

Ananias and Sapphira Lie to the Holy Spirit (c. Fall 33)

Acts 4:32–5:11

Private Property Owners Contribute Voluntarily to the Needs of the Community

4:32 The group of those who believed were of one heart and mind, and no one said that any of his possessions was his own, but everything was held in common.

33 With great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all.

34 For there was no one needy among them, because those who were owners of land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds from the sales

35 and placing them at the apostles' feet. The proceeds were distributed to each, as anyone had need.

Introduction to Barnabas (Joseph), Who Later Ministered with Paul

36 So Joseph, a Levite who was a native of Cyprus, called by the apostles Barnabas (which is translated "son of encouragement"), 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and placed it at the apostles' feet.

Ananias Conspires with His Wife Sapphira to Deceive the Apostles

5:1 Now a man named Ananias, together with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property.

2 He kept back for himself part of the proceeds with his wife's knowledge; he brought only part of it and placed it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back for yourself part of the proceeds from the sale of the land?"

4 Before it was sold, did it not belong to you? And when it was sold, was the money not at your disposal? How have you thought up this deed in your heart? You have not lied to people but to God!"

5 When Ananias heard these words he collapsed and died, and great fear gripped all who heard about it.

6 So the young men came, wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

Sapphira's Part in the Deception is Revealed

7 After an interval of about three hours, his wife came in, but she did not know what had happened.

8 Peter said to her, "Tell me, were the two of you paid this amount for the land?" Sapphira said, "Yes, that much."

9 Peter then told her, "Why have you agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out!"

10 At once she collapsed at his feet and died. So when the young men came in, they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

11 Great fear gripped the whole church and all who heard about these things.

Signs and Wonders by the Apostles (c. 33/34)

Acts 5:12–16

12 Now many miraculous signs and wonders came about among the people through the hands of the apostles. By common consent they were all meeting together in Solomon's Portico.

13 None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high honor.

14 More and more believers in the Lord were added to their number, crowds of both men and women.

15 Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets, and put them on cots and pallets, so that when Peter came by at least his shadow would fall on some of them.

16 A crowd of people from the towns around Jerusalem also came together, bringing the sick and those troubled by unclean spirits. They were all being healed.

Jewish Persecution Intensifies (c. 33/34)

Acts 5:17–42

The Apostles are Imprisoned

17 Now the high priest rose up, and all those with him (that is, the religious party of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy.

18 They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail.

An Angel Releases the Apostles

19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, led them out, and said,

20 "Go and stand in the temple courts and proclaim to the people all the words of this life."

21 When they heard this, they entered the temple courts at daybreak and began teaching. Now when the high priest and those who were with him arrived, they summoned the Sanhedrin—that is, the whole high council of the Israelites—and sent to the jail to have

the apostles brought before them.

22 But the officers who came for them did not find them in the prison, so they returned and reported,

23 “We found the jail locked securely and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside.”

24 Now when the commander of the temple guard and the chief priests heard this report, they were greatly puzzled concerning it, wondering what this could be.

25 But someone came and reported to them, “Look! The men you put in prison are standing in the temple courts and teaching the people!”

The Apostles Willingly Go Before the Jewish Council

26 Then the commander of the temple guard went with the officers and brought the apostles without the use of force (for they were afraid of being stoned by the people).

27 When they had brought them, they stood them before the council, and the high priest questioned them,

28 saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name. Look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood on us!”

29 But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than people.

30 The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you seized and killed by hanging him on a tree.

31 God exalted him to his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are witnesses of these events, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.”

33 Now when they heard this, they became furious and wanted to execute them.

Gamaliel’s Wise Advice

34 But a Pharisee whose name was Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was respected by all the people, stood up in the council and ordered the men to be put outside for a short time.

35 Then he said to the council, “Men of Israel, pay close attention to what you are about to do to these men.

36 For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and nothing came of it.

37 After him Judas the Galilean arose in the days of the census, and incited people to follow him in revolt. He too was killed, and all who followed him were scattered.

38 So in this case I say to you, stay away from these men and leave them alone, because if this plan or this undertaking originates with people, it will come to nothing,

39 but if it is from God, you will not be able to stop them, or you may even be found fighting against God.” He convinced them,

40 and they summoned the apostles and had them beaten. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus and released them.

The Apostles Continue Preaching the Gospel

41 So they left the council rejoicing because they had been considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name.

42 And every day both in the temple courts and from house to house, they did not stop teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus was the Christ.

Ministry Distinctions Within the Church (c. early 34)

Acts 6:1–6

1 Now in those days, when the disciples were growing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Greek-speaking Jews against the native Hebraic Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.

2 So the twelve called the whole group of the disciples together and said, “It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to wait on tables.

3 But carefully select from among you, brothers, seven men who are well-attested, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this necessary task.

4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

5 The proposal pleased the entire group, so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a Gentile convert to Judaism from Antioch.

6 They stood these men before the apostles, who prayed and placed their hands on them.

The Arrest of Stephen (c. Spring 34)

Acts 6:7–15

7 The word of God continued to spread, the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large group of priests became obedient to the faith.

8 Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.

