

## Jesus Evangelizes Judea, Samaria and Galilee

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| <p>Luke introduced three evangelists:</p> <p><b>Stephen</b> who became Luke's first recorded martyr, Acts 6:8 - 7:60.</p> <p><b>Philip</b>, the evangelist, 8:4 – 40.</p> <p>He was not Philip, the apostle (1:13).</p> <p>He was the evangelist in whose house the Apostle Paul once stayed.</p> <p>He lived in Caesarea by the sea.</p> <p>He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied, 21:8, 9.</p> <p><b>Saul</b>, 8:1-3; 9:1-31.</p> <p>Jesus said, "This man is a chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel." 9:15.</p> <p>Luke introduced Saul/Paul into his narrative at the stoning of Stephen.</p> <p>The witnesses laid their clothes at Saul's feet (7:58). See Deut. 17:7.</p> | <p><b>Stephen: "A man full of God's grace and power." Acts 6:8.</b></p> <p>Members of the Synagogue of Freedmen argued with Stephen "but could not stand up against his wisdom or the Holy Spirit by whom he spoke." 6:10.</p> <p>They brought false charges and false witnesses against him.</p> <p>He was brought before the Sanhedrin.</p> <p><b>The false charges:</b> 6:12-15.</p> <p>Blasphemy against Moses and God.</p> <p>Speaking against the temple and the law. They claimed, Jesus said He would destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down.</p> <p>The Sanhedrin was conditioned to view Stephen's face as an angel.</p> <p>In this setting he reviewed these Jewish authorities' history for them.</p> <p>His lesson may have been God's last evangelism message especially designed for the Sanhedrin.</p> | <p><b>Philip, the evangelist, went down to a city in Samaria. Acts 8:4-25.</b></p> <p>As in the case of Jesus, when the Jewish authorities began to lose control over the people they used force. 8:1-3. The church scattered out of Jerusalem, except the apostles and the local members.</p> <p>Philip had the power to do miracles:</p> <p>Such as signs, heal the ill and crippled and drive out evil spirits. 6, 7.</p> <p>This gave Philip an audience. He preached the good news of the kingdom of God and Christ 8:5, 12.</p> <p>Men and women were baptized, Also, a sorcerer by the name of Simon.</p> <p>This is the way the church came to be in Samaria; however, it was necessary for the apostles to come and lay their hands on the baptized believers in order for the Holy Spirit to work with and through them, 17</p> | <p><b>Philip and the eunuch from Ethiopia. Acts 8:26-40.</b></p> <p>A simplified conversion:</p> <p>The eunuch was reading a scripture from Isaiah. Acts 8:32, 33.</p> <p>It was a prophecy about the murder of Jesus Christ.</p> <p>This prophecy had to be interpreted by someone who was inspired by God.</p> <p>Philip had the help of the Holy Spirit. 6:5; 8:29.</p> <p>From this scripture about the sacrifice of Jesus, Philip taught him the kingdom of God and how to be transferred to this kingdom, 8:12, 35. The eunuch accepted this teaching and responded by baptism in water. The Holy Spirit (by the direction of Jesus) took Philip away, 8:39.</p> |
| <p>Jesus had instructed the apostles to be His "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 1:8.</p> <p>We have witnessed the evangelism of Jerusalem.</p> <p>It is vital to our study that we keep in our minds what we witnessed in this evangelism program.</p> <p>It is God's program through Jesus Christ as, Prince and Savior.</p> <p>He directed all events through the Holy Spirit to the apostles and others He chose.</p>   | <p>Stephen refuted the charges against him by retelling the story of Israel in the way all would agree.</p> <p>Finally, he touched the charges about the temple by quoting Isaiah 66:1, 2.</p> <p>Who could build a house for God who, Himself, created all things? God does not live in the temple in Jerusalem.</p> <p>Stephen then made the same accusation the apostles had made:</p> <p>"You crucified Jesus Christ." 4:10; 5:30.</p> <p>See Stephen's full charges: 7:51-53.</p> <p>His final testimony so enraged the Jewish leaders, they killed him. 7:56.</p>   | <p>Simon had claimed false powers before his new birth. When he witnessed real power in the hands of the apostles he sinned by trying to buy a gift of God.</p> <p>Peter let him know – it can't be done.</p> <p>The teaching (doctrine) we learn is:</p> <p>A believing sinner can turn from his or her wicked life and be baptized for the remission of their sins. This gives them citizenship in God and Christ's kingdom. If they turn back to sin they can repent and pray to the Lord for forgiveness, 8:20ff.</p>   | <p>Saul, the man from Tarsus. 9:1-31.</p> <p>Jesus asked Saul why he was persecuting Him? (To persecute the church is to persecute Jesus, Eph. 1:22,23).</p> <p>Saul's response was; "Who are you Lord?" When Saul understood it was Jesus who had been crucified, he also understood Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, 9:20, 22.</p> <p>Saul became the Apostle Paul and the churches had peace.</p>   |

### Questions for Discussion

- A.** If the story of Stephen was intended to be a pivotal narrative; that is, a link between Jesus' evangelism of the Hebraic Jews in Jerusalem and what may have been the Grecian Jews throughout Israel, what were the changes? Please make a list. (Don't forget to include the activities of the members of the church.)
- B. Philip went to Samaria.**
1. Where did Philip evangelize? In what way could we consider this a follow up work of Jesus earthly ministry? See John 4:1-43.
  2. What was unusual about Philip's family?
  3. How did Philip gather an audience to hear his message?
  4. Under what entity were all his lessons directed?
  5. Luke gave us three points to consider in regard to theology from his story about Philip's ministry:
    - a. What may we have learned about the apostles' baptism of the Holy Spirit?
    - b. What was clearly set forth from the narrative about the new birth of the Ethiopian eunuch?
    - c. Give the theology we can learn in Acts 8 in regard a Christian committing wilful sins.
  6. Why was Simon the sorcerer interested in the power manifested by the presence of the Holy Spirit?
  7. How might we conclude the Holy Spirit gave Philip the power to understand messages Old Testament prophets had received?
  8. Luke delved into the individual narrative about Philip and the Ethiopian more intimately than with most of his stories. When Luke recorded the exclamation of the eunuch: "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" What do we know, from our other studies in Acts, Philip had taught him about the kingdom of God?
- C. Saul, the man from Tarsus.**
1. How was Saul persecuting Jesus?
  2. How long did it take Saul to humble himself when he understood Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah?
  3. How may the fact, the Sanhedrin "lost their cool" and turned violent, helped create a peaceful climate for the church in the following period?
  4. How did the violence Saul was promoting assist in Jesus' "to the ends of the earth" command to evangelize? See Acts 1:8.
  5. Please consider two statements made by the Apostle Paul. See Acts 23:1 and I Tim. 1:12-14. What does this reveal to us about Saul's sincerity about serving God by persecuting Christians?