

Acts Lesson #6

BSF Scripture Reading:

FIRST DAY:

1. Read the lesson notes and References

SECOND DAY:

Read Acts 8:1-8

[8:1] And Saul was there, giving approval to his death.

The Church Persecuted and Scattered

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. [2] Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. [3] But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

Philip in Samaria

[4] Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. [5] Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. [6] When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. [7] With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. [8] So there was great joy in that city.

Question 4

2 Kings 17:6-41; [6] In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes.

Israel Exiled Because of Sin

[7] All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods [8] and followed the practices of the nations the

LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. [9] The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns. [10] They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. [11] At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that provoked the LORD to anger. [12] They worshiped idols, though the LORD had said, "You shall not do this." [13] The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: "Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."

[14] But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers, who did not trust in the LORD their God. [15] They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, "Do not do as they do," and they did the things the LORD had forbidden them to do.

[16] They forsook all the commands of the LORD their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshiped Baal. [17] They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sorcery and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

[18] So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left, [19] and even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced. [20] Therefore the LORD rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence.

[21] When he tore Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat their king. Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the LORD and caused them to commit a great sin. [22] The Israelites persisted in all the sins of Jeroboam and did not turn away from them [23] until

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the LORD removed them from his presence, as he had warned through all his servants the prophets. So the people of Israel were taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria, and they are still there.

Samaria Resettled

[24] The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim and settled them in the towns of Samaria to replace the Israelites. They took over Samaria and lived in its towns. [25] When they first lived there, they did not worship the LORD; so he sent lions among them and they killed some of the people. [26] It was reported to the king of Assyria: “The people you deported and resettled in the towns of Samaria do not know what the god of that country requires. He has sent lions among them, which are killing them off, because the people do not know what he requires.”

[27] Then the king of Assyria gave this order: “Have one of the priests you took captive from Samaria go back to live there and teach the people what the god of the land requires.” [28] So one of the priests who had been exiled from Samaria came to live in Bethel and taught them how to worship the LORD.

[29] Nevertheless, each national group made its own gods in the several towns where they settled, and set them up in the shrines the people of Samaria had made at the high places. [30] The men from Babylon made Succoth Benoth, the men from Cuthah made Nergal, and the men from Hamath made Ashima; [31] the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire as sacrifices to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. [32] They worshiped the LORD, but they also appointed all sorts of their own people to officiate for them as priests in the shrines at the high places. [33] They worshiped the LORD, but they also served their own gods in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought.

[34] To this day they persist in their former practices. They neither worship the LORD nor adhere to the decrees and ordinances, the laws and commands that the LORD gave the descendants of Jacob, whom he named Israel. [35] When the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites, he commanded them: “Do not worship any other gods or bow down to them, serve them or sacrifice to them. [36] But the LORD, who brought you up out of Egypt with mighty power and outstretched arm, is the one you

must worship. To him you shall bow down and to him offer sacrifices. [37] You must always be careful to keep the decrees and ordinances, the laws and commands he wrote for you. Do not worship other gods. [38] Do not forget the covenant I have made with you, and do not worship other gods. [39] Rather, worship the LORD your God; it is he who will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies.”

[40] They would not listen, however, but persisted in their former practices. [41] Even while these people were worshiping the LORD, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did.

John 4:1-26

Jesus Talks with a Samaritan Woman

[4:1] The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, [2] although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. [3] When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

[4] Now he had to go through Samaria. [5] So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. [6] Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

[7] When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, **“Will you give me a drink?”** [8] (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

[9] The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

[10] Jesus answered her, **“If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”**

[11] “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? [12] Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?”

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[13] Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, [14] but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

[15] The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

[16] He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

[17] “I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. [18] The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”

[19] “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. [20] Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

[21] Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. [22] You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. [23] Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. [24] God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

[25] The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

[26] Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”

THIRD DAY

Read Acts 8:9-40

[9] Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, [10] and all the people, both high and low,

gave him their attention and exclaimed, “This man is the divine power known as the Great Power.”

[11] They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. [12] But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. [13] Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

[14] When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. [15] When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, [16] because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. [17] Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

[18] When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money [19] and said, “Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

[20] Peter answered: “May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! [21] You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. [22] Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. [23] For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.”

[24] Then Simon answered, “Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me.”

[25] When they had testified and proclaimed the word of the Lord, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

Philip and the Ethiopian

[26] Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” [27] So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, [28] and on his way home was

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sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. [29] The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

[30] Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

[31] “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

[32] The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before the shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

[33] In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth.”

[34] The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” [35] Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

[36] As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?” [38] And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. [39] When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. [40] Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Question 8a

Isaiah 53:7,8: [7] He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

[8] By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants?

For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

FOURTH DAY

Read Acts 9:1-19a

Saul's Conversion

[9:1] Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest [2] and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. [3] As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [4] He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

[5] “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied.

[6] “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

[7] The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. [8] Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. [9] For three days he was blind and did not eat or drink anything.

[10] In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered.

[11] The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. [12] In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

[13] “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. [14] And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

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[15] But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. [16] I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

[17] Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

[18] Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, [19] and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

FIFTH DAY:

Read Acts 9:19b-30

Saul in Damascus and Jerusalem

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. [20] At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. [21] All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?” [22] Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

[23] After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, [24] but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. [25] But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

[26] When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. [27] But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. [28] So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. [29] He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him.

[30] When the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

SIXTH DAY:

Read Acts 8:1-9:30

See above verses: