

Simon the Sorcerer

Acts 8:4-25

by Don Falkos

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The believers who fled from Jerusalem under persecution from Saul proclaimed the good news about Jesus wherever they went. Philip went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. He expelled evil spirits and healed people who were paralyzed or crippled.

For a long time the people of Samaria had been devoted to a sorcerer named Simon who had astounded them with his magic. But now they were hearing the good news of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus. Many people, including Simon, believed and were baptized. Simon began following Philip wherever he went. He was amazed by the miracles Philip performed.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard the people of Samaria had believed in Jesus, they sent Peter and John. As soon as they arrived, they prayed for these new believers to receive the Holy Spirit, because as of yet it hadn't come to any of them. Then Peter and John laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

When Simon saw what they did, he offered them money. "Give me this power, too, so anyone I lay my hands on will receive the Holy Spirit."

But Peter replied, "To hell with you and your money! How dare you think you could buy the gift of God! You can't do what we're doing; your heart is not right with the Lord. Pray God will forgive you."

Simon pleaded with them, "Please pray to the Lord for me."

After their work in Samaria, Peter and John went back to Jerusalem. They stopped in many Samaritan villages along the way to share the good news.