

Acts 8:5-40 **Philip's Initial Ministry**

Philip fled persecution in Jerusalem and went to Samaria – Preaching Christ and Healing

⁵ Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. ⁶ And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. ⁷ For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸ And there was great joy in that city.

Simon the Sorcerer

⁹ 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.

Samaritans believed Philip – Witnessing the Miracles and Signs done by the Holy Spirit

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 signs which were done.

Peter and John sent to Samaria by the Apostles in Jerusalem – Holy Spirit Given

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 hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Simon sought to buy the power to give the Holy Spirit – Peter called him to Repent

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 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."

Peter and John returned to Jerusalem preaching the Gospel in Samaritan villages

²⁵ So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

Angel sent Philip to meet the Ethiopian Eunuch

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. ²⁷ So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." 30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" 31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.

33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation?
For His life is taken from the earth."

34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"

Philip began with the Scripture being read by the Ethiopian and taught him Jesus – Baptized him

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" 37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

Philip was caught away by the Holy Spirit – Preaching from Azotus to Caesarea

39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- ✚ Philip, like Stephen, was not an Apostle, but he was one of the seven appointed by the Apostles to serve as Deacons in overseeing the distribution of goods. [Acts 6:1-5]
- ✚ Like Stephen, Philip was a man of **good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom**, through whom **God performed many miracles** to confirm the message of the **Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ**, which Philip was preaching. [Acts 6:1-5, 8:5-7, 12]
- ✚ When Persecution arose and the Church was scattered, Philip went to Samaria and preached Jesus Christ. [Acts 8:1, 5, 12]
- ✚ And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. **For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.** And there was great joy in that city. [Acts 8:6-8]
- ✚ The evidence of the miracles was sufficient to cause the multitude to believe.

Simon the Sorcerer (Magician)

- ✚ But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery (magic, witchcraft) in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. [Acts 8:9-11]

- ✧ Witchcraft is deception at the core, but does indeed astonish the people, sorcery implies it is a deceptive spirit or lying spirit. [1 Kings 22:22-23, 2 Chronicles 18:21-22]
- ✧ Sorcerers and astrologists were in common use throughout the Middle East in the Bible times and were considered as Wise Men by the rulers of the heathen nations, who frequently consulted them before making important discussions. [Genesis 41:8, 24, Exodus 7:11, 22, 8:7, 18, 22, 9:11, 2 Kings 17:17, 2 Chronicles 33:6, Isaiah 3:3, Jeremiah 27:9, Daniel 1:20, 2:2, 10, 27, 3:2-3, 4:7, 5:11, Micah 5:12, Malachi 3:5, Acts 8:9-11, 13:6-12, 19:19]
- ✧ Sorcery (mysticism) was forbidden by God in the Law. [Exodus 22:18, Deuteronomy 18:10]
- ✧ Sorcery (Mysticism) are counted as works of the flesh. [Galatians 5:19-21]
- ✧ Sorcery is a problem with sinners throughout the Great Tribulation. [Revelation 9:21, 18:23, 21:8, 22:15]

Samaritans believed Philip – Witnessing the Miracles and Signs done by the Holy Spirit

- ✧ 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. Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done. [Acts 8:12-13]
- ✧ The Samaritans were open to the message of the Gospel preached by Philip just as they had been with Jesus. [Acts 8:12-13, John 4:1-43]
- ✧ The message combined with the miracles being done through Philip were enough to convince the people of Samaria that the message was true.
- ✧ It was sufficient to convince Simon the sorcerer who was familiar with magic and deception, that it truly was the hand of God working through Philip, miracles were done that Simon could not do by sorcery, like the signs in Egypt by Moses. [Acts 8:6-13, Exodus 8:19]
- ✧ Simon also believed and was baptized along with the people.

