



# LIVING WITH PURPOSE

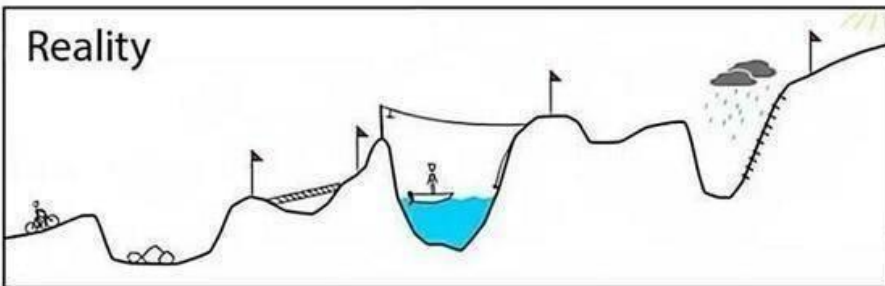
EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED



Your plan



Reality



- <sup>ESV</sup> **MATTHEW 16:18** ... ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.

## ACTS 8:1-25

1. PERSECUTION 8:1-4
2. SAMARITAN CONVERSIONS 8:5-8
3. APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING 8:9-25



# 1. PERSECUTION (8:1-4)

## ACT 8:1-3

- <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 8:1** AND SAUL WAS THERE, GIVING APPROVAL TO HIS DEATH. ON THAT DAY A GREAT PERSECUTION BROKE OUT AGAINST THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM, AND ALL EXCEPT THE APOSTLES WERE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT JUDEA AND SAMARIA. <sup>2</sup> GODLY MEN BURIED STEPHEN AND MOURNED DEEPLY FOR HIM. <sup>3</sup> BUT SAUL BEGAN TO DESTROY THE CHURCH. GOING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, HE DRAGGED OFF MEN AND WOMEN AND PUT THEM IN PRISON.

## PERSECUTION IS PROMISED

- <sup>NIV</sup> **JOHN 15:20** REMEMBER THE WORDS I SPOKE TO YOU: 'NO SERVANT IS GREATER THAN HIS MASTER.' IF THEY PERSECUTED ME, THEY WILL PERSECUTE YOU ALSO. ...
- <sup>NIV</sup> **JOHN 16:2** THEY WILL PUT YOU OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE; IN FACT, A TIME IS COMING WHEN ANYONE WHO KILLS YOU WILL THINK HE IS OFFERING A SERVICE TO GOD.



## PERSECUTION WILL NOT PREVAIL

- <sup>ESV</sup> **MATTHEW 16:18** ... ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.
- <sup>ESV</sup> **JOHN 16:33** I HAVE SAID THESE THINGS TO YOU, THAT IN ME YOU MAY HAVE PEACE. IN THE WORLD YOU WILL HAVE TRIBULATION. BUT TAKE HEART; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD."

## PERSECUTION HAS PURPOSE

- <sup>NAS</sup> **ROMANS 8:28** AND WE KNOW THAT GOD CAUSES ALL THINGS TO WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THOSE WHO LOVE GOD, TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO *HIS* PURPOSE.
- <sup>ESV</sup> **PSALM 119:71** IT IS GOOD FOR ME THAT I WAS AFFLICTED, THAT I MIGHT LEARN YOUR STATUTES.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **GENESIS 50:20** "AND AS FOR YOU, YOU MEANT EVIL AGAINST ME, *BUT* GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT THIS PRESENT RESULT, TO PRESERVE MANY PEOPLE ALIVE.

