

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Fruitage of the Ministry

CORINNE HELINE

Acts 3:14

But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you.

Before the powers of love and faith are awakened within, everyone denies the higher nature and chooses instead the lower.

Acts 4:32-35

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

The early Church was so close to Christ that its followers enjoyed true fellowship. They were of one heart and soul. Herein is found the secret power of early Christian centers. The spirit of fellowship is infinitely greater than any material possession and forms the strongest magnetic current to attract all material necessities. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Plato in his *Republic*, Sir Thomas More in his *Utopia*, and Edward Bellamy in *Looking Backward*, all picture an ideal state of society based upon the principles operative in early Christian communities.

Acts 4:36, 37

And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, the son of consolation), a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

These words introduce one of the most beautiful of New Testament characters. Barnabas, as stated, means "son of consolation." This was not the birth name of the man but the new name acquired with his spiritual illumination. His special mission was to lift and soothe broken hearts. He possessed that wide tolerance, compassion, understanding and sympathy, which ideally fitted him for his particular work. He had great wealth and gave freely to the poor. Eventually he met martyrdom in Cyprus. A collection of twenty-one letters is attributed to him.

Ananias and Sapphira

Acts 5:1-3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession,

And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

And Peter answered unto her, Tell me

whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

Then she fell down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Esoteric Christians seek for a deeper meaning hidden beneath the account of various happenings in the lives of the different biblical characters because they realize that each of these occurrences bears a special relationship to their own individual progress, marking a step in their own past, present, or future development.

Ananias and Sapphira represent personal acquisitiveness, division and inharmony instead of fellowship and unity. The test to which they were subjected is a subtle one that faces every neophyte, one which must be met successfully before it is possible for the spiritual glories revealed to the Disciples to become manifest in his life and works.

Peter represents the attainment of a faith so perfect that his actions may be observed and studied with detailed accuracy without discovering in them any lack of this great attribute. Ananias and Sapphira signify the lower nature which, however strong, eventually dies or is overcome by the power of faith. It was the demonstration of this power, the most essential of all requisites, which caused Peter to become the *rock* upon which the Church is founded.

The quality of avarice appeared in some of the assembled neophytes. These were tested to determine whether life and well-being were valued above esoteric knowledge. It was this quality of self-seeking that Peter rebuked and that was killed (overcome).

Acts 5:14-16

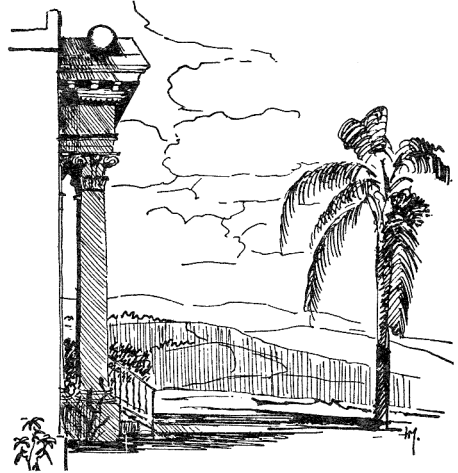
And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.

Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of

Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one.

Peter had learned to draw at will from the forces of the realm of Christ consciousness wherein all is life. In that sphere is no death, and Peter, the high Initiate, was so infused with its power emanations that the vibratory power of his shadow (vital body) healed all those who contacted him.



Acts 5:17-20

Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation.

And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

Locks and bars and prison doors offer no obstruction to one who is able to function in an etheric body. To one who has overcome and who is able to function beyond the realm of physical law, imprisonment pertains to the physical body alone. The universe is the home of such an one, for his spirit is free. ★