Peter and John sent to Samaria by the Apostles in Jerusalem – Holy Spirit Given

- ✧ Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. [Acts 8:14-17]
- ✧ Philip preached the things concerning Jesus the Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven, the people **believed** and were **baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**, but the Holy Spirit was not given to them at that time. [Acts 8:5-16]
- ✧ Peter and John, sent by the Apostles in Jerusalem, came and prayed for them, when they laid their hands on them they received the Holy Spirit.
- ✧ This does not set a precedent, because in the upper room in Jerusalem, no one laid hands on anyone, but the Holy Spirit came according to the Will of God, as He did in the case of Cornelius where they received the Holy Spirit while Peter was still preaching. [Acts 2:1-12, 10:1-47, 1 Corinthians 12:11]

Simon sought to buy the power to give the Holy Spirit – Peter called him to Repent

- ✧ And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." [Acts 8:18-19]
- ✧ But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." [Acts 8:20-23]

- ✚ Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me. [Acts 8:24]
- ✧ Simon had made a business of practicing magic, and could see the commercial value of having power to impart the Holy Spirit by the laying on of his hands. Many people are in Christian ministry for the same purpose today.
- ✧ Peter rebuked Simon for the commercial desire for the power, and called Simon to repent, while informing Simon that the desire for commercial advantage out of the gift of God was a sin and wickedness. Yet it was not the unforgivable sin, and by prayer Simon may ask God to forgive the evil thoughts of his heart.
- ✧ Simon wanted help with the prayer, feeling that Peter had a better relationship with God than himself.
- ✧ So often we seek a preacher to intercede with God on our behalf, when God knows the heart and hears the humble prayer of a sincerely penitent believer. We need only pray to the Father by the authority given us through Jesus Christ our Savior (in His Name). [John 14:13-14, 15:16, 16:23-24]

Peter and John returned to Jerusalem preaching the Gospel in Samaritan villages

- ✚ So when they (Peter and John) had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. [Acts 8:25]

Angel sent Philip to meet the Ethiopian Eunuch

- ✚ While Philip was in the middle of a dynamic effective evangelistic outreach with the Samaritans, the Lord sent an angel to call Philip to go to the road south of Jerusalem leading to Gaza for the salvation of one man, and that man a Eunuch from Ethiopia who was in charge of the treasury of Candace the queen of Ethiopia. [Acts 8:26-28]
- ✧ The eunuch had been in Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel, Creator of all the earth.
- ✧ He was familiar with the history of Israel and their religion, and was reading the book of Isaiah the Israeli prophet as he was riding in his chariot.
- ✚ Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." [Acts 8:29]
- ✚ So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" [Acts 8:30]
- ✚ And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. The place in the Scripture which he read was this:

"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.
In His humiliation His justice was taken away,
And who will declare His generation?
For His life is taken from the earth." [Acts 8:31-33]

- ✚ So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" [Acts 8:34]

Philip began with the Scripture being read by the Ethiopian – Taught him Jesus – Baptized him

- ✚ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. [Acts 8:35]
- ✚ Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" [Acts 8:36]

- ✚ Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "**I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**" So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. [Acts 8:37-38]
- ✧ The best place to start teaching someone who is interested to learn, is to begin with what they know, and lead them to truth that they need to know and understand.
- ✧ The method was effective, and the right response was observed.
- ✧ What was needed, was to realize that **Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**
- ✧ Baptism was the first act of obedience to the things Jesus commanded. [Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16]
- ✧ Obedience brings a satisfied conscience and rejoicing in the spirit. [Acts 8:39]

Philip was caught away by the Holy Spirit – Preaching from Azotus to Caesarea

- ✚ Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he (the eunuch) went on his way rejoicing. [Acts 8:39]
- ✚ But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea. [Acts 8:40]
- ✧ When Philip landed, he found himself at Azotus, from where he began his journey northward preaching in all the cities until he finally arrived in Caesarea where he made his home and was known as the evangelist and had seven daughters who prophesied. [Acts 8:40, 21:8-14]
- ✧ It was in Caesarea where Paul met Philip and stayed in his home, and Agabus prophesied about Paul's impending imprisonment. [Acts 21:8-14]