



I. Public sin – Public judgement (5:1 - 11)

Verse 1

Now
a man named Ananias, [whom Jehovah has graciously given]
together with (syn = union) his wife Sapphira, [sapphire]
also sold a piece of property. [estate/land]
(Matt. 19:22 – the rich young ruler had much wealth (land))
Possibly moved by Barnabas' gift in chapter 4:36.37

Verse 2

With his wife's full knowledge (synoida = union + know)
he kept back (nosphizo = to embezzle/deceive)
part of the money (time = price/value) for himself,
but brought the rest
and put it at the apostles' feet. (same as 4:37)
The issue is NOT how much money – it is the perception and the deception of Ananias to appear to be like Barnabas.

Verse 3

Then Peter said,
"Ananias,
how [why] is it that Satan (Satanas)
has so filled your heart
that you have lied (pseudomai = false)
to the Holy Spirit
and have kept for yourself
some of the money
you received for the land?

This is an example of what I Cor. 12:8 speaks of the gift of the Holy Spirit of a "word of knowledge". Peter received this information from spiritual means at this moment.

Peter's concern is not for the church or the apostles, it is the fact that deception is against the Holy Spirit.

Verse 4

*Didn't it belong to you
before it was sold?
And after it was sold,
wasn't the money
at your disposal?
What made you think [conceived in your heart]
of doing such a thing? [deed]*

Is Ananias the victim of Satan? The "Eden conspiracy" (Gen.3)

What sin do you think was a the heart of this deed?

Greed – pride – self ambition – praise of men

You have not lied to men but to God.

The truth is all sin is really against God!

Verse 5

When
Ananias heard this,
he fell down and died.

Peter did not pronounce a death sentence – God did it!

And great fear (phobos = fear of things) seized
all who heard what had happened.

Verse 6

Then
the young men came forward,
wrapped up his body,
and carried him out
and buried him.

Instead of despising God's judgement, we should instead be grateful for the grace of God's mercy!

Verse 7

About three hours later
his wife came in,
not knowing what had happened.

Verse 8

Peter asked her,
"Tell me,
is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"
"Yes," she said, "that is the price."

Sapphira has an opportunity to clarify the issue and come clean before the apostles and the Lord.

Verse 9

Peter said to her,
"How could you agree
to test the Spirit of the Lord? (this is the integrity test)
Look!
The feet of the men who buried your husband
are at the door,
and they will carry you out also."

Verse 10

At that moment
she fell down at his feet and died.
Then the young men came in and,
finding her dead,
carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

Verse 11

Great fear (phobos) seized
the whole church (ekklesia)
and all who heard about these events.

Note: This is the FIRST use of the word "church" in the Book of Acts.

"Ekklesia" (Ecclesiology – The study of church)

Ek (out of something) + Kalew (to call forth to something)

"called out of something and to unity for something"

The Old Testament understanding – the assembly of the Israelites
from among the peoples of the world to follow and glorify
Yahweh.

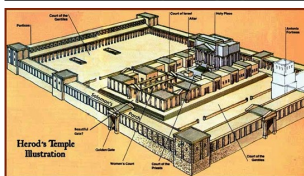
The New Testament understanding – now centers on those called
out of the world who wish to follow and glorify Yahweh by means
of believing and serving Christ as God's son.

II. Public signs through the Spirit(5:12 - 16)

Verse 12

The apostles performed
many miraculous signs
and wonders
among the people.
And all the believers
used to meet together
(homothymadon – in one accord)
in Solomon's Colonnade.

SOLOMON'S COLONNADE



Verse 13

No one else dared join (kollao = glue) them,
even though they were highly regarded
by the people.

Verse 14

Nevertheless,
more and more (plethos = multitudes) men and women
believed in the Lord
and were added to their number.

The discipline of Ananias and Sapphira demonstrated the truth
of the words and lifestyles of the apostles giving them respect in
the community and fruit for the kingdom of God.

One of our biggest fears is holding people accountable to a
higher standard. We are concerned that people will be turned
away – instead in many cases people are drawn to discipline.

Verse 15

As a result,
people brought the sick
into the streets
and laid them
on beds
and mats
so that at least Peter's shadow
might fall
on some of them
as he passed by.

This does NOT say that Peter's shadow healed people. It reflects
the hope of those who saw the signs and wonders.

This fame is a dangerous test for any leader to deal with.

Verse 16

Crowds gathered also
from the towns around Jerusalem,
bringing their sick
and those tormented
by evil spirits,
and all of them were healed.

Again, it is interesting that Luke, a physician by trade, would
validate the miraculous healings that occurred.

God is working through a pure church with pure motives!

We see the beginning of the next phase of ministry in the Book of
Acts – those OUTSIDE Jerusalem begin to get involved in the
movement and in sharing in the glory of Christ.

**This was a TEST of their faithfulness to God through the
popularity they experienced!**

III. Public persecution (5:17 - 32)

Verse 17

Then
the high priest
and all his associates,
 who were members
 of the party of the Sadducees,
were filled with jealousy. (zelos = passion/malice/zeal)

Verse 18

They arrested the apostles
and put them in the public jail.

