
The Acts of the Apostles I
The Scattering of the Disciples
Acts 8:1-40

- I. PROVIDENTIAL PERSECUTION (Acts 8:1-4)
- A. The Persecution of the Church (Acts 8:1; cp. Acts 1:8)
- i. The interesting connection between Acts 1:8 and Acts 8:1
1. In Acts 1:8, Christ told the disciples to be witnesses “unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Yet, throughout the early part of the book of Acts, the believers are more than willing to stay put in Jerusalem.
 2. It was not until the persecution of Acts 8:1 when “they were scattered abroad” that they “went every where preaching the word.”
 3. They were told to go, but they did not go until God made them.
 - a) Even these early believers held back in obeying the will of God.
 - b) They did not go to Judea and Samaria until persecution compelled them to go.
 - c) It is much better to do the will of God, than to wait until He makes us do it.
- ii. The consenting of Stephen’s stoning by Saul (Paul).
1. Saul first shows up at the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58), “consenting unto his death.”
 2. In Acts 22:20, he looks on that event as proof of his guilt in the killing of Christians (see 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13).
- B. The Burial of Stephen (Acts 8:2)
- C. The Work of Saul (Acts 8:3; Acts 7:58; Acts 9:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:9)

1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because **I persecuted the church of God.**

- D. The Preaching of the Word (Acts 8:4; Acts 11:19-21)

II. SAMARITAN REVIVAL (Acts 8:5-25) – Note: A shift begins here in Acts 8. Preaching begins among the Samaritans then moves to the Gentiles.

A. The Revival in Samaria (Acts 8:5-8)

- i. The preaching of Philip (Acts 8:5; cp. Matthew 10:5)

Matthew 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, **Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

- ii. The response of the people (Acts 8:6; John 4:40-42)

John 4:40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. **41** And many more believed because of his own word; **42** And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

- iii. The demonstration of power (Acts 8:7)
- iv. The joy of the people (Acts 8:8; Acts 13:52)

B. The Conversion of Simon (Acts 8:9-13)

- i. The sorcery of Simon (Acts 8:9; Deuteronomy 18:10-12)
- ii. The influence of Simon (Acts 8:10-11; Acts 13:6-12)
- iii. The belief of Simon (Acts 8:12-13; John 2:23-25; James 2:19)

C. The Receiving of the Spirit (Acts 8:14-17)

- i. The coming of Peter and John (Acts 8:14)
- ii. The prayer of Peter and John (Acts 8:15-16)
- iii. The laying on of hands (Acts 8:17; cp. Acts 2:38; Acts 10:44-48)

D. The Sin of Simon (Acts 8:18-24)

- i. Simon's offer of money (Acts 8:18-19; 2 Kings 5:5-6, 15-16; 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17-19)
- ii. The rebuke of Peter (Acts 8:20-23)
 1. Simon was condemned by Peter because he thought "that the gift of God may be purchased with money (v. 20).

2. Only fools think that money will buy the most important things (Proverbs 17:16; Isaiah 55:1-3)

Isaiah 55:1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath **no money**; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk **without money and without price**. **2** Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. **3** Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

- iii. The request of Simon (Acts 8:24)

- E. The Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8:25; cp. Acts 16:5)

III. DESERT WITNESSING (Acts 8:26-40)

- A. The Special Commission (Acts 8:26-29)

- i. The call to the desert (Acts 8:26)

1. Away from success (Acts 8:25)
2. Away from comfort (Matthew 8:20; Matthew 10:37-38)

- ii. The treasurer of the Ethiopians (Acts 8:27-28) – Notice Philip’s obedience (Acts 8:27; cp. Acts 22:10-11)

1. His authority (Acts 8:27; John 12:20)
2. His activity (Acts 8:28; Isaiah 55:11)

- iii. The call to the chariot (Acts 8:29; Romans 12:1-2)

Note: Paul upon recounting his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus:

Acts 22:10-11 And I said, **What shall I do, Lord?** And the Lord said unto me, **Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.** **11** And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

- B. The Eunuch’s Confusion (Acts 8:30-34)

- i. The arrival of Philip (Acts 8:30-31)

1. Philip’s inquiry (Acts 8:30; cp. John 4:6-10)
2. The eunuch’s problem (Acts 8:31a; Luke 24:44-46; Romans 10:14-16)

- a. A lost man needs a guide to understand the scriptures.

- b. Spiritual things are foolishness to the natural man (1 Corinthians 2:14).
- 3. Philip's companionship (Acts 8:31b; 1 Peter 3:15)
 - ii. The message of Isaiah (Acts 8:32-33; Isaiah 53:7-8)
 - iii. The question of the eunuch (Acts 8:34)
- C. The Eunuch's Confession (Acts 8:35-40)
 - i. The message of Jesus (Acts 8:35; Luke 24:25-27; 1 Corinthians 2:2)
 - ii. The belief of the eunuch (Acts 8:36-37; Matthew 16:13-17)
 - iii. The baptism of the eunuch (Acts 8:38; cp. Matthew 3:16; John 3:23)
 - 1. Baptism has always been by immersion
 - 2. They went down into the water and came up out of the water
 - 3. The purpose of baptism
 - a. Obedience
 - ii) First step of obedience
 - 1) Believers baptism (Acts 8:34, 39)
 - 2) Not baptismal regeneration (1 Corinthians 4:15; cp. 1 Corinthians 1:13-16)
 - iii) To fulfill all righteousness
 - 1) As Christ (Matthew 3:13-15)
 - 2) So Paul (Acts 9:17, 18; 1 Timothy 1:15, 16; 1 Corinthians 11:1, 2)

Matthew 3:13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, **to be baptized of him.** **14** But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? **15** And Jesus answering said unto him, **Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.** Then he suffered him.

1 Timothy 1:15 This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. **16** Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me **first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.**

- b. Identification
 - ii) With Christ (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27) – Note: these passages are detailing a spiritual baptism. You are placed into Christ at salvation by the Holy Spirit.

iii) With the church – Note: The following passages are dealing with a water baptism.

- 1) By the local body
- 2) Into the local body (Acts 16:14, 15, 30-34, 40)

c. Representation (Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 3:27)

ii) By immersion (Matthew 3:16; John 3:23; Acts 8:38, 39)

- 1) In His death (Galatians 2:20)
- 2) In His burial (Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24)
- 3) In his Resurrection (2 Corinthians 5:17) – “to walk in newness of life.”

Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway **out of the water**: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

John 3:23 And John also was baptizing in AEnon near to Salim, **because there was much water there**: and they came, and were baptized.

iv. The rejoicing of the eunuch (Acts 8:39)

D. The Disappearance of Philip (Acts 8:39-40)