

Acts 8: 1- 24 Study Guide.

Acts 8 begins right after the end of **chapter 7** (the stoning of Stephen). This week, you will focus on the **first part of Acts 8** and next week's study guide will conclude the chapter.

Scriptures in Study Guide:

Scriptures included are in the **NIV** (New International Version).

To make things easier, the actual verses from **Acts 8:1-24** will be included in your daily lessons to help you with the missing words.

Day 1 (Acts 8:1-3)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 8** out loud and answer the following questions below.

8 1 And Saul approved of their killing him. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in 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 both men and women and put them in prison.

Acts 8:1

- And Saul _____ of their _____ him.
- On _____ day a great persecution _____ out against the _____ in Jerusalem, and _____ except _____ apostles were scattered _____ Judea and Samaria.

Questions:

- Who approved of "their killing him"? _____
- Who was Saul (see **Acts 7:58**)? _____
- Who is "him" (see **Acts 7:54-59**)? _____
- Who was Stephen (see **Acts 6:1, 6:5**)? _____
- Who is "their" referring to? (See **Acts 7:54**)? _____
- When they killed Stephen and Saul gave approval of this, what broke out against the church in Jerusalem? _____
- What happened to all of the believers except for the apostles? They were _____.
- Where did they scatter to? _____ and _____
- According to **Acts 1:8**, where did Jesus tell His disciples they would be His witnesses after Jerusalem? _____ and _____
- Who stayed in Jerusalem? The _____.

Deep Dive:

- Define "persecution"? _____
 - According to **John 15:18**, what will the world do toward us since it first did it toward Jesus? _____
 - According to **1 John 3:13**, what shouldn't be what if they world hates us? _____
 - According to **1 Peter 4:13**, Whose suffering do we participate in when we go through unjust trials? _____
 - What can we learn, from this verse, of the affect of persecution on the church? Does it stop it or grow it? _____
- If persecution grows the church, is there a purpose in our suffering for our faith? _____

Day 1 (Acts 8:1-3); cont'd

Acts 8:2:

- Godly _____ buried Stephen and mourned _____ for him.

• **Questions:**

- Who buried Stephen? _____
 - What else did these godly men do for Stephen beside burying his body?
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Note: In the Jewish faith, there is also oral rabbinical tradition that has been written down as literature. This is called the Mishnah and is not included in the Scriptures. It was compiled about 200 years before Jesus walked this earth. Many Jewish people, especially the rabbis in Jesus' time (Roman Empire) followed its mandates. One of the directives was that an executed person was to be buried; but not mourned. We see, in **Acts 8:2**, that these "godly" (some translations say "devout") men did follow the guideline of burying Stephen, but ignored about not mourning him. This shows the extent of where these "godly" men's hearts were. They are softening.

Acts 8:3:

- But Saul _____ to destroy _____ church.
- Going from _____ to house, he dragged off _____ men and women and put them in _____.

• **Questions:**

- What does the word "but" indicate when it is within a sentence? _____
 - What did Saul begin to do to the church? _____
 - According to **Acts 8:3**, how did Saul physically go about to destroy the church?
-

Day 2 begins on the next page

Day 2 (Acts 8:4-8)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 8** out loud and answer the following questions below.

4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. **5** Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. **6** When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. **7** For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. **8** So there was great joy in that city.

Acts 8:4:

- Those _____ had been _____ preached the word _____ they went.

Questions:

- What did those who were scattered do? _____
- According to **1 Peter 3:15**, what should we always be ready to do? _____
- **Write out 2 Timothy 4:2** - _____

Acts 8:5:

- Philip went _____ down to a city in _____ and proclaimed _____ Messiah there.

Questions:

- Who went down to a city in Samaria? _____
- Who did Philip proclaim there? _____
- What do we learn about the relationship of Jews and Samaritans in **John 4:9**? _____
- Who was Philip, according to **Acts 6:1-6**? _____

- **Note:** When the church scattered from Jerusalem, Philip went to witness (evangelize) to those in Samaria.

- In **Acts 1:8**, where are the places that Jesus said His disciples would be His witnesses? _____

Acts 8:6:

- When the _____ heard Philip and _____ the signs he performed, they _____ paid close _____ to what he _____.

Questions:

- When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, what did they pay close attention to? _____

- And, **according to Acts 8:5**, Who was Philip proclaiming? _____

Day 2 continues on the next page

Day 2 (Acts 8:4-8); cont'd

Acts 8:7:

- For with shrieks, _____ spirits came out of many, and _____ who were paralyzed or _____ were healed.

