



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Deceit in the Church=Severe Church Discipline!

APRIL 30, 2014

David Andersen / PO Box 2020, Chesterfield, VA 23832 / David.Andersen@capitolcom.org

Acts 5:1-11

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2) And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid 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 part of the price of the land for yourself? 4) While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.’ 5) Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. 6) And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. 7) Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8) And Peter answered her, ‘Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?’ And she said, ‘Yes, for so much.’ 9) Then Peter said to her, ‘How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.’ 10) Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. 11) So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.” (NKJV)

“THE CONCEPT OF FILLING THE HEART REFERS TO THE CONTROL SATAN HAS TO INFLUENCE SUCH A DECISION TO LIE PLUS THE INFINITIVE POINTS TO THE RESULT OF SUCH FILLING, THE ACT OF LYING; SATAN FILLED AND THE RESULT WAS THE LIE.” DARRELL BOCK

What did it take to convince this husband and wife, who were “one heart and soul” with God’s people, to choose to lie to all of them? Who was this couple trying to imitate and gain similar praise? Does God ever tolerate sin in His immediate presence? How was Peter so convinced that Sapphira would die also? What does God say is the “beginning of wisdom”?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- MAY 7-9: NO STUDY WILBERFORCE CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON, DC.
- MAY 14-16: ACTS 5:12-23 TRIUMPH OVER TYRANNY: ALL THE MESSAGE OF LIFE WAS GIVEN!

For the first time since the deceit of Judas, whom Satan had “entered into” (Luke 22:3, John 13:27), were the believers in Jerusalem responsible to deal with sin in their midst. After Judas had died a swift, gruesome death in his suicide gone catastrophic, the immediate administrative act, following the first priority of prayer by the Apostles, had been to replace him (Acts 1:14-26). In answer to prayer, the intimate presence of the Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost and His people proclaimed the truth in every language represented in the capital. The growth went from 120 to 3000, to over 5000 men (with their families probably over 25,000 total). Yet they had enjoyed perfect unity in sharing the truth of the Gospel, their possessions, fellowship, food, and the priority of prayer. Never before or since had this perfect unity been shared by such a large a flock in the history of the world!

“THE STORY OF ANANIAS IS TO THE BOOK OF ACTS WHAT THE STORY OF ACHAN IS TO THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.”

F. F. BRUCE

I. DECEIT DEFIED BY DEITY

ACTS 5:1-6

Satan first deceived Eve who enjoyed with Adam God’s perfect truth, creation, care, unity and daily fellowship.

BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY @ 11:30AM BIBLE STUDY – WOODBRIDGE – BOB EVANS, 13900 NOBLEWOOD PLAZA

THURSDAY @ NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

FRIDAY @ WILBERFORCE CONFERENCE

Virginia

Deceit in the Church=Severe Church Discipline!

Along with all the fruit of the trees in the Garden of Eden, and the Tree of Life (giving perpetual life), was the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. God warned of this final tree, *“in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”* When they disobeyed God, the perfection they had enjoyed was gone! They died spiritually that day and by submission to Satan, gave him authority over all their posterity (Romans 5:12)! Thus all died spiritually (Ephesians 2:1), and are sinners by nature (Romans 3:10-18). Not only was physical death introduced to mankind, but also the *“lake”* for *“all liars”* *“which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death”* (Revelation 21:8, 27; 22:14-15). When God redeemed His own from Egypt and gave them the land of Israel, the spoils of the first city were to be reserved only for God who intimately cared for them (Joshua 6:18-19). But Achan deceitfully *“took”* and hid some in his tent, *“so the anger of the Lord burned against the children of Israel”* and 36 were killed by the men of Ai (Josh. 7:1, 5). God told Joshua why they were defeated, *“Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you”* (Josh. 7:12). As Achan was found out, he and all his family (who knew about his sin), and all he owned was buried by stoning and burned, *“So the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger”* (Josh. 7:25-26). Here in our passage, Ananias *“kept back”* and lied to the Holy Spirit to *“keep back”* for himself that which he had evidently promised to God. The word for *“kept back”* means to embezzle, steal or misappropriate funds and it is the same word used when Achan *“took”*. Ananias had deceived and lied, not just *“to men, but to God”*, thus jeopardizing the whole church! As Adam & Eve were denied the Tree of Life, so Ananias was denied the breath of life and *“breathed his last”* and was removed.

**“ANANIAS FAILED TO REALIZE THAT WHERE THE SPIRIT IS,
GOD IS—GOD, THE CONSUMING FIRE,
WHO DESTROYS DECEPTION ON CONTACT.”**
DENNIS JOHNSON

II. LYING LEVELED BY THE LORD ACTS 5:7-10

How did Peter know about their lie? The Spirit must have revealed their lie to Peter just as He had revealed to Elisha when his servant, Gehazi, had misappropriated the funds from Naaman the Leper and thereby received the death of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:26-27). Though Satan had tempted Ananias and *“filled”* his *“heart to lie to the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 5:3), yet Peter made it clear that Ananias was fully responsible for having *“conceived this thing in”* his *“heart”* (5:4). Sapphira (for sapphire, meaning beautiful) was given a chance to repent and set the record straight in front of everyone there at Solomon’s Porch in the Temple (5:12) when Peter asked, *“Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?”* But worse than Ananias who had deceived by his actions in substituting part of the price for the whole when he placed the money at Peter’s feet, Sapphira his wife perjured herself with a blatant, bal-faced lie, *“Yes, for so much.”* Astounded at her prideful arrogance in thinking she could get by with such lying, Peter said the third *“behold”* of Acts, *“Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.”* She *“breathed her last”* and was removed.

“THESE SIX THINGS THE LORD HATES, YES, SEVEN ARE AN ABOMINATION TO HIM: A PROUD LOOK, A LYING TONGUE . . . A FALSE WITNESS WHO SPEAKS LIES, AND ONE WHO SOWS DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN.” PROVERBS 6:16-17, 19

III. CHURCH DISCIPLINE BRINGS WISDOM ACTS 5:11

“So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.” The word *“church”* is here for the first time in Acts. Only used twice previously, both include church discipline. What the leaders of the church *“bind on earth”* literally *“shall have been bound in heaven”* (Mt. 16:19, 18:18). Thus the decision of God in heaven regarding sin is revealed by the church leaders on earth! There is great wisdom in the *“fear of the Lord”* (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7, 29).

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Are you proving that your heart is controlled by Satan because you are willing to deceive others?
- 2) Do you deceive by actions, insinuations, silence or even blatant, bal-faced lies and think that you can get by with it?
- 3) Is the wisdom of the Fear of the Lord evidenced in your life by obedience to Scripture and the leaders of your church?