9 But some men from the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, as well as some from Cilicia and the province of Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen.
 10 Yet they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.
 11 Then they secretly instigated some men to say, “We have heard this man speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God.”
 12 They incited the people, the elders, and the experts in the law; then they approached Stephen, seized him, and brought him before the council.
 13 They brought forward false witnesses who said, “This man does not stop saying things against this holy place and the law.
 14 For we have heard him saying that Jesus the Nazarene will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.”
 15 All who were sitting in the council looked intently at Stephen and saw his face was like the face of an angel.

Stephen’s Sermon (c. Spring 34)

Acts 7:1–53

1 Then the high priest said, “Are these things true?”
 2 So he replied, “Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he settled in Haran,
 3 and said to him, ‘Go out from your country and from your relatives, and come to the land I will show you.’ [[Gen 12:1](#)]
 4 Then he went out from the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God made him move to this country where you now live.
 5 He did not give any of it to him for an inheritance, not even a foot of ground, yet God promised to give it to him as his possession, and to his descendants after him, even though Abraham as yet had no child.
 6 But God spoke as follows: ‘Your descendants will be foreigners in a foreign country, whose citizens will enslave them and mistreat them for four hundred years.
 7 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,’ said God, ‘and after these things they will come out of there and worship me in this place.’ [[Gen 15:13–14](#); [Exod 3:12](#)]
 8 Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, and so he became the father of Isaac and circumcised him when he was eight days old, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.
 9 The patriarchs, because they were jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt. But God was with him,
 10 and rescued him from all his troubles, and granted him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household.
 11 Then a famine occurred throughout Egypt and Canaan, causing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food.
 12 So when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there the first time.
 13 On their second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers again, and Joseph’s family became known to Pharaoh.
 14 So Joseph sent a message and invited his father Jacob and all his relatives to come, seventy-five people in all.
 15 So Jacob went down to Egypt and died there, along with our ancestors,
 16 and their bones were later moved to Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a certain sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.
 17 “But as the time drew near for God to fulfill the promise he had declared to Abraham, the people increased greatly in number in Egypt,
 18 until another king who did not know about Joseph ruled over Egypt. [[Exod 1:8](#)]
 19 This was the one who exploited our people and was cruel to our ancestors, forcing them to abandon their infants so they would die.
 20 At that time Moses was born, and he was beautiful to God. For three months he was brought up in his father’s house,
 21 and when he had been abandoned, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son.
 22 So Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds.
 23 But when he was about forty years old, it entered his mind to visit his fellow countrymen the Israelites.
 24 When he saw one of them being hurt unfairly, Moses came to his defense and avenged the person who was mistreated by striking down the Egyptian.
 25 He thought his own people would understand that God was delivering them through him, but they did not understand.
 26 The next day Moses saw two men fighting, and tried to make peace between them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers; why are you hurting one another?’
 27 But the man who was unfairly hurting his neighbor pushed Moses aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?
 28 You don’t want to kill me the way you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?’ [[Exod 2:14](#)]
 29 When the man said this, Moses fled and became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.
 30 “After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush.
 31 When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and when he approached to investigate, there came the voice of the Lord,
 32 ‘I am the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ Moses began to tremble and did not dare to look more

closely.

33 *But the Lord said to him, 'Take the sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.*

34 *I have certainly seen the suffering of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Now come, I will send you to Egypt.'* [Exod 3:1-10]

35 This same Moses they had rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and judge?' God sent as both ruler and deliverer through the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush.

36 This man led them out, performing wonders and miraculous signs in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years.

37 This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers.' [Deut 18:15]

38 This is the man who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors, and he received living oracles to give to you.

39 Our ancestors were unwilling to obey him, but pushed him aside and turned back to Egypt in their hearts,

40 saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go in front of us, for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt—we do not know what has happened to him!' [Exod 32:1]

41 At that time they made an idol in the form of a calf, brought a sacrifice to the idol, and began rejoicing in the works of their hands.

42 But God turned away from them and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets: 'It was not to me that you offered slain animals and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, house of Israel?

43 *But you took along the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of the god Rephan, the images you made to worship, but I will deport you beyond Babylon.'* [Amos 5:25-27]

44 Our ancestors had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as God who spoke to Moses ordered him to make it according to the design he had seen.

45 Our ancestors received possession of it and brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors, until the time of David.

46 He found favor with God and asked that he could find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob.

47 But Solomon built a house for him.

48 Yet the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands, as the prophet says,

49 *'Heaven is my throne,
and earth is the footstool for my feet.
What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord,
or what is my resting place?*

50 *Did my hand not make all these things?'* [Isa 66:1-2]

51 "You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! [cf. Jer 4:4; 9:26] You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, like your ancestors did!

52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become!

53 You received the law by decrees given by angels, but you did not obey it."

The Martyrdom of Stephen / Introduction to Saul (Paul) (c. Spring 34)

Acts 7:54-8:1a

7:54 When they heard these things, they became furious and ground their teeth at him.

55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently toward heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

56 "Look!" he said. "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

57 But they covered their ears, shouting out with a loud voice, and rushed at him with one intent.

58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 They continued to stone Stephen while he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

60 Then he fell to his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" When he had said this, he died.

8:1a And Saul agreed completely with killing him.

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