

34 AD – SIMON THE SORCERER ASKS TO PAY FOR A SPIRITUAL GIFT

“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” (Isaiah 2 v 3)

EVENTS IN 34 AD

In **33 AD Stephen** was stoned to death. (See our paper [33 AD](#)). The church was scattered (Acts 8:1). The shock of Stephen’s death, the process of throwing saints in jail, and then the packing up and moving of thousands of believers were events that took time to unfold.

The account of **Simon the Sorcerer** occurs next in the chronology of Acts. **Philip** preached in **Samaria** (Acts 8:5) and ‘all the people high and low’ that had previously followed **Simon the Sorcerer** believed and were baptized into the name of Christ (Acts 8:10-13). Such a penetration of the gospel into every corner of **Samaria** must have taken some time. The visit of **Peter** and **John** occurred after that.

So, we can safely assume the request of **Simon the Sorcerer** to buy a spiritual gift occurred in the year following the stoning of **Stephen**, i.e. in **34 AD**.

PETER AND JOHN LAY ON HANDS

Peter and **John** were sent to **Samaria** to test if the converts were genuine. Importantly **Philip** did not tell the **Samaritans** they had to go to **Jerusalem** to worship Jehovah or to receive communion. If **Philip** had said that the **Samaritans** would have been stumbled because since ancient time they resented **Jerusalem** and built places of worship on their own hills.

Peter and **John** laid hands on the **Samaritans** and they manifested the Holy Spirit where they were in **Samaria** – without ever travelling to **Jerusalem**.

SIMON THE SORCERER ASKS TO BUY A SPIRITUAL GIFT

The conversation between the apostles and Simon the Sorcerer:

“And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, ‘Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he

may receive the Holy Ghost'. But Peter said unto him, 'Your money perish with you because you thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. You have neither part nor lot in this matter: for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven. For I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity'. Then answered Simon, and said, 'Pray to the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken come upon me'." (Acts 8:18-24)

Although Simon the Sorcerer had believed the testimony of Philip he was only a recent convert – his mind had not been renewed through meditation on the Scriptures and the selfless life of Christ. His request to pay for the spiritual gift followed the concept of religion he previously knew which is when you want something from a prophet you offer a gift.

PROPHECY OF ISAIAH 2 V 3

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."
(Isaiah 2 v 3)

The amazing prophecy of Isaiah occurs chronologically (when you count forward on a one verse per one year basis from Isaiah 1 v 1 as 1 AD) at the time of the revival under the preaching of Philip.

Philip was not an apostle! Philip was one of the seven men chosen to care for the needs of the poor widows in Acts 6:3-7. He was the colleague of Stephen and worked together with him during the time when the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly.

While the apostles were huddled together preparing for their weekly 'ministry of the word' Philip was washing feet and gossiping the gospel among the poor.

"for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem"

Oh the exquisite irony of it. The while the apostles were in Jerusalem ministering 'the Law of the Lord' – Philip was in Samaria ministering the 'word of the LORD' – the gospel of Jesus Christ! The disciples who remained in Jerusalem became the core of the Judaizers – who wanted to impose the Mosaic Law on believers in Jesus.

In Acts 21 Paul returned to Jerusalem and recounted to James and the elders how the Gentiles believed and accepted Jesus Christ without being circumcised or obeying the Law of Moses. James instructed Paul: **“Do therefore this that we say to thee: ... purify thyself ... and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walk orderly, and keep the law.”** (Acts 21:23-24)

James ordered Paul to make a sacrificial offering in the Jewish Temple! To prove that he keeps the Law! As an example to the Christian brothers! The study of the Law by the apostles in Jerusalem was an evil seed that grew into the shady tree of the darkest legalism. When Paul made his speech in the Temple (Acts 21:27-36) he was without a doubt addressing many Christian believers who had reverted to Judaism. Some of the ones calling for Paul to be killed: **‘Away with him!’** (Acts 21:36) were deceived Christians in among the Jews!

“Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths”

The mystery that Stephen understood – viz. his vision of the LORD standing high above – and Philip understood was that the **‘mountain of the LORD’** is not Jerusalem any more. The **‘mountain of the LORD’** - which is the true **‘Zion’** - is the Heavenly Jerusalem.

For this reason the Samaritans did not have to go to the physical Jerusalem to be saved. They could believe in Jesus in their hearts and enter the invisible Kingdom of God – whose temple is in Heaven where Christ our High Priest ministers grace and forgiveness of sin.

SPIRITUAL NUMBER ANALYSIS

For a mind that has wisdom please read on. See truth from another perspective.

PART ONE

Chapter **2** of Isaiah is the **2nd** chapter of The Prophets.

The spiritual number **2** means **‘Division’** or **‘Discern’**

The preaching of Philip marks a division. The Spirit of the LORD is moving away from Jerusalem. In Acts 8 the Spirit moves to Samaria. In Acts 10 there is a revival in Cornelius’ house in Caesarea. In Acts 11 the Spirit moves to Antioch. And from there to Cypress etc.

PART TWO

Isaiah 2 v 3 is the **17,689th** verse in the whole Bible starting at Gen 1 v 1.

The number **17,689 = 133 squared!**

The spiritual meaning of **133** is 'Brotherly Love'

The spiritual meaning of **133 squared** is 'Brotherly Love *exalted!*'

Samaritans were considered almost sub-human by the Jews in Jerusalem. They were ethnically part Assyrian and part Palestinian. They held to the Torah but did not hold any further revelation in the Bible. Their forefathers were famous idolaters and had many wars with the children of Judah.

Here comes Philip with the good news! In the gospel of Jesus Christ there are no ethnic divisions. One's race or ancestry is of no importance. All believers in Jesus are equal in the sight of God – no one is higher, no one is lower. Christians may experience unimpeded 'brotherly love' because all of us were wretched sinners in the eyes of God before our sins were forgiven by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus.

PART THREE

Isaiah 2 v 3 is the **34th** verse of The Prophets starting at Isaiah 1 v 1.

The spiritual meaning of **34** is 'Man's Religion'

A sure sign of Man's Religion is money flowing between disciples and teachers. Peter and John knew that the Holy Spirit did not come upon the Samaritans because their hands were 'holier' than anyone else's hands. The Holy Spirit came upon the Samaritans because of the gift of God. Peter and John were simply there to witness what the LORD was doing and bring the confirmation of the work of the Holy Spirit back to the disciples so all could know the Samaritan Christians were equal brothers.

Simon the Sorcerer had made a living from selling supernatural phenomenon to a deceived crowd of Samaritans. He was just a fresh convert. He needed to be told transacting money had no part in the ministry of spiritual gifts.

APPLICATION

Dear believers.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is free.

We don't charge others for the privilege of hearing the gospel.

We don't charge converts for the privilege of sitting under the ministry of gifted believers.

Money has no part in Christian ministry.

The only collections recorded in the New Testament were gifts for the poor believers who suffered under famine and could not work to feed themselves.

Paul wrote 'If anyone does not work, they do not eat.'

Paul told Timothy 'If we have food and clothing we will be content with that.'

Paul was never a burden to the churches he planted - he supported himself.

Christians met in homes for 300 years until Constantine. Temples with priests were pagan.

The Temple-centered model of worships with its costly offerings and maintenance of priests and Levites has no part of Christianity. That is Man's Religion not God's gospel.

The Holy Spirit departed from Jerusalem.

Let's not be disobedient and erect 'places of worship' and pay ministers to be 'holy teachers' within them. This would grieve the Holy Spirit.

Rather, let us be like Philip. Let us go to the highways and bi-ways and invite the poor to the feast of God's grace being freely offered in the Heavenly Jerusalem.