

## THE GOSPEL IN SAMARIA

Acts 8:1-25

### INTRODUCTION

The persecution of Hellenistic believers had at least one good effect: it got people like Philip out of Jerusalem and into the rest of Palestine. Acts 8:1–40 gives a few examples of what one man did in Samaria and Judea; Luke probably heard these stories when he visited Philip twenty-five years later (see 21:8). We shouldn't imagine that Philip was the only evangelist at work (see 8:4); he was simply the one with whom Luke was later able to speak.

### THIS WEEK:

Discover this week from Acts 8:1-25 the differences and similarities between how the gift of the Holy Spirit was received by Jews in Jerusalem and how he was received by the non-Jews in the regions of Judea and Samaria.

### OBSERVATION *What does it SAY?*

Discover key details of the passage by reading Acts 8:1-25 and then answering the following questions:

1. What happened to the Church after Stephen's martyrdom? (vv.1b -2, 4)?
2. What is the word Luke uses to describe what Saul did to the Church (v. 3)?
3. What was the result of Philip's ministry in Samaria (vv. 4-8)?
4. Who was Simon and what does Luke say happened to him when he heard Philip preach (vv. 9-13)?

5. What was the specific means by which the Samaritan's received the Holy Spirit (vv. 14-17)?
6. What did Simon request of the apostles (vv.18-19)?
7. What did Peter say was Simon's specific error in this request (v. 20)?

## INTERPRETATION *What does it MEAN?*

Use the Bible to interpret the Bible. Look up the cross references and use them to interpret the passage under study:

8. This transition to the non-Jews in Judea and Samaria came about as a result of persecution. Luke introduces Saul (who later became the Apostle Paul) as one who would later be instrumental in the further spread of the Christian message to the "utter most parts of the earth". Describe Paul's own description of his attitude and actions before his conversion:
  - a. To Jesus in Acts 7:58; 22:19-20:
  - b. To the mob in the temple in Acts 22:4, 5:
  - c. To Agrippa in Acts 26:9-11:
  - d. To the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 15:9:
  - e. To Timothy in 1 Tim. 1:13:



9. Luke writes that the crowds were "paying attention" to Philip in v. 6 but they also "paid attention" to Simon in v. 10. Why do you suppose Luke points this out ? What do you suppose is at stake here regarding the gospel?
10. Notice that there are different conditions for different groups of people regarding how one received the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts. List the different conditions below:
  - a. What are the three conditions stated in Acts 2:38? Was this group Jew or Gentile?
  - b. What are the three conditions stated in Acts 8:13, 17? Was this group Jew or Gentile?
  - c. What is the one condition stated in Acts 10:44 (c.f. Eph. 1:13)? Was this group Jew or Gentile?
11. What explains this difference in the conditions required for one receiving the gift of the Spirit (Acts 10:11-15; 11:8-9, 18; 22:21; Rom 3:21-22, 28-30; Eph. 3:6)?

## **APPLICATION** *Why does it MATTER?*

Now that you have discerned what the passage means, how does it apply to your life?

12. What is required for one receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit today (Eph. 1:13; Acts 16:31)?
13. The story of Simon the Sorcerer illustrates that there is a spiritual battle going on for the attention of people. Does what a person gives his or her's attention to affect their spiritual life? How?
14. What things grab people's attention today? Is it worse today than in years gone by? Why or why not?
15. Do you think that we are inevitably victims of the things that vie for our attention today? Why or why not?

**TAKE AWAY** *How does this change me?*

16. What does this passage reveal about God?

17. What does this passage reveal about humanity?

18. What is the Holy Spirit revealing in this passage about your life?

**Have your kids do the word find puzzle on the next page or read to them Acts . Use the following questions to have a discussion about how God knows our secret desires and actions**