## THE PURPOSE

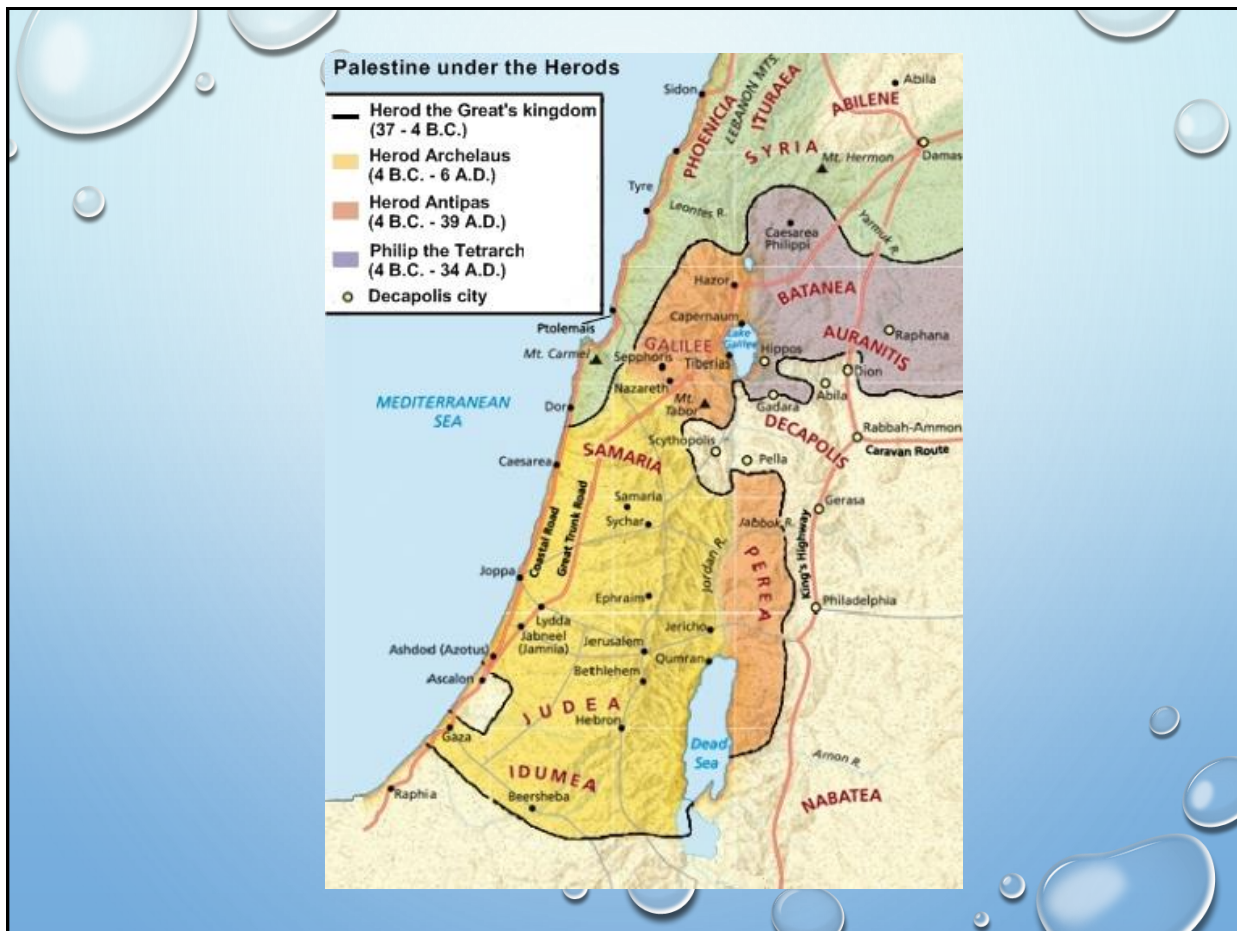
- <sup>NAS</sup> **ACTS 8:1** ... A GREAT PERSECUTION AROSE AGAINST THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM; AND THEY WERE ALL SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE REGIONS OF JUDEA AND SAMARIA, EXCEPT THE APOSTLES.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **ACTS 1:8** BUT YOU SHALL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU; AND YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA, AND EVEN TO THE REMOTEST PART OF THE EARTH."

