

## Acts 8

**Acts 7:50 Hath not my hand made all these things?**

**Steven was the first to assist upon the universal note of the Gospel. He asserted that God is spiritual not encased in the Temple or any building ... God is universal and not national.**

**Acts 7:51 Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers [*did*], so [*do*] ye. 52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept [*it*]. 54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with [*their*] teeth.**

**Acts 7:55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.**

**“Behold I see the Heavens opened ...” This is the term used by to Jesus to refer to himself as a representative of man, the only true man. What he saw from heaven was Jesus dealing with all of humanity, not just Israel. It was Steven’s climatic statement of his whole defense. God is universal, redemption is for all, the Messiah is not exclusive. Jesus as a Messiah for all mankind was too much for the political nationalistic Jewish mob.**

**Daniel 7:13-14 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, [*one*] like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion [*is*] an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom [*that*] which shall not be destroyed.**

**Acts 7:57-58 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And cast [*him*] out of the city, and stoned [*him*]: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.**

**If you can't answer your opponent's logic and yet you will not accept his truth the only way to relive yourself is to get rid of him. This was their frame of mind when suddenly Steven poured fuel on the fire by declaring ... "Behold I see the heavens"**

**Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon [*God*], and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.**

**Steven's martyrdom holds a vital place of the unfolding story of Acts, because of his exposition of the Universal meaning of the Gospel.**

**His death itself became the event which literally propelled the Gospel beyond the Jerusalem – Judea area. Hence-forth Judaism will not be able to restrain the gospel's growth "to all the world and every creature."**

**Acts 8:1 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.**

**Not the Apostles but Steven, and we may assume others were the ones who saw and preached the universal implications of the Gospel is for all mankind.**

**Whatever positive reason the Apostles may have had for staying in Jerusalem, it is a fact that they were not the ones who implemented the universal outreach of the Gospel. Even though they were commission to preach to all the world old habits and prejudices die hard ... the universal outreach was initiated by Steven and was propelled forward by the necessity of the Church fleeing the persecution.**

**Steven's martyrdom is followed by vigorous persecution that began that same day. Before the sunset the pent up fury of the Pharisees found a leader in Saul of Tarsus. He led the ravaging of the church. After at least five years there was still only one Church of Christ, the one in Jerusalem. It was either scattered out Judea and Samaria or was imprisoned.**

**"And Saul was consenting unto his death ..." Saul consented, that is, approved and gave his voice to the death of Stephen as a probable member of the Sanhedrin court, he appears to have voted for it, cf: Acts 26:10. He did not actively take part in the stoning, but aided and abetted. The memory of this sad event clung to him painfully even to his old age cf: Acts 22:20 Luke no doubt here records the facts given him by the apostle Paul himself.**

**“... And at that time ...” In other words “and on that day.” Not satisfied with the blood of Stephen, the persecutors turned their rage at once on the whole church.**

**“ ... and they were all scattered abroad ...” The meetings of the saints were for the time being broken up, and the disciples generally fled from the storm, into the country side portions of Judea and the adjoining district of Samaria.**

**“...except the apostles.” The apostles, in some way not explained, were shielded from the destruction, remained, and many of the scattered brethren, residents of Jerusalem, soon afterwards returned, while others that were foreign Jews went to other regions, carrying the gospel with them.**

**Acts 8:2 And devout men carried Stephen [*to his burial*], and made great lamentation over him.**

**Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed [*them*] to prison.**

**Saul’s leadership is testimony that the opposition leadership has shifted for Sadducees to Pharisees. This is significant. The Pharisee party held a strict legalism and tradition. They were self-righteous separatists and exclusivists. Steven’s preaching the universal inclusiveness of the Gospel set them off. As long as the Gospel movement was no more than a Jewish sect it might be tolerated, but to imply the intent of God was to find his people beyond Judaism is worthy of being stamped out. This explains both the first persecution of the body of believers and its vigor.**

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**Believers were scatted in all directions, many who could not run or did not run were put in the Jewish prison.**

**“As for Saul, he made havoc of the church ...” This mad violence he often recalled and mentioned while serving Christ.**

**“... Entering into every house.” Where he supposed disciples could be found.  
“... Haling.” Hauling, dragging out with violence. As we learn from Paul's statements elsewhere, the saints were not only committed to prison, but scourged in the synagogues and persecuted unto death.**

**Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.**

**“... went everywhere preaching the word.” They had not gone out into all the world as commanded so God kicked them out of their nest into, at least, Samaria. The rage of the persecutors only extended the reign of Christ. The scattered saints, long prepared at the feet of the apostles, went everywhere as preachers of Christ. The blood of Stephen fertilized the seed the church planted “everywhere.”**