Questions:

- How did the impure spirits come out of many people? With _____
- What happened to the paralyzed and lame? _____

Reminder: a “sign” points to something or Someone. To gain a further perspective on theses signs, let’s go to a couple of places in Scripture:

- Turn **back to Acts 3** and answer the following questions:
 - What sign was done through Peter and John in **Acts 3:6-10**?

 - Write out the last sentence of **Acts 3:16** -

 - The real miracle, however, is shared in **Acts 3:19**. What is it?

- **Write out John 3:16:**

- Based upon what you have learned, is the most important sign physical or spiritual?

Note: there was a purpose for these physical signs. There is no physical church nor New Testament at this point. There needed to be validation that these disciples were Jesus’ witnesses. Not only could they prove Jesus as Messiah through the Old Testament prophecies; but God enabled them also to perform signs like Jesus had done.

- **According to John 5:8-9:**
- What did Jesus tell the lame man? _____
- What did the lame man do when Jesus told him that? _____

Acts 8:8

- So _____ was great joy in _____ city.

Question:

- What filled that city (Samaria)? _____

Day 3 (Acts 8:9-13)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word. Read **Acts 8** out loud and answer the following questions below.

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 rightly called the Great Power of God.” **11** They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. **12** But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed 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.

Acts 8:9-10

- Now _____ some time a man _____ Simon had _____ sorcery in _____ city and _____ all the people _____ Samaria.
- He boasted _____ he was _____ great,
- and all _____ people, both high _____ low, gave _____ their _____ and exclaimed, “This man _____ rightly _____ the Great Power _____ God.”

Questions:

- According to **Acts 8:9**:
 - How long had a man named Simon been practicing sorcery? _____
 - Where was Simon practicing his sorcery? _____
 - How did the people react to Simon’s sorcery? _____
 - What did Simon, himself, boast? _____
 - Would you describe Simon as humble or prideful? _____
 - What makes you think that? _____
- Write out **Proverbs 16:18** - _____
- According to **Proverbs 16:5**, what do we learn about how God feels about pride? _____
- According to **Acts 8:10**,
 - What type of people gave their attention to Simon and his sorcery? Both _____ and _____
 - What do you think the Scripture means by “high” and “low”? _____
 - What did all the people say that Simon was “rightly” called? The _____ of God.
 - **Note:** evidently Simon was known in that area as “the Great Power of God”

Day 3 is continued on the next page

Day 3 (Acts 8:9-13); cont'd

Acts 8:11

- They followed _____ because he _____ amazed them for a long time _____ his sorcery.

Questions:

- Why did the people, both high and low, follow Simon? _____
- How long had Simon amazed all of the people with his sorcery? _____

Acts 8:12

- _____ when they believed _____ as he _____ the good _____ of the kingdom of _____ and the name _____ Jesus Christ, they _____ baptized, _____ men and women.

Questions:

- What happened to the people who had followed Simon when they believed the good news the Philip proclaimed? They were _____
- Who was baptized? Both _____ and _____
- What were the 2 areas of good news that Philip proclaimed?
 - The good news of the _____ of _____
 - The good news of the _____ of _____

Acts 8:13

- Simon _____ believed and _____ baptized.
- And he _____ Philip everywhere, astonished _____ the great signs and miracles he _____.

Questions:

- Who else believed and was baptized? _____
- Who did Simon follow after he believed and was baptized?

- Where did Simon follow Philip? _____
- What was Simon astonished by? The great _____ and _____ he saw.

Day 4 begins on the next page

Day 4 (Acts 8:14-17; related Scriptures)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 8** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

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

Acts 8:14:

- When _____ apostles _____ Jerusalem heard _____ Samaria had accepted the word _____ God, they _____ Peter and John _____ Samaria.
- **Questions:**
- Where were the apostles? In _____
- What did the apostles in Jerusalem hear? _____
- Who were sent to Samaria? _____ and _____
 - **Note:** reminder that Samaria was looked down upon by Jewish people since these were Jewish people who had intermarried with gentiles. The apostles are “eyewitnesses” to Jesus and His resurrection. Their presence here will authenticate the “work of God” that is going on. As we discussed before, God’s plan was always to redeem all nations; just not the Jewish nation. We see that most clearly in the lineage of Christ.
 - In **Matthew 1:5**, who was the mother of:
 - Boaz (his father was Salmon) - _____
 - Obed (his father was Boaz) - _____
 - Where did Rahab come from? (See **Joshua 2:1; Joshua 2:10-13; Joshua 6:25**) _____
 - Was Rahab, since she lived in Jericho, a Jewish person by birth? _____
 - Where did Ruth come from? (See **Ruth 1:4; Ruth 1:16; Ruth 4:13**) _____
 - Since Ruth was born in Moab, was she a Jewish person by birth? _____

Note: All is still on plan where God begins to gather His church as the “church era” begins. The “nation of Israel” as a whole is put aside in regard to be the vessel God uses to make Himself known to the world. God still has a plan for Israel and God will fulfill His promise completely to the Israel nation at His second coming. And there will be those, like these apostles, who are Jewish who will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus as the Christ (their Messiah). These are called “Messianic Jews”.

