

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

LESSON 7: CHAPTER 4:22-5:11

10 July 2015

- Vs. 22** The healed man had been lame over 40 years since his birth.
- He pictures the unsaved:** you and I are born crippled by sin. We can't walk right. He must be carried to where he will beg alms because he can't help himself. He's near the temple, but he's outside. The sinner is only separated from God by his unbelief. He's close, but outside.
- He pictures the nation of Israel:** They're helpless. They're near God, but separated from God.
- He pictures salvation:** As soon as somebody told him about Jesus, his condition changed and his character changed. He began to witness for Jesus. He's willing to suffer for his testimony.
- Vs. 23** They didn't quit. They went back to the brethren and reported all that had happened.
- Vss. 24-28** Upon hearing the report, all the believers pray to God, the Creator. They quote Psalm 2, referring to the religious rulers as "the heathen" who "rage." Many people conspired against God's "holy child Jesus" (Herod, Pilate, the Romans, and the Jews) to do what God had planned from the start.
- Vss. 29-30** In response to the threatenings of the religious rulers, the disciples pray for boldness to speak God's word. They pray for more signs and wonders to be done in Jesus name. Rather than trying to reason with the rulers, they go straight to God. (See 1 Peter 2:21-23). Jesus is our example. He didn't return the threats. He committed himself to the righteous judge.
- Pray for boldness:** when you need it for witnessing (Acts 4:29), when you want to approach the presence of God (Hebrews 10:19), and when you face the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Jn. 4:17).
- Vs. 31** In response to their prayer, God shakes the place where they were assembled and they all receive another filling of the Holy Spirit. After that, "**they spake the word of God with boldness.**" (Answered prayer). Ask God to enable you to serve Him and glorify His name.
- Vs. 32** The believers were "**of one heart and of one soul**" and shared all their possessions. This was not a command, but a desire in their hearts.
- Vs. 33** With "**great power**" the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of Jesus (not the kingdom). With "**great grace**" they could be gracious in their preaching to the lost and their dealings with the saints.
- Vss. 34-35** All the saint's material possessions were distributed among them to meet the needs of others. This is only possible because the church is still "in one accord," but it doesn't last long. Beginning with chapter 5, we start seeing the church weakening.
- Vss. 36-37** Barnabas is introduced. He is a believer who is completely sold out to the Lord. He is a Levite who lived in Cyprus, but sold his land to serve the Lord.

CHAPTER 5 Corruption is removed from the church by the Holy Spirit (vss. 1-11).

- Vs. 1** This chapter begins with the word “But...” indicating that the church is now going to begin experiencing some problems among the believers. They were “in one accord, BUT...” now things are going to be different. Ananias and Sapphira his wife are introduced. They sold a possession (like many others did).
- Vs. 2** This couple withheld part of their donation, but that is not sin. Their sin is that they lied in the church. Their goal was to make people think they were more spiritual than they really were. This was the sin of Satan; desiring to lift himself up by any means. It’s pride (Prov. 13:10).
- Vs. 3** Peter confronts Ananias about the lie. Satan (John 8:44) filled the man’s heart. His lie was not to men, but to the Holy Ghost. This was a pre-planned, premeditated sin. It had to do with money. **“The love of money is the root of all evil”** (1 Tim. 6:10) Sin took root in the church in Acts 5.
- Vs. 4** The money from the sale of the land belonged to Ananias. He was free to do whatever he wanted with it. It wasn’t a sin to keep it. The sin of lying about it was conceived in his heart (see James 1:14-15). He lied unto God.
- Vss. 5-6** Ananias died instantly and was wrapped up, carried out, and buried.
- Vss. 7-11** Sapphira arrived three hours later. Peter confronted her also. She lied. Peter told her she was going to die (prophecy). She died instantly and was buried next to her husband. This event caused all the church to greatly fear.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. The deception (fraud) is planned (vss. 1-2). This matches 2 Peter 2:3. The Lord promises sure judgment upon those who use lying words to make merchandise of the Church. See Rev. 3:1.
2. The deception is performed (vss. 3-4).
 - a. The source of their sin: Satan (vs. 3).
 - b. The place of their sin: their heart (vs. 4)
 - c. The folly (foolishness) of their sin: They forgot that God sees and knows all things. (Num. 32:23). They insulted the Spirit of truth with a lie. (vs. 3, vs. 9)
3. The punishment of the deception (vss. 5-6). There is a sin unto death (1 John 5:16). God’s judgment may be sickness or death to the church member who sins (1 Cor. 11:28-31).
 - a. Now that we have all the New Testament Scriptures, it is the duty of the church to remove those members who dishonor God and defile the Body of Christ. (See 1 Cor. 5:6-7)

FIVE LESSONS FROM THIS EVENT:

1. The presence of the flesh in the believer.
2. The power of Satan over the fleshy believer. He seeks a believer with a bad heart.
3. The Holy Spirit is not an influence, but a person. –You can’t lie to a force (vs. 3).
4. Sin in the believer is against the Holy Spirit.
5. The presence of the Holy Spirit demands a separation from evil.

PROOF OF THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Acts 5:3, “To lie to the Holy Ghost.” Verse 4: --“Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.”
2. Isaiah 6:8-9 (God speaks these words). Those same words are quoted in Acts 28:25-26, which says the Holy Ghost said it.
3. Jeremiah 31:31-34 (God speaks these words). This passage is quoted in Hebrews 10:15-17 and credit is given to the Holy Ghost.