

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: ACTS 5:1-11



The STORY

Read about Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11.

Please note: The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- What did Ananias and Sapphira do wrong? (Ananias and Sapphira said they would give the money from the sale of land to the apostles but after they sold their land they kept some of the money for themselves.)
- What happened to them? (God judged them by ending their lives.)
- Why did God do this? (Though it does not say why God did this, it would seem that God was protecting the purity of the early church to help keep them strong.)

CRAFT QUESTIONS

Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: Ananias falling down dead. Engage the children by asking:

- What do we learn about God from this passage? (We learn that God is holy and that He is going to protect His church. We also learn that God hates sin.)
- Did Sapphira tell the truth when Peter confronted her? (No, she did not tell the truth. She lied by telling Peter the money she gave was the full price she and her husband received.)
- After Ananias and Sapphira died it says a great fear seized the church. How do you think fear would help protect the church? (People would be afraid to sin knowing God who is all-knowing would see their sin. So, in that way it would help keep the church pure. It would also give the people a healthy fear of the Lord.)

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ASSEMBLY WARM UP

In today's lesson we will see that once again Israel is disobeying the Lord!

Sometimes we might think that Israel was so terrible but we should remember that we are often just like they are.

Can you think of something you have done wrong to disobey your parents? Have you ever hit your sister or brother or become angry. (Ask the class for a show of hands.)

What other sins is it easy to commit? (Get their suggestions.)

Do you ever repeat a sin, that is do it again? (Help the children see that they can often repeat again and again the same sins. Help them identify with Israel who repeated their sins against God.)

God was very kind to Israel. He would always send them into a difficult situation that they could not get out of without his help. In our story today we will learn that God allowed the Philistines to rule over Israel for 40 years. Then after 40 years he sent a deliverer named Samson.

Does anyone know what was amazing about Samson? (Most of the children who answer will talk about Samson's hair but the most amazing thing about Samson was that the Spirit of God came upon him. That is what really gave Samson his strength, not his long hair. His long hair was only a way to show that his life was dedicated in service to the Lord.)

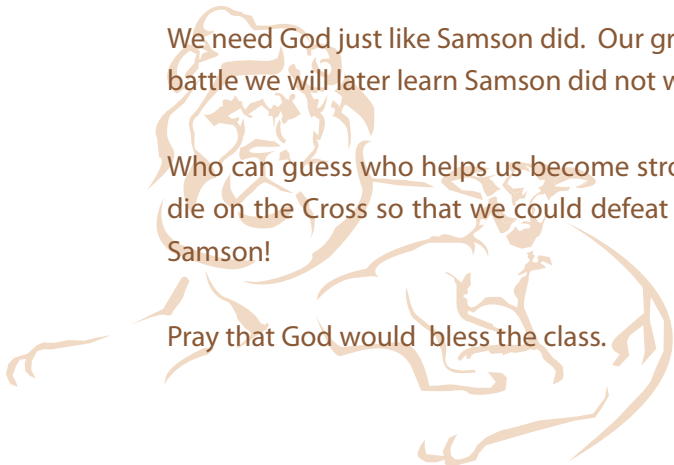
Samson could break strong ropes that most people can't (bring in a length of rope clothesline and pass it around to see if anyone can break it.)

Samson was just like us except for the fact that God helped him by making him strong. If it were not for God Samson would not have had his incredible strength.

We need God just like Samson did. Our greatest struggle is not with Philistines but with sin. That was a battle we will later learn Samson did not win.

Who can guess who helps us become strong in our battle with sin? (Jesus does. Jesus sent His Son to die on the Cross so that we could defeat sin. God's Spirit comes on all believers just as it came upon Samson!

Pray that God would bless the class.



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SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- Why do people lie? (To stay out of trouble or to appear more important.)
- Who are you thinking the most of when you lie? (Lying is most often selfish and most lies are designed to serve self.)
 Explain that the lie is the outside sin but that we usually have an inside sin which motivates us to lie. If we lie to stay out of trouble, that inside sin might be a craving for ease or peace from the consequences. If we lie to impress, the sinful craving of our hearts could be a desire to be liked by others.
- When have you been most tempted to lie? (Accept any answer.)

WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

The Holy Spirit was poured out powerfully on the early church. This move of the Spirit of God launched the growth of the early church.

Ananias and Sapphira threatened to discredit the Gospel and the work of God as the church was becoming established. They sold their property but they were not interested in giving up all the money they earned from the sale. They wanted the commendation for giving the whole but did not want to sacrifice all the funds.

With the credibility of the Gospel on the line, the Spirit of God killed them both. Thus, a holy fear fell upon the people and the integrity of the Gospel was protected.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.