Acts 8:15-16

- When they _____, they prayed for _____ new believers there _____ they might _____ the Holy Spirit,
- _____ the Holy _____ had not yet _____ on any of _____; they had simply _____ baptized in _____ name of the _____ Jesus.
- **Questions:**
- What did Peter and John do for the new believers when they (Peter and John) arrived? _____
- What did they pray for them to receive? _____
- Why, according to **Acts 8:16**, did they pray for these new believers to receive the Holy Spirit? _____
- What had they simply been baptized in? The _____ in the _____ of the _____.

Day 4 (Acts 8:14-17; related Scriptures); cont'd

This is a time of transition and building within the plan of God. The church “age” or “era” is beginning. This is when God establishes His church to continue to do the work that Jesus began in His earthly ministry. Many were baptized before the cross and this was called “John’s baptism”

Let’s look at some Scriptures that increase our understanding of the purpose of “John’s baptism”:

- According to **Matthew 3:5-6**, list the regions that are mentioned who were coming to John the Baptist to confess their sins and be baptized?

- According to **Matthew 3:11**,
 - what did John the Baptist baptize people for? _____
 - John the Baptist said there was another coming after him that would baptize with what?

- Look up **Acts 19:4** and write out Paul’s explanation of “John’s baptism” -

John’s baptism was to prepare the sinner’s heart to receive what Jesus promised His disciples they would receive after His suffering (payment) for our sins on the cross.

Let’s look at some Scriptures to further our understanding in this truth:

- Write out **John 14:15-17** -

- According to **John 14:15**, if we love Jesus, Who is God, what will we do as His disciples?

- _____ His _____

- According to **John 14:16**,

- Jesus ask the Father for another Advocate to do what?

- This Advocate is identified as the Spirit of _____.

- According to **John 14:17**, Jesus says that they know Him and has been with Him (meaning that God’s Spirit was with them as Jesus was with them) and now He (God’s Spirit) will be where? _____

So, Jesus is telling His apostles that they don’t need to be afraid (**John 14:1**) because in a little while (after He is crucified and resurrected), His Spirit will live within them. This “indwelling” could not take place BEFORE sin’s debt was paid. And God paid this Himself - something that He promised Adam and Eve and their descendants in **Genesis 3:15**. Let’s move on...

Day 4 finishes on the next page

Day 4 (Acts 8:14-17; related Scriptures); cont'd

Acts 8:17:

- Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
- **Questions:**
- What did Peter and John do with their hands? _____ their hand on the new believers.
- What happened when Peter and John placed their hands on these new believers?
_____.

This laying of hands by the apostles was an outward sign that these non-Jews were part of God's promise of salvation. By the apostles physically doing this, it authenticated their conversion since the church is still in the midst of still being built. They are the formal representatives for Jesus Christ.

- According to **Acts 4:13**, Who did they recognize that Peter and John (the apostles) had been with?

Days 5 & 6 follow on the next page

Days 5 & 6 (Acts 8:18-25)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 8** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

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 in the hope that he may 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** After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

Acts 8:18:

- _____ Simon saw _____ the Spirit was given _____ the laying on of _____ apostles' hands, he offered _____ money
- and said, "_____ me also _____ ability so that everyone on whom _____ lay my _____ may receive _____ Holy Spirit."

Questions:

- Give a summary (**see Acts 8:9-10**) of who Simon was?

-
- According to **Acts 8:13**, :
 - Simon did what after he was baptized? _____
 - what was Simon's reaction to "all of the signs and great miracles" that he saw taking place by Philip? _____
 - When Simon, according to **Acts 8:18**, saw that the Spirit was given to others with the laying on of the apostles hands, what did Simon offer the apostles? _____
 - According to **Acts 8:19**, what did Simon want in exchange for the money? _____
-

There is a frequent questions about when is belief true belief. Is believing enough?
To better understand, **let's go to Scripture:**

Questions:

- According to **James 2:19**, what do the demons even do?

 - According to **Mark 5:7-8**, Who do the demons in the demon-possessed man call Jesus?

