

thing, etc.? The sin was the man's own, because he had deliberately yielded to the tempter. (Compare James 4:7.) **Not lied unto men**; that is, this was not the worst part of the offence. **But unto God.** This was the worst part of Ananias' offence, that he had thought to deceive God.

5, 6. Ananias...fell down and gave up the ghost; literally, "breathed out his soul"; died. **Great fear...on all them that heard**; preventing others from acting in so unbrotherly and insincere a fashion. **Young men...wound (wrapped) him up**; in the robe he was wearing. **Buried him**; an immediate necessity in that hot country.

7-11. Three hours after...wife, not knowing. The dreadful news had not reached her. **Came in**; to the room where the apostles were. **Tell me, etc.** This question might have stirred Sapphira to repentance and confession. **Yea, for so much.** She makes the lie her own. **Tempt the Spirit of the Lord**; to put to the test the Holy Spirit dwelling in the apostles, whether He can be deceived or not. **Behold, etc.** Sapphira, too, falls down dead, and is buried beside her husband. By the awful judgment on Ananias and Sapphira, the lesson is stamped on the hearts of the members of the church at the very beginning, that God requires of them that their love shall be sincere and self-sacrificing.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



CYPRUS, the home of Barnabas, is an island in the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea. Its extreme length is 145 miles, and its greatest breadth is 60 miles. In ancient times and during the middle ages, it was noted for its copper and timber. Indeed the name Cyprus is from the Latin word for copper. The timber consisted chiefly of the cypress and the juniper. The juniper seems to have attained a great size, and still grows freely in some places. Much glass was made in Roman times. The island has always grown grain in considerable quantities, and exports it in our own day. In some of the lagoons salt is obtained.

FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. How did the early believers show their love for one another?

2. Of what sin were Ananias and Sapphira guilty, and how were they punished?

LESSON QUESTIONS

32-37 How is the harmony among the early believers described? To what great fact did the apostles witness? How was their testimony backed up? Explain "great grace was upon them all". How was a central fund formed? Who had charge of it? Who is singled out as an example of liberality?

Ch. 5:1,2. Whose conduct is contrasted with that of Barnabas and the other Christians? What was the purpose of Ananias and Sapphira? Where does Jesus teach us in what spirit we should give? (Matt. 6:1-4.) Who loved his possessions more than he loved Jesus? (Matt. 19:21, 22.)

3,4 By whom did Peter say Ananias had been inspired? To whom had he lied? Why was he responsible for the deceit he had practised? Show that the Holy Spirit is a Person.

5-11 How was Ananias punished for his sin? How did Sapphira make his lie her own? Explain "tempt the Spirit of the Lord". What happened to Sapphira? At whose word? What would the members of the church learn from the doom of Ananias and Sapphira?

FOR DISCUSSION

1. How far should Christians nowadays follow the example of having "all things common"?
2. Hypocrisy.

A LESSON FOR LIFE

Weights or wings: our possessions, large or small, may be to us the one or the other. They may drag us down, as did those of Ananias and Sapphira, to the depths of meanness and deceit; or they may help us to rise, as did Barnabas, to the heights of goodness and generosity that are like God's, free and ungrudging. Whether ours shall be the upward or the downward way, depends upon our own choice.

Prove from Scripture—That we should be sincere.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 5. Are there more Gods than one? **A.** There is but One only, the living and true God. **Ques. 6.** How many persons are there in the Godhead? **A.** There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

The Question on Missions—6. What do the Chinese do for the blind? Our mission doctors? The Chinese sometimes try to cure blindness by digging it out with a needle, and, of course, only destroy the eye. Our doctors restore sight to many blind people by removing the opaque lens in cataract, or by cutting a little window in the iris.