

Acts 8v1-25
SM and AS
20200823

Let's begin by reading John 4v4-5 and 19-24

Acts 8v1-4

- Jerusalem → Judea and Samaria
- Saul – very involved – chase those scattered
- Philip one of the those scattered

Samaritans (see this in John 4)

- Books of Moses – one god – were waiting for the “restorer”
- Place – Jerusalem / Mt Gerizim
- Promise – Little of God's plan not 2/3 parts of Bible

Philip preaches

- Christ (v5)
- Many receive the message (7, 8 and 14)

BUT, they didn't receive the Holy Spirit.

What normally happened, before in Acts and later thought whole New Testament did not happen – they had to wait to receive the Holy Spirit.

What normally happens – God gives us his Holy Spirit as we believe – his presence within us, to point us to Jesus, to help us to live his way, to cleanse our hearts, to help our blind eyes to see – DOESN'T happen here. (v16)

Now this has led to controversies

- Confirmation with Bishop and his hands
- Second stage blessing

Now we do want to join with Ephesians 5v18 “be filled with the Spirit”

That the Holy Spirit would have more of our life, that we would work with the Holy Spirit more, that he would take charge of every thing we do.

But the point of Chapter 8 is that it's unusual, not that Acts 8 is the way it should be.

So why is it different here?

Let's think what they have to wait for.

Read v14-17

They wait for the Apostles from Jerusalem.

Remember how the Samaritans differed

- Place – here are the apostles from JERUSALEM. Luke 9v51-53
- Promise and Plan – the APOSTLES. Not that Philip or his message were inferior, but that the apostles were a key part in this stage of God's plan and key messengers of God's promise.

The wait was

1. Apostles see that God authenticated the spread to Samaria (not say much about that here)
2. KEY – because Samaritans need to learn that they couldn't do things their way

The Samaritans needed to learn that God does things in his way.

God has worked and always worked through real people in real places according to his promises and totally in his way.

“The gospel is the product of a long, objective, historical and geographical process, controlled at every juncture by the God whose gospel it is.”

God worked through real people – Adam, Eve, Moses, the prophets, the kings, the governors, the heroes, the villains, the men, the women, Mary, Jesus, the apostles – were all real people chosen and used by God. You could put them on a time line. If people had birth certificates then, they'd have had one.

God worked through real places – Eden, Israel, Egypt, Jerusalem, heaven, Sinai, Gerizim, Sinai – were all real places chosen and used by God. You could see them on an atlas. If people had cameras then, you'd have been able to see the picture.

God made and kept real promise. When he promised a person, they came and he kept his promise. When he promised to use a place – he did.

God did things his way, using real people and real places.

The Samaritans had been trying to bypass that, and that's what I think Simon the sorcerer is doing.

The Samaritans had looked to God, but on their terms. And that's Simon.

Doesn't it make you feel good that god does things that way?

He makes a real solid promise and he keeps it.

He really deals with real people.

He really acts in real places.

God's plan is real, personal and deliberate. It's not wispy, furtive or uncertain.

It's concrete, promised and certain. It involves real people in real places

And it includes us. Here and now.

God knows names. He knows addresses.

He knows you and he knows about the people you're with and the places were you are.

And it's part of his plan.