**Acts 8:5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.**

**As the Gospel travels the high road to “all the world and every creature”. It has almost impossible chasms to cross. The welcoming of half Jew, half Gentile, socially-reprobate Samaritans is one pillar of the bridge the Gospel uses to cross the mighty gorge of prejudice self-righteous bigotry..**

**Samaritans were racially mixed, neither Jew nor Gentile, but half-breeds since they shared the blood and culture of both. They accepted the first five books of the Hebrew bible, the books of the Law of Moses. They held many Hebrew hopes including the expectation of the Messiah. Semi gentile in origin, they date from the time of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivity. They stood half way across the gulf between the scrupulous Jews and uncircumcised Gentiles. In the providence of God they proved to be a halfway house between Jews and Gentiles.**

**“Philip went down to the city of Samaria.” Phillip was one of the seven upon whom the Apostles laid hands cf. Acts 6:1-5.**

**“... The city of Samaria ...”The Greek does not render it certain that this was the capital named Samaria, as there is no definite article. It is literally "a city of Samaria or the district of Samaria.**

**“...and preached Christ unto them.” The following will teach us what is involved in “preaching Christ”**

**Acts 8:6** And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

**“And the people with one accord gave heed ...”** This is the second non-apostle who worked miracles. It was the miracles that, at first, fixed their attention. Observe that Philip, another of the seven, has the gift of miracles, the second recorded instance in the church of the possession of this power by one not an apostle. Stephen being the first cf: Acts 6:6-8

**Acts 8:7** For 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.

This verse describes the nature of his miracles, similar to those of Christ. Acts 8:8 And there was great joy in that city.

**“...great joy in that city.”** A town SHOULD be different after a preacher preaches in it. He healed many and brought great joy by preaching Christ he stepped over the line of Judaism.

Since this was new territory, geographically and spiritually, he did many authenticating signs and wonders ... Which was the purpose of miracles.

**Acts 8:9** But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one:

**“But there was a certain man, called Simon.”** A spellbinder called the sorcerer, wizard or magician, who bewitched the people by his enchantments, which, is to drive out of one’s senses. Whether this was done by the conjurer’s art or by the power of Satan, it is impossible for us to know.

**“... giving out that himself was some great one.”** He was claiming to be more than just a mere man ... may have claimed to be a prophet ...

**Acts 8:10** To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

**“... this man is the great power of God.”** Unable to explain the things that he did, the Samaritans ascribed the manifestations worked through Simon to

**“...the great power of God.” which should alert us today to how easy it is to be tricked by spellbinders and film-flam men ... who come in “sheep clothing”.**

**Acts 8:11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.**

**Acts 8:12 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.**

**“But when they believed Philip preaching ...” This verse states in the concise manner the apostolic order of converting men: (1) Philip preached; (2) he preached the kingdom and name of Jesus Christ; (3) faith came by hearing, for the Samaritans believed; (4) when they believed they were baptized. This describes the uniform course in apostolic days.**

**“... baptized both men and women.” Note that (1) only believers are baptized, (2) that men and women are both included, but children are not named ... infants are sinless.**

**Acts 8:13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.**

**The Samaritans had a diluted monotheism some Judaism and some occult. Simon the sorcerer was a native born Samaritan held in high esteem by the Samaritans.**

**If the story stopped at verse thirteen the reader would have no reason to see any distinction between the people who “believed” and Simon who “believed”. So far as the record goes they were both equally converted.**

**Being baptized they had already received the gift of the Holy Spirit cf: Acts 2:38**

**“Then Simon himself believed also ...” There has been much needless discussion whether Simon was sincere. It would never have been doubted had we not been told that he later fell into sin. It is best to take the Scripture in as making common sense. He became a believer like the rest. He was baptized like the rest, then, like many others, later, under temptation, he fell into sin. It is impossible to believe that a man of his power and influence in Samaria would have yielded outwardly to the gospel and shown the deference he manifested to Philip unless**

**he was at the time sincere. But he was of the class described by the Savior when the seed of the sower fell among the thorns.**

**Acts 8:14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:**

**“... the apostles which were at Jerusalem . . . heard.” They had remained in their nest cooped up in Jerusalem in spite of being ordered to “go into all the world and preach the Gospel unto every creature” Mark 16:15. The word reached them of Philip's faithful work. Christ had directed that the gospel be carried to "Jerusalem, and unto Judea, and unto Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."**

**Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth**

**The gospel had been carried to Samaria and been received. The preacher sent there was not an apostle. He had miraculous powers, but could not confer them or pass them on to others. Now that the Gospel was accepted by a half-breed Samaritans, not Jewish, it was needful, that spiritual gifts (cf: I Corinthians 12:1ff), such as had been given to Stephen and Philip cf: Acts 6:7 should be bestowed upon this alien nation. Observe, (1) when the Jews first had the gospel on the day of Pentecost these gifts were imparted by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles; (2) when the Samaritans were converted these were imparted by the laying on of the apostles hands; (3) later when the first Gentiles were converted, an apostle being present, they were imparted. There is no record of their impartation, except by apostolic. Cf: Romans 1:11.**

**“Sent unto them Peter and John” This is positive proof that Peter was not a pope. The body which sends is superior to the one sent. He and John go at the bidding of all the body of apostles. This is the last mention of John in Acts.**

**Acts 8:15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:**

**But to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit cf: I Corinthians 12:1ff the Samaritan believers must have the Apostles lay hands upon them and have the Holy Spirit fall upon them as authenticating approval. So the Apostles came in order to give divine sanction by the manifestation of this Holy Spirit.**

**The Apostles from Jerusalem came to Samaria to confirm the reception of a Motley group of believers of Samaria. To authenticate the conversion of these half breeds. The divine verification must come from the divine Holy Spirit through the Apostles.**

**“... prayed for them, ...” That the Holy Spirit might fall on them. They had been baptized and thereby born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5), but had not received the miraculous gifts of the Spirit which conferred miraculous powers. This was bestowed by apostolic prayer and the laying on of hands.**

**Acts 8:16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)**

**This special coming of the Holy Spirit as at Pentecost was not a matter of individual salvation; it was essentially a matter of validation. By this we mean that God has shown approval of the reception of these half breeds Samaritans.**

**Acts 8:17 Then laid they [*their*] hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.**

**... laid they [*their*] hands on them ... "This was part of that miraculous supremacy of the apostles that they could not pass on to any successor." This reception of the Holy Spirit was manifest in speaking with tongue and other powers.**

**This would also cause the Samaritans to recognize the authority and position of the Jewish Apostles for they were racially prejudiced against Jesus.**

**Acts 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,**

**“And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, ...” NOTE WHAT SIMON SAW. How were the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit given? “through laying on of the apostles' hands” These gifts are outlined in I Corinthians 12:1ff. Simon had not tried to make such a deal with Phillip, for Phillip did not have the power to bestow, or pass on, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. Trying to purchase power is called “Simony”.**

**This was Simon’s sinful effort to buy the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for money.**

**Simon was a babe in Christ, a first generation believer with no history or tradition of Judaism or Christianity behind him. As all new converts he interprets his new life of faith and what he sees to his own back ground and understanding.**

**“When Simon saw ...” he offered them money. Uninstructed in the lofty spirit of the gospel, ambitious to possess this power peculiar to the apostles, he is sordid enough to offer money for it. His sin was not that he aspired to this power, but that he sought to buy it. He had very crude conceptions of the spirit of Christianity. It is not stated, but it is easy to infer, that he was not one of those upon whom the apostles had bestowed the divine gift.**

**Simon misinterpreted in the light of his own background in the magic arts and occult. It was only natural that Simon should selfishly seek to appropriate the power of this Holy Spirit as of any Newborn babe in Christ falls into sin in terms of his sinful past.**

**Acts 8:19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.**

**Acts 8:20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.**

**Peter rebuked him that the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was not for sale or exploitation.**

**“... Peter said ...” Peter's outburst of indignation is characteristic.**

**“... Thy money perish with thee, ...” Not an anathema, but the statement of a fact, unless he repents.**

**“... because thou hast thought ...” Observe that, in Peter's rebukes, the thought is, not that he has never been converted, but that he has now committed an awful sin. It is *one sin*, not his *sins*, that stands out in every sentence.**

**Acts 8:21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.**

**Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter. In these gifts of the Holy Spirit. He can neither receive them, nor impart them. Perhaps salvation is also included.**

**“... for thy heart is not right ...” This offer to purchase the gift of God shows that it was not. Because it is not, he can have no part nor lot, etc.**

**Acts 8:22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.**

**“Repent, therefore, of this ...” Observe that Peter does not bid him to repent of his sins, but of *this* one great sin.**

**“ ...if perhaps the thought of thine heart ...” This one sin is so great that Peter seems doubtful whether it will be forgiven, even on repentance and prayer.**

