

Acts 8

King James Version (KJV)

8 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. (Stephen has just been stoned to death. Saul was OK with that. He thought that he had executed judgment on a heretic. He held the coats for the murderers while they stoned Steven to death)

(The Christians had scattered to Samaria - the land of the heathen - away from Jerusalem and the temple and the Sanhedrin. The Apostles remained in Jerusalem because the Holy Spirit was within them. God can give great courage and wisdom to those that He blesses with His presence)

NOTE: (There is nothing more dangerous than religious zealots. They believe that they have the right to control others - in this case, even to their death. These zealots were preaching - Join us or die - just like the Muslims of today)

(Jesus taught - "Who so-ever will follow Me, the same shall be saved")
Luke-9:23-24

² And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. (He was a great teacher of God's Word. He died way too early in his life)

³ As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. (haling - old English word - means to drag away forcefully. Saul was a zealot for the Sanhedrin and did their bidding against the Christians)

NOTES: (People like Saul are pure evil. Yet they believe that they are doing God's work. God is going to forcefully correct Saul because he was complicit in forcefully persecuting the Christians)

(The good news is that after Saul repented, he became a very good man and a great teacher of God's Word. He used his zealotry to advance the Word of God throughout the region)

(God protects His own. HE is not intimidated in the least by men, armies or nations)

⁴Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. (They got away from Saul and Jerusalem; and taught elsewhere)

⁵Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. (After the king of Assyria conquered the 10 northern tribes, he took them away captive. The people who moved into their land <Samaria> were riff raff, transients and all kinds of people)

⁶And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. (It was the Holy Spirit of God, not Philip, who did the miracles. Seeing miracles performed by God was a great convincer to these people)

⁷For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. Luke-10:17

⁸And there was great joy in that city. (God's Word produces joy in people, when they finally hear the truth. They begin to understand why we are here in the flesh, and where we are going afterwards. It gives our life great happiness and a purpose)

⁹But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: (sorcery = magic, evil spirits, drugs – whatever it takes)

(A true man of God gives God the credit for miracles and wisdom. A false teacher uses tricks to deceive people. He presents himself as someone special)

NOTE: (This Simon is a type for antichrist. He put on a good show. People like that have been around forever. They will be around in the end days and gladly join antichrist to convince others)

¹⁰To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. (He is a fraud, but he was convincing. He was a skilled con man)

¹¹And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. (Simon had become a "religious leader". He had many followers. He was a smooth talker)

¹² But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Simon started losing his membership. People instinctive know when they finally hear the truth)

¹³ Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. (He had his own agenda, when he converted. He was probably trying to get in on the teaching and healing for some personal and monetary gain. He probably thought that Philip was using some kind of trick; and he wanted to learn it)

¹⁴ Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: (They came to help Philip spread the Word)

¹⁵ Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (They prayed for them and taught them God's Word)

¹⁶ (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) (After being baptized, they had a lot to learn about the Word of God)

¹⁷ Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. (This is also as Joel-2 prophesied)

¹⁸ And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, (Simon wanted to use this new "trick" to make money and a name for himself. Over the centuries, Simony became a term for buying and selling high church positions and tickets to heaven)

NOTES: (This still goes on today; practiced by false preachers on television; and in "revival" tents and other religious side shows)

(That is an insult to God; just as the temple money changers were an insult to Jesus. HE dealt with them swiftly and decisively. God will do the same with the fake preachers of today) see Amos-8:10-14

¹⁹ Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. (Glorifying himself, not God)

(God is not for sale. HE freely gives His gifts to those who deserve it)

²⁰ But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. (May you choke on your money. It's all ill gotten gains)

(God's salvation is free to all who want to receive it. It is not for sale by any preacher. The apostles were not making any profit for teaching God's Word. They were using these miracles to glorify God; not themselves)

NOTE: (We can find a lot of preachers like Simon, today, on television and on the internet. Stay away from those con artists. They are after your money and nothing more)

²¹ Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. (Simon was no believer. He was just a conman. He thought that he could fool God)

²² Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. (Repent. It's not too late. Saul was far worse than Simon. But after he repented, he was saved)

(God can forgive any of us – if we truly repent, change our ways, study God's Word and begin to live by it)

²³ For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. (Simon was looking for fame and fortune)

NOTE: (Look at the celebrities today. They are willing to do almost anything for fame and fortune. It's a trap; and Satan knows how to use it)

²⁴ Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the LORD for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. (He could have repented and prayed to God for himself; instead of asking Peter to do it for him. He's still trying to outsmart God)

²⁵ And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. (The Apostles continued to do God's work of salvation)

²⁶ And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

Joshua-15:47 (This land may be Gaza or the West Bank, today. It was given to Judah, but they never claimed it. Philip claims it here for Jesus Christ)

NOTE: (Today, Gaza and the West Bank have fallen to Islam and continues to be a den of murderers and enemies to Christianity)

²⁷ And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, (He believed in God and wanted to learn His Word. The Gospel was spreading to the Gentiles)

²⁸ Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. (He was studying the Books of the Bible) (Esaias = Isaiah <Greek vs Hebrew>)

²⁹ Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. (God continues to guide the Apostles)

³⁰ And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? (Philip was offering to help with the teaching)

³¹ And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. (We need skilled teachers to help us learn. The Word of God can be very deep in meaning. That is why God greatly blesses His true teachers)

³² The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: **Isaiah-53 (Prophecy of Jesus' crucifixion)**

³³ In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. (Jesus fulfilled this prophecy)

³⁴ And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. (Isaiah was teaching Jesus Christ as Messiah) Isaiah-53:9-12

³⁶ And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? (He believed Philip's teaching; and was asking to be baptized)

³⁷ And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Immanuel = God with us; God in the flesh)

(Jesus is God's begotten, not His "son". God begat Himself in the flesh, through Mary's womb. That's why Jesus didn't have a father)

(Joseph was Jesus' step father. Jesus called Himself the Son of man, because He was God in the flesh – with a flesh mother. Men called Him the Son of God)

See Genesis ("Let us create man in OUR image". The Father created Jesus in His image, as we created our flesh bodies in our image. We were there with God in the First Age. Unlike God, however, we have a flesh father)

³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. (Never refuse someone who asks to become a Christian, if he or she states that they believe that Jesus is God with us. Jesus opened salvation to all people who believe on Him and want to be saved)

³⁹ And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. (Possibly because he was caught up in God's Holy Spirit and wasn't looking for Philip any more)

⁴⁰ But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea. (Azotus = Ashdod, today) (Philip preached in the land that is now Gaza)