-

So, we learn from Scripture that even demons believe that Jesus is the Son of God in regard to identification. This, however, is not a saving faith in Jesus Christ. A saving faith will be demonstrated in a saved life. (see **1 John 2:6**)

According to **1 John 2:3**, if we have come to know Jesus, what will we keep? _____
Write out **1 Peter 4:2** -

This man, Simon, was a sorcerer and is demonstrating, by his actions, where his heart is. In case Simon has any question, Peter will clear this misunderstanding up for him.
Let's continue....

Days 5 & 6 (Acts 8:18-25); cont'd

Acts 8:20:

- Peter _____: "May your money _____ with you, _____ you thought you _____ buy the gift of _____ with money!"
 - **Questions:**
 - What did Peter say could perish with Simon? _____
 - Why does Peter say that Simon's money could perish with him? What did Simon think he could buy?
-

Acts 8:21:

- You have _____ part or share in _____ ministry, because your heart is _____ right _____ God.
 - **Question** - Why does Peter tell Simon the sorcerer that he has no part or share in this ministry?
-

Acts 8:22:

- Repent of this _____ and pray to _____ Lord in the _____ that he _____ forgive you for _____ such a thought in _____ heart.
 - **Questions:**
 - What does Peter tell Simon the sorcerer that he need to do?
 - _____ of this wickedness and _____ to the _____
 - What may the Lord do if Simon the sorcerer repents and prays to the Lord?
-

Acts 8:23:

- For I _____ that you are _____ of bitterness and _____ to sin."
- **Question** - what does Peter say that he can "see" in Simon the sorcerer?
 - Simon the sorcerer is _____ of _____
 - Simon the sorcerer is _____ to _____

Let's look back into God's Word to see "how" Peter could "see" this:

- According to **Acts 8:18**, why did Simon the sorcerer want this "power"? _____
 - Would you say his desire was for others furthering knowledge of God or himself? _____
 - According to **Matthew 7:15-16**, how did Jesus teach how we will recognize a "false prophet"? _____
 - Who else in the early church did Peter confront about wrong desires that came from the heart? (**see Acts 5:1**) _____ and his wife, _____
 - According to **Acts 5:3**, what did Satan fill of Ananias to lie to the Holy Spirit? his _____
 - Write out **James 1:14-15** - _____
-

Note: Peter, in love, is speaking the truth to Simon the sorcerer what his spiritual condition is based upon the "fruit" (Simon the sorcerer's actions) Peter is "seeing". Let's see how we, as God's children, can protect our hearts from the evil of our fleshly desires and wants.

- Write out **Proverbs 4:23:** _____
-

Days 5 & 6 (Acts 8:18-25); cont'd

- According to **2 Corinthians 10:5**, how are we suppose to take our thoughts captive?

- Write out **Psalm 119:11** -

Acts 8:24:

- Then Simon _____, “Pray ____ the Lord for me ____ that nothing you _____ said may happen _____ me.”
- **Questions:**
- What does Simon the sorcerer ask Peter to do for him? _____ to the _____ for me.
- Why does he want Peter to pray for him? _____

Note: Simon is a picture of a false convert, much like Judas Iscariot (someone who has their own earthly agenda in the faith/church). Notice that Simon doesn’t repent but, instead, asks for prayer so that he will be saved from physical consequence. Scripture does not speak whether Simon the sorcerer ever did come to a saving faith. If we look at other conversions in the Bible, though, their full salvation is plainly stated and demonstrated by their changed behavior. (see **John 9:27** and **9:38**, **Acts 9:18** and **9:20**; **Acts 16:15**, **Acts 16:30-34**). Simon the sorcerer may have been like the seed on the rocky places (**Matthew 13:5**) - he had “no root” and his faith was only “temporary” (see **Matthew 13:20-21**).

What about his prayer request? Should Peter pray for what Simon asked for? Let’s see what God teaches us through His Word (**note:** all these are followers of God praying for those who are not following God):

Questions:

- According to **Genesis 20:7**, what does God tell Abimelech (Gerar’s king) that Abraham will do for him?

- According to **Genesis 20:17**, what does Abraham do for Abimelech? _____
- According to **Exodus 8:8**, what does Pharoah ask Moses to do for him? _____
- According to **Exodus 8:12-13**, what did Moses do for Pharoah? _____
- According to **Luke 22:32**, what did Jesus tell Peter He had done for him? _____
- Write out **Romans 5:8** -

Note: When a person asks for us to pray to God, we should pray. We do not pray, however, something against God’s Word or against His will. In fact, God’s will in a person’s life and situation is the best prayer for that person. Our Creator God knows them best and will guide us as we pray for others.

Let me know if you have any questions. I’m here. I’m praying for you.