**Acts 8:23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and [in] the bond of iniquity.**

**“For I perceive that thou art ...” His great sin had brought him into the state now described.**

**“... gall of bitterness, ...” The gall of reptiles was considered by ancients the source of their venom. The expression would denote moral corruption.**

**“ ... bond of iniquity.” Bound by iniquity.**

**Acts 8:24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.**

**“... Pray ye to the Lord for me, ...” Simon's language indicates that he was terror-stricken and deeply touched for he asked for intercessory prayer for his forgiveness. Simon immediately sought the Apostle's help with his life being straightened out by the Lord does not mean the complete and immediate absence from sin. Every convert must learn that his faith must be from a straight heart.**

**Acts 8:25 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.**

**“... When they had testified ...” The Apostles came to investigate and authenticate and they left preaching unto the Samaritans.**

**From the call of Abraham, the Gospel for all men has always been God's goal. cf: Genesis 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.**

**But for men even the Apostles to see and implement that idea has not been easy.**

**Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.**

**But the Apostles have been stuck in the nest at Jerusalem refusing to fly. Now Peter and John made their first flight to Samaria.**

**Philip the evangelist is the one most prepared mentally and emotional to preach and baptize a black eunuch from Ethiopia.**

**Note the agencies of God in the redemption of the black Ethiopian eunuch. Angels (26), the Holy Spirit (29), man (29), scriptures (32), providence (36) Christ (35).**

**It is a long way from Ethiopia to Jerusalem. Race, politics, social status, or physical limitations, none of these can keep a man from God. Luke including the Story of the eunuch was further demonstration that God was determined to thrust redemption out to all men. After the half breed Samaritans came the black man.**

**His handicaps were racial, he was a black man, who the scriptures twisters insisted was under "the curse of Noah". Nationally he was a foreigner, a Gentile, Ethiopian. Religiously he came to temple to worship, which indicates his religious views. Not a Jew, but had adopted the Hebrew faith. Physically he was a eunuch, and as a castrated man, he's had only limited access to the worship of God. cf**

**Deuteronomy 23:1 He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.**

**Professionally and politically he held high office under Candice the Queen.**

**He was weighed down with handicaps with his approach to God through Judaism. In Christ no limitation need keep any person from full fellowship in the Gospel. God was not about to let a seeker go home without salvation, so He claimed the Ethiopian as His own ... and sent him a Christian.**

**Acts 8:26 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.**

**The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip. In some way he was supernaturally directed by an angel to go far south of Samaria to the road from Jerusalem to Gaza.**

**“... Gaza ...” Was an old Philistine city, on the sea-coast in southwest Palestine. It was taken by Alexander the Great, and had endured many sieges, but was still a town of 15,000 or 16,000 inhabitants.**

**Acts 8:27 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,**

**The embracing of a Black, physically deformed half-a-man is another pillar that anchors the bridge over which the Gospel travels to the Gentile world. It moves from Jerusalem’s Jews, to Hellenistic Jews, to the half Jew, half Samaritans to the black eunuch proselyte.**

**“... a man of Ethiopia ...” was that portion of Africa which lies south of Egypt.**

**“... eunuch of great authority ...” This mutilated class of men often rose to great power in the countries of the ancient world. Candace had her seat of power on the large island of Meroe, about a thousand miles from the mouth of the Nile. Candace is still seen inscribed on the ruined palace walls of Meroe.**

**“... come to Jerusalem for to worship ...” His long journey, his study of Scripture and his ready hearing heart all indicate a believer in God, a devout man, and one seeking for the Christ.**

**Acts 8:28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.**

**“... Was returning, and ... read ...” He was reading aloud in the Oriental manner. He was reading in Isaiah 53 the greatest prophecy of Christ.**

**Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.**

**“... the Spirit said ...” Philip promptly obeyed, ran to the chariot, listened and heard what he read, and then asked his question, the result of which was that he was asked to take his place in the chariot.**

**Acts 8:30 And Philip ran thither to [him], and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?**

**This verse indicated that Philip jogged alongside the chariot and heard the man reading from Isaiah 53:7. He boldly asked and was invited into the chariot to explain the Scripture.**

**Acts 8:31** 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.

He was reading the clearest pronouncement in the Old Testament about the suffering servant Messiah. The eunuch had just left Jerusalem where every Synagogue, temple, alcove, and public park was alive with debate about this very passage. The Apostles were explaining it in view of the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. The Pharisees would be contradicting. This left the eunuch confused and uncertain.

