

Questions / Answers

1. Why were the Jewish rulers angry?
Because the disciples taught that Jesus, who they killed, was the Son of God and had risen from the dead.
2. What did the Jewish rulers do to Peter and some of the apostles?
Put them in prison.
3. Did this stop them preaching the Gospel?
No. An angel let them out of prison.
4. What did the Jewish rulers do to Stephen?
Bribed men to tell lies about him and stoned him to death.
5. What did the Jewish rulers do to the Christians in Jerusalem?
Persecuted them.
6. Did this stop the Gospel being preached?
No. The Christians moved and started churches in other areas.
7. What did Philip explain to the Ethiopian man?
About Jesus and the hope of life he gives those who believe in him.
8. What did Philip and the Ethiopian do when they came to water?
Philip baptised the Ethiopian man.
9. Who was Cornelius? What did an angel tell him to do?
He was a Gentile, a soldier. The angel told him to send for Peter.
10. Give 2 reasons why Peter was willing to baptise Cornelius, a Gentile.
God had shown him in a dream that Gentiles could also become God's people. God gave Cornelius the Holy Spirit.

Memory verses

Acts 4:19—20 Acts 10:15 Acts 10:47 Galatians 3:26—29

Discussion

Read Acts 8:36—39. Discuss what these verses teach us about baptism?

Writing

Read Acts 10:9—20. Write about the dream that God gave Peter. What did the dream teach Peter?

CBM Senior Lessons



Lesson 40 The disciples preach the Gospel

READING Acts 5:17—42; 6:1—15 & 7:54—60; 8:26—39; Acts 10

LESSON

The Jewish rulers were angry when they saw that many people believed in Jesus. They were angry that the disciples were teaching and doing miracles in the name of Jesus. The Jewish rulers had killed Jesus. They thought they had stopped his teaching. They were very angry that the disciples were continuing the teaching of Jesus and many people believed in Jesus. The Jewish rulers were even more angry when they knew that the disciples were teaching that Jesus is the Son of God and that he had risen from the dead.

The Jewish rulers commanded the disciples to stop teaching about Jesus. Peter told them that it was more important to obey God than to obey men. Jesus, the Son of God, had commanded them to teach in his name. They must obey him. The Jewish rulers put Peter and some of the apostles in prison to stop them teaching. But an angel let them out of prison. Men cannot stop the teaching and purpose of God.

The people who believed in Jesus Christ and were baptised were later called Christians. The Christians who met together to worship God were called a Church. The Jewish rulers were very angry that so many people believed the teaching of the disciples and became Christians. There were already several thousand Christians in Jerusalem.

Stephen was a young Christian who did a lot of work for the Church. The Jewish rulers bribed bad people to tell lies about Stephen. The Jewish rulers arrested Stephen and took him to the Sanhedrin. The bad people told more lies about Stephen and stirred up the people against him. The Jewish rulers and the people became so angry that they dragged Stephen outside Jerusalem and stoned him to death.

After the death of Stephen, the Jewish rulers persecuted all the Christians in Jerusalem. Many Christians left Jerusalem and went to live in other towns. But the Jewish rulers could not stop the Gospel spreading. Wherever the Christians went to live, they preached the Gospel. Christian churches started in many towns throughout the land of Israel. Men cannot stop the teaching and purpose of God.

The disciples preached to the Jews in Jerusalem and the land of Israel. The disciples were later called 'apostles', which means 'someone who has been sent'. Jesus had sent them to preach the Gospel. Philip preached the Gospel in many villages in Samaria. One day an angel told him to travel towards the desert. There he saw a man from Ethiopia in a chariot reading the Old Testament. The man worked in the court of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia. He had been to worship at Jerusalem and was travelling home.

The Ethiopian man was reading Isaiah 53 verses 3—7, but he did not understand them. He did not know whether Isaiah was writing about himself or about someone else. Philip got into the chariot and explained the verses to him. Philip told the Ethiopian all about Jesus. He explained that the Old Testament prophets wrote about Jesus. He told him about the great hope of life that Jesus gives to those who believe in him.

Then the Ethiopian understood the good news about Jesus, and he was very happy. When they came to some water he asked Philip to baptise him. Philip told him that if he really believed with all his heart he could be baptised. The Ethiopian said that he believed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Philip and the Ethiopian both went right down into the water and Philip baptised him under the water. Then Philip left him and the Ethiopian continued his journey rejoicing.

BAPTISM

Philip made sure the Ethiopian really understood and believed the Gospel before he was baptised. We must understand and believe about Jesus Christ and God's Kingdom before we can be baptised.

Philip and the Eunuch went down into the water together. They were in the desert; the Ethiopian would have had drinking water in a bottle. But sprinkling some water was not true baptism. They waited until they came to enough water for the Ethiopian to go right down under the water.

The first Christians were Jews. God's promises about salvation through Jesus were given to Abraham and David. God's promises were given to the Jews. Do you remember God's promise to Abraham? God said that Abraham's descendant (Jesus) would bring blessing to people of **all** nations. God wanted the sacrifice of Jesus to bring salvation to all men.

Jesus was a Jew. When Gentiles are baptised they become part of God's family and brothers or sisters of Jesus. Gentiles become adopted Jews and can share in God's promises. Gentiles can have their sins forgiven through Jesus Christ. They can have the hope of eternal life in God's Kingdom.

Cornelius was a soldier who lived at Caesarea. Cornelius was a Gentile, but he was a faithful man. Cornelius prayed regularly to God and helped the poor. One day, while Cornelius was praying, an angel told him to send for a man called Peter. The angel told Cornelius that Peter would tell him what God wanted him to do.

Some days later Peter arrived at Cornelius' house. Peter was a Jew and Cornelius was a Gentile. The Jews were God's chosen people. In Old Testament times God had told the Jews to keep separate from the Gentiles. The Jews thought that the Gentiles were unclean. The Jews kept totally separate from the Gentiles - they would not go into their homes or eat with them. God had told Peter, by a dream, that through Jesus the Gentiles could also become God's people. This was a hard thing for Peter to understand.

When Peter came to Cornelius' house, he remembered what God had told him. Peter went into the house and met Cornelius and all his family and friends. They had all come to listen to Peter. Peter told them about Jesus. He told them that Jesus never sinned. Jesus gave his perfect life by dying on the cross. God had raised Jesus from the dead. While Peter was speaking to Cornelius and his family, they all received the Holy Spirit. Peter was amazed that God gave His Holy Spirit to Gentiles. This showed Peter that the Gentiles could be saved through Jesus, as well as the Jews.

Peter baptised Cornelius and his family. They were the first Gentiles to become Christians. Through baptism into Jesus Christ all people can become God's people. All people can have the hope of salvation.