



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## The Decoy Leader Who Everyone Thought was Real

APRIL 29-MAY1, 2015

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**Acts 8:9-24** *“But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, 10) To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, ‘This man is the great power of God.’ 11) And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. 12) But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13) Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and the signs which were done. 14) Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15) who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16) For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17) Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18) And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19) saying, ‘Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ 20) But Peter said to him, ‘Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21) You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. 22) Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23) For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.’ 24) Then Simon answered and said, ‘Pray to the Lord for me, that*

*none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me.” (NKJV)*

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“NOT ONLY THE FOLLOWERS, BUT THE LEADER BELIEVED.”  
J. A. ALEXANDER

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How much influence did Simon have in the Capital city? What was the strategy of his influence? Was his power surpassed by Philip? Is there a subtle difference in the nature and timing of Simon’s belief? What was the object of Simon’s amazement? Who sent Peter and John to this capital? What did Simon’s request prove? Did Simon ever really repent?

### FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- MAY 6-8: ACTS 8:25-40 *PHILIP FINDS A LEADER WITH TRUE FAITH*
- MAY 13-15: ACTS 9:1-15 *TRIUMPH OVER TYRANNY: THE CRUEL COMMISSIONED BY CHRIST!*

Is there anything more dangerous eternally for any individual than to think they are going to heaven but in reality, they are headed to hell? This is the ultimate deception that Satan desires for everyone, especially leaders, to believe that they are on the narrow way leading to salvation while taking the broad road leading to destruction (Mt. 7:13-14). Those who are religious but lost will be the most shocked when Jesus pronounces the final verdict to them, *“I never knew you; depart from Me, you that practice lawlessness!”* (Mt. 7:23). They are the tares that look like the wheat in Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43; among whom was this sorcerer named Simon who led *“all”* in Samaria.

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“IT WAS EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN THE JEWS TO CONSULT SUCH PERSONS ON THE PAIN OF DEATH,  
LEVITICUS 19:31, 20:6.”  
ALBERT BARNES

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### BIBLE STUDIES

- WEDNESDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3 AND 12:00 NOON – OAKTON – BOB EVANS AT THE 66 AND 123
- THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY’S AT RT. 10 (IRON BRIDGE ROAD) & 301(12531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY)
- FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – NORFOLK – GOLDEN CORRAL, 6103 N. MILITARY HWY, NEAR THE NORFOLK AIRPORT

# Virginia

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### I. A DECOY WITH SELF

ACTS 8:9-11

Simon's sorcery was a kind of demonic magic so long practiced that he had deceived the entire capitol city into not only an astonishment that caused them to follow him, but they even called him "*the great power of God*"! This man began with an exalted view of himself which characterizes Satan's greatest trap: the view that man (and especially himself) is essentially good. All caught in this web have a false sense of security in thinking greatness or good works will get them to heaven. Instead, God says, "*we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6). Simon had fooled himself into thinking he was almost God! Such is the pride of man, the sin that God abhors. He states seven things that He hates the most, and the first is "*a proud look*" (Prov. 6:16-17). In fact, it is impossible to be saved while in the trap of pride because "*God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble*" (James 4:6). Christ clearly taught that the proud cannot be saved (Luke 18:9-14).

baptism is the first act of obedience in identifying with Christ and His people after salvation, baptism cannot save anyone, just as Simon's didn't save him. He outwardly complied in following the rituals but inwardly he was looking for a way to regain his influence and control over the capital, as his words reveal.

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"HIS DECLINING POPULARITY, A DESIRE TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH GOD AND THE MESSIAH, AND A DESIRE TO LEARN WHAT HE PERCEIVED TO BE PHILIP'S POWER, MOTIVATED SIMON HIMSELF TO BELIEVE." JOHN MACARTHUR

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### III. A DECOY WITH THE SPIRIT

ACTS 8:14-19

Because of the severe animosity so prevalent between the Jews and the Samaritans, the Apostles chose to send Peter and John to assist in the transformation of the city for Christ and to unite His Church. When the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit through the prayers and personal touch of the Apostles, Simon wanted this power and offered to pay for it. Can you buy God with Gold?! Such a belittling of God brought sharp words revealing his utter spiritual bankruptcy in lacking any part with them and his eternal condition, "*Your money perish with you!*"

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"EVERYONE PROUD IN HEART IS AN ABOMINATION TO THE LORD; THOUGH THEY JOIN FORCES, NONE WILL GO UNPUNISHED." PROVERBS 16:5

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"FOR WHOSEVER WILL SAVE HIS LIFE SHALL LOOSE IT; AND WHOSEVER WILL LOOSE HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE SHALL FIND IT" MT. 16:25

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### II. A DECOY WITH SALVATION

ACTS 8:12-13

Simon's strategy of sorcery in the capital city could not match Philip's power from God. In response to his Spirit filled preaching "*they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*" The message related the truth that the kingdom of God is obtained through submission to the sovereignty of God and His Word and especially His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 10:3-17). Now that his following had believed Philip and his message, Simon suddenly wants to join the group. The lack of an object with Simon's belief provides a hint that all was superficial. His heart had a longing for power rather than a longing for purity in sincere repentance. Though

### IV. A DECOY WITH SIN

ACTS 8:20-24

Though Simon was specifically commanded to repent, he was so "*poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity*" that he refused to deal with his sin before God and instead his decoy to mask his sin and still sound spiritual was to place the burden of his destiny upon the Apostles' prayer.

#### Questions to Ponder:

- 1) How do you know for sure that Christ will not say to you in eternity, "Depart from me, you that practice lawlessness"?
- 2) Is your heart still full of pride which God hates or have you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
- 3) Are you like Philip and the Apostles and proclaim the Gospel to others in the capitol no matter what the persecution?