

Acts Chapter 8

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[0 : 0 0] In Acts chapter 8, we are dealing with Philip. And this Philip is one of the deacons appointed in Acts chapter 6.

He is not to be confused with Philip, who is one of the apostles that our Lord chose, as indicated in Matthew chapter 10. So we are starting at the top left-hand corner of the page, verse 5, page 482 in our text.

And by the way, this is our October 18 class today. I can believe that October is already halfway over, and next thing you know, we'll be looking at...

I don't even want to say it. It'll be there before we know it. So we read that Philip went down, we talked about the significance of down and the direction, to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them.

Important thing to note about the Samaritans is, they were not considered bona fide Jews. The Samaritans were half-breed Jews.

[1 : 0 7] Earlier in the year 741, I believe it was, 741 B.C., the Assyrians invaded northern Israel after they had divested themselves from the southern two tribes and the division of the kingdom, and sacked the city of Samaria and carried many of those Jews of the northern kingdom off into Assyrian captivity, left a certain contingent there to farm the ground so that they could get the produce from it and ship it up north.

And those Jews who remained there in northern Israel eventually began intermarrying with their captors. So they became a combination of Jew and Assyrian, the end result of which was Samaritans.

Capital of Samaria, capital of this Samaritan area, of course, was the city of Samaria. And it wasn't long until these half-breed Jews began to be held in extreme contempt by the purest Jews who, of course, remained down south in the southern kingdom.

So the distinction between the Jew and the Samaritan became quite profound. Remember, it was in John 4 that Jesus went through Samaria rather than go around it like most Jews did who didn't want to contaminate themselves with the soil of Samaria.

Jesus went through Samaria because he planned an encounter with the woman at the well. It was Jacob's well in the city of Samaria. By the way, it's today's modern city dominated and controlled by the Arabs, it's part of the West Bank and it's referred to as Nablus, N-A-B-L-U-S in Israel.

[3 : 0 0] So it is significant that Philip went to Samaria. In a way it is and in a way it's predictable because Christ told the apostles in Acts chapter 1, you will receive power after that the Spirit of God has come upon you and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

So Philip is here going to Samaria. And he is apparently quite successful as an evangelist. He went down to the city of Samaria. We talked about the geography and the topography of that.

And he preached Christ unto them. That simply means he showed them from the Old Testament. And keep in mind, guys, the Old Testament was all that existed.

There was no New Testament when Philip began preaching here. It didn't come into being until years later. So all they had was the Old Testament. However, those of you who are at all familiar with the Old Testament know that Christ is found throughout it, beginning in Genesis all the way through Malachi.

Christ is referred to messianically and prophetically. And he, Philip, went through those passages just as Christ did.

[4 : 19] After his resurrection, when he confronted the disciples on the Emmaus Road, we are told that he opened the Scriptures and showed them all things concerning himself from Moses and the prophets.

And all that they received from the risen Christ was found in the Old Testament. And, of course, they were tremendously enlightened.

So here, Philip is doing essentially the same thing. And we read that in verse 6. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spoke.

That simply means they listened seriously. They gave it very strong consideration. And as a result, they are going to become believers.

They are hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. And they are enumerated. Unclean spirits crying with loud voice came out of many that were possessed with them.

[5 : 22] And many were taken with palsies that were lame were healed. This palsy, by the way, is a kind of paralysis, a neurological muscular injury that results in inability to use one's limbs.

They were healed. And there was great joy in that city. I pointed out to you, and this is really important. Fellas, what I'm going to say now is one of the biggest reasons why people are confused over manifestation of miracles.

Is God the same today as he was back then? Of course he is. Is Christ the same today as he was back then? Of course he is. Is he able to perform miracles today like he did then?

Of course he is. Then why don't we see more of them? And the answer is because the miraculous demonstration whereby the...