**Acts 8:32** 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:

“... The place of the scripture . . . was this ...” See Isaiah 53:7-8. The whole chapter is a wonderful prophecy of the sufferings of Christ written 750 years before Christ. Philip explained the text, and from it *he preached to him Jesus*.

“... led as a sheep ...” Unresisting, meek and mild He laid down His life.

“...opened he not his mouth:” Made no defense. His judgment was taken away. Justice was mocked and trampled underfoot.

**Acts 8:33** In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

“... who shall declare his generation?” This refers to portraying the wickedness of the generation which slew him.

**Acts 8:34-35** 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.

“... of whom speaketh the prophet this?” This gave Philip the opportunity of preaching Jesus. Philip showed in the prophecies of the Messiah, that it behooved him to suffer, die, and rise again, and that he commanded his gospel to be preached to all the world and that believers to be baptized in his name. The eunuch calls for baptism, shows that in preaching Jesus Philip taught baptism.

**Acts 8:36** 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?

“... they came to a certain water: ...” There are several roads from Jerusalem to Gaza. The one by Hebron is through "desert" more than the others. Eusebius (e-SEH-bee-us) and Jerome state that the baptism occurred at a perennial stream, coming from a fountain at Beth-Zur, not far from Hebron.

The literal Greek is, "**Behold! Water!**" As if his soul was filled with joy that water was provided by the providence of God and he could now obey the Gospel.

“... what doth hinder me ...” Is anything standing in my way to come unto God through Christ? Nothing, if he was a believer and “behold water” was at hand.

**Acts 8:37** 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.

“... If thou believest ...” This verse is not found in the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus manuscripts, but was certainly in manuscripts older than them both. It is referred to by Irenæus (are-NI-es) in the second century, and by Augustine in the fourth. It clearly shows that the early primitive church was to require such a confession of faith. Cf: Matthew 10:32 & Romans 10:9-10.

“...with all thine heart, ...” A living faith must seize upon and control the heart.

**Acts 8:38** 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.

This is the first place in the New Testament that the ordinance of Baptism is described. The subject of the sentence is alluded to four times. “They,” “both,” “both,” “Philip and the eunuch” they both went down in and they both came out.

It is a special significance that it is the eunuch that requested Baptism, not Philip ordering it. In light of what we have just read, preached unto him “preaching Jesus” includes Baptism. A person who argues about how to be saved is not ready to be saved. When faith receives Christ it never argues it obeys. Baptism is simply a demonstration of faith.

“... they went down both into the water, ...” The original undoubtedly implies a going, not *to*, but *into*, the water, for the full immersion of the new convert.

**Acts 8:39** 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.

“... when they were come up out of the water, ...” They did not go *to* and come away *from* the water, but they went, “both Philip and the eunuch,” down *into* (Greek, *eis*) and came up *out of* (Greek, *ek*) the water.

“... the Spirit ... caught away Philip, ...” Led him to depart abruptly snatched away.

“... went on his way rejoicing.” In his new-found Savior. But Philip was found at Azotus (a-ZO-tus), the old Philistine city of Ashdod (ASH-dod), near the sea-coast, between Gaza and Joppa. It is now a ruin. Here he preached in all the sea-coast cities, probably founding churches (Acts 9:32 Acts 9:36), till he came to Cæsarea.

**Acts 8:40** But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

Cæsarea. the seaport northwest of Jerusalem, which was the Roman capital of Judea. We are not told how soon he reached Cæsarea. It may have been months or years It is likely that it did not take place until after Peter's missionary work there. Many years later we find Philip living in this city (Acts 21:8).

It took a number of years to get the church to be established and self-confident it first came into mind of Hellenistic Jewish believers who comprehended the universal nature of the Gospel. Steven's courageous preaching followed by the success of Philip at Samaria and the Ethiopian eunuch put the Gospel in a position to conquer the whole wide world of people, languages and cultures.

But a far reaching advance like that will require wisdom and sight unclouded by racial restraints or religious restrictions. Jesus will need an instrument stronger than tempered steel, but as gentle as the divine love. Before the actual sailing into the Gentile world the vessel of divine choice must be found, designated, equipped, and committed to the task. Saul of Tarsus; heretofore the Greatest enemy of the Gospel, Christ will bring to his knees, change his heart into a select vessel, in whom Jesus will get His Gospel out to “all the world and every creature” and World Conquest in the first century will become a living reality.

Sources: KJV, theWord.com, World Conquest, B. W. Johnson, Burton Coffman, F.F. Bruce, J.W. McGarvey & Clarke's Commentaries.