1. How did the people in Samaria respond to Philip's message? (Acts 8:6-8)  
Possible Answer: The people listened to Philip and saw the miracles he did, and many of them believed and were baptized.
2. Who was Simon, and what did he do after seeing the miracles Philip performed? (Acts 8:9-11)  
Possible Answer: Simon was a sorcerer who practiced magic, and he believed in Jesus and was baptized.
3. How does Philip's obedience to share the gospel with the people of Samaria fulfill Jesus' command to spread the good news? (Matthew 28:19-20)  
Possible Answer: Jesus told his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, and Philip's preaching in Samaria shows how the gospel is being spread to different places, just like Jesus commanded.
4. What can we learn from Simon's desire to buy the power to perform miracles? (Acts 8:18-23)  
Possible Answer: Simon's actions show us that true faith in Jesus is not about trying to use God's power for our own gain or selfish reasons, but it's about trusting in God and following Him with our whole hearts.
5. How does Philip's experience in Samaria remind us of the importance of sharing Jesus' love and miracles with others? (John 13:34-35)  
Possible Answer: Jesus commands us to love one another as He loved us, and by sharing the good news and performing miracles, Philip showed God's love to the people in Samaria, just as Jesus commanded us to do.
6. How can we share the good news about Jesus with our friends and family, like Philip did in Samaria?  
Possible Answer: We can tell them stories from the Bible, like how Jesus loves everyone and wants to be their friend. We can also show them kindness and help them when they need it.
7. When we see God doing miracles in our lives or in the lives of others, how can we respond with faith and gratitude, like the people of Samaria did?  
Possible Answer: We can thank God for His blessings and miracles, and we can trust Him to take care of us and help us in difficult times.

# WORD FIND

Acts 8:1-25

R L N J W H E N N V I E D  
S O R C E R Y U J L C F D  
A R E J N O S S I M O N Y  
I D C E T H E A R T G B V  
D P E R F O R M E D R M J  
F A I U N H B A J B E A O  
R P V S A M A R I T A N U  
P O E A M S P I R I T Y D  
R S N L E Z T A M A Z E D  
A T T E N T I O N J S P V  
Y L E M U G Z G B P B C J  
B E C A U S E P H I L I P  
M S P H A N D S G R L T F  
U P J P E T E R H O L Y T

Saul agreed with putting him to death. On that day a severe persecution broke out against the church in **Jerusalem**, and all except the **apostles** were scattered throughout the land of Judea and **Samaria**. Devout men buried Stephen and mourned deeply over him. Saul, however, was ravaging the church. He would enter house after house, drag off men and women, and put them in prison. So those who were scattered **went** on their way preaching the word. **Philip went** down to a **city** in **Samaria** and proclaimed the Messiah to them. The crowds were all paying **attention** to what **Philip said**, as they listened and saw the signs he was **performing**. For unclean **spirits**, crying out with a loud voice, came out of **many** who were possessed, and **many** who were paralyzed and lame were healed. So there was **great** joy in that **city**. A man **named Simon** had previously practiced **sorcery** in that **city** and **amazed** the **Samaritan** people, while claiming to be somebody **great**. They all paid **attention** to him, from the least of them to the greatest, and they **said**, "This man is called the **Great** Power of God." They were **attentive** to him **because** he had **amazed** them with

and women were **baptized**. Even **Simon** himself believed. And after he was **baptized**, he followed **Philip** everywhere and was **amazed** as he observed the signs and **great** miracles that were being **performed**. **When** the **apostles** who were at **Jerusalem** heard that **Samaria** had **received** the word of God, they sent **Peter** and John to them. After they **went** down there, they **prayed** for them so that the **Samaritans** might **receive** the **Holy Spirit** **because** he had not yet come down on any of them. (They had only been **baptized** in the **name** of the **Lord** Jesus.) Then **Peter** and John laid their **hands** on them, and they **received** the **Holy Spirit**. **When Simon** saw that the **Spirit** was given through the laying on of the **apostles' hands**, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also so that anyone I lay **hands** on may **receive** the **Holy Spirit**." But **Peter** told him, "May your silver be destroyed with you, **because** you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this matter, **because** your **heart** is not right before God. Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and **pray** to the **Lord** that, if possible, your **heart's** happen to me." So, after they had testified and spoken the word of the **Lord**, they traveled back to **Jerusalem**, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.