



## DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

*Yearning for Him unto Power ... by Billy*

**READ : ACTS 8:4-24**

- **04-8** The river is always purest at its source, power and unity.
- Today we may face different restrictions but this will not prevent the word of God being preached. We must come to see that restriction (persecution) releases the church into a new level of ministry opportunity.
- The question of signs and wonders arises in this passage. Are they for today? Why do we experience so little? A massive topic.
- We could argue that their purity of faith as eyewitnesses of God's majesty in Christ led them to great heights.
- Some would argue that once the canon of scripture was complete these signs were withdrawn. I believe that the Holy Spirit doesn't change and that the power of God will always respond to simple faith. (*Mark 16:17:Matt.4:24*)
- Let God be true and every man a liar.
- Unbelief among the masses (*Mark 6:5-6*) and cynicism and among the disciples, lack of faith (*Matt.17:19-21*) prevented the miracle.
- The need for deliverance and healing remains despite advances in medicine and psychiatry.
- Other questions will come to mind as we continue to read this passage but we need to remember that the main focus is that the gospel is being spread beyond Jerusalem and Judea (*Acts 1:8*)
- Acts was not written as a letter to establish church practice.
- The supremacy of God's work is made known among the false gods of Samaria. He confirms His word with signs (megas)
- The gospel is received by those who the Jewish people regarded as untouchables.
- There is no opposing force, no ethnic or religious barrier that can prevent the spread of God' word.
- Great joy will always follow when the word of God is received. This happened previously in Samaria via testimony (*John 4:40-42*)
- **V9-13** As we read about Simon the magician, it seems that he has encountered God's salvation. He continued with Philip in his ministry (devoted himself to it).

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- But he appears more focused on the power of the signs than on the message of the gospel. He imagined that he possessed great power but was confronted with a greater Power. He watched as all of those who once followed him were now following Jesus Christ. But there is not a mention of jealousy.

V14-24 As the story unfolds the true character of Simon was revealed.

- Peter and John came from Jerusalem to investigate this work of God. (*Acts 11:22*). Probably because it was an unplanned mission.

- As the Samaritans had not received the Holy Spirit's infilling, they laid hands upon them and prayed that they would receive God's gift.

- When it says that the Spirit 'came upon' them, it indicates a pressing and a descending upon. (Also embrace)

- Just like salvation, the gift of the Holy Spirit cannot be earned.

- This gift is not just given to those who are more qualified but it (the gift) is received in simple faith. (*Note v.14-15*)

- One commentator notes that John once called down a different fire on the Samaritans (*Luke 9:54*) .... but now such a change.

- Simon saw the mighty demonstration of God's power in the lives of the Samaritans as they were filled with the Spirit. (*Acts 2:4 and Acts 10:45-46 NLT*)

- He offered money to the apostles to buy their power. His old lust for power was still strong and this motivated him.

- There were still bonds of iniquity that had to be broken in him and Peter discerned this and told him to repent. (*Isa.55:7 and Isa.58:6*)

- By his words and his actions Simon proved that he did not believe in Jesus Christ. (*Rom.8:6-8 NKJV*) His amazement lacked repentance.

- A profession of faith without repentance is spurious faith.

- Any question of Simon Magus becoming a true believer is in doubt as history reveals that he became one of the leading voices in the Gnostic heresy. (Salvation by secret knowledge, not the cross)

- In summary today let's rejoice in the spread of God's word and continue to pray that He will confirm it with signs following.

- Let us also receive gladly the gift of the Holy Spirit so that we will serve Him more fully.

- But let us beware of an amazement with the supernatural that leads us to seek power rather than walk in fellowship with Christ.