This is the first time ALL the apostles were put in jail. This is new level of persecution. This was the second time in jail for Peter and John (Act. 4:3)

Verse 19

But during the night
an angel of the Lord
opened the doors
 of the jail
and brought them out.

Verse 20

"Go,
stand in the temple courts,"
he said,
"and tell the people the full message
of this new life."

God did not release them for their comfort or protection, but to continue HIS work! In the future they will not ALWAYS be freed.

God did not always spare their lives:

Matthew was beheaded with a sword.

Mark died in Alexandria after being dragged through the streets of the city.

Luke was hanged on an olive tree in Greece.

John died a natural death, but they unsuccessfully tried to boil him in oil.

Peter was crucified upside-down in Rome.

James was beheaded in Jerusalem.

James the Less was thrown from a height then beaten with clubs.

Philip was hanged.

Bartholomew was whipped and beaten until death.

Andrew was crucified and preached at the top of his voice to his persecutors until he died.

Thomas was run through with a spear.

Jude was killed with the arrows of an executioner.

Matthias was stoned and then beheaded – as was **Barnabas**.

Paul was beheaded in Rome.

Verse 21

At daybreak
they entered the temple courts,
as they had been told,
and began to teach the people. } Amazing obedience!
When the high priest and his associates arrived, } Amazing boldness!
they called together the Sanhedrin
 --the full assembly of the elders of Israel—
and sent to the jail for the apostles.

Verse 22

But on arriving at the jail,
the officers did not find them there.
So they went back and reported,

Verse 23

Three marks of a miracle:

"We found 1) the jail securely locked,
with the 2) guards standing at the doors;
but when we opened them,
we found 3) no one inside."

Verse 24

On hearing this report,
the captain of the temple guard
and the chief priests were puzzled, (diaporeo = thoroughly lost/confused/dismayed)
wondering what would come of this.

The repeated signs of supernatural activity with these men caused them to pause and think.

Verse 25

Then
someone came and said,
 "Look!
The men you put in jail
are standing in the temple courts
teaching the people."

Verse 26

At that,
the captain went with his officers
and brought the apostles.
They did not use force,
because they feared that the people would stone them.

Verse 27

Having brought the apostles,
they made them appear
before the Sanhedrin
to be questioned (eperotao = demand an answer)
by the high priest.

Verse 28

"We gave you strict orders
not to teach in this name," he said.
"Yet you have filled Jerusalem (pleroo = filled up)
with your teaching (didache = doctrine)
and are determined to make us guilty
of this man's blood."

The heart of the matter is the Jewish leadership does not want to
take responsibility for the death of Christ!

Verse 29

Peter and the other apostles replied:

"We must obey God
rather than men!" } Absolute submission

Verse 30

The God of our fathers
raised (egeiro = to awaken) Jesus from the dead—
whom you had killed (diacheirizo = by your hands)
by hanging him on a tree. (xylon = tree not cross)

Verse 31

God exalted him
to his own right hand
as Prince and Savior (soter = deliverer, perserver)
that he might give
repentance (metanoia – turn from and to)
and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Verse 32

We are witnesses (martys) of these things,
and so is the Holy Spirit, (living testimony)
whom God has given
to those who obey him."

IV. Public proof (5:33 - 42)

Verse 33

When they heard this,
they were furious (diaprio – cut to the heart)
and wanted to put them to death.

When you can't win the argument, destroy the person!

Verse 34

But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, (Grandson of Hillel)
a teacher (Rabban – not just rabbi) of the law,
who was honored (timios = precious)
by all the people,
stood up in the Sanhedrin
and ordered that the men be put outside
for a little while.

Verse 35

Then he addressed them:
"Men of Israel,
consider carefully
what you intend to do
to these men.



Verse 36

Some time ago
1) Theudas appeared,
claiming to be somebody,
and about four hundred men rallied to him.
He was killed,
all his followers were dispersed,
and it all came to nothing.

Verse 37

After him,
2) Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the
census and led a band of people in revolt.
He too was killed,
and all his followers were scattered.

Verse 38

*Therefore,
in the present case I advise you:
Leave these men alone!
Let them go!
For if their purpose or activity
is of human origin, it will fail. (dissolve)*

Verse 39

*But if it is from God,
you will not be able to stop these men;
you will only find yourselves
fighting against God.” (theomachos!)*

Gamaliel proposed the test of time – but the test of eternity is more important.

Verse 40

*His speech persuaded them.
They called the apostles in
and had them flogged.
Then they ordered them
not to speak in the name of Jesus,
and let them go.*

Verse 41

*The apostles left the Sanhedrin,
rejoicing because they had been counted worthy
of suffering disgrace
for the Name.*

Verse 42

*Day after day,
in the temple courts
and from house to house,
they never stopped teaching
and proclaiming the good news
that Jesus is the Christ.*

Once again, the power of the Holy Spirit enabled them to not succumb to persecution but to be more faithful in their teaching and preaching of Jesus as THE CHRIST!

The greatest test of our faith is persecution and rejection.

The three tests in chapter 5:

- 1) The integrity test –
- 2) The popularity test –
- 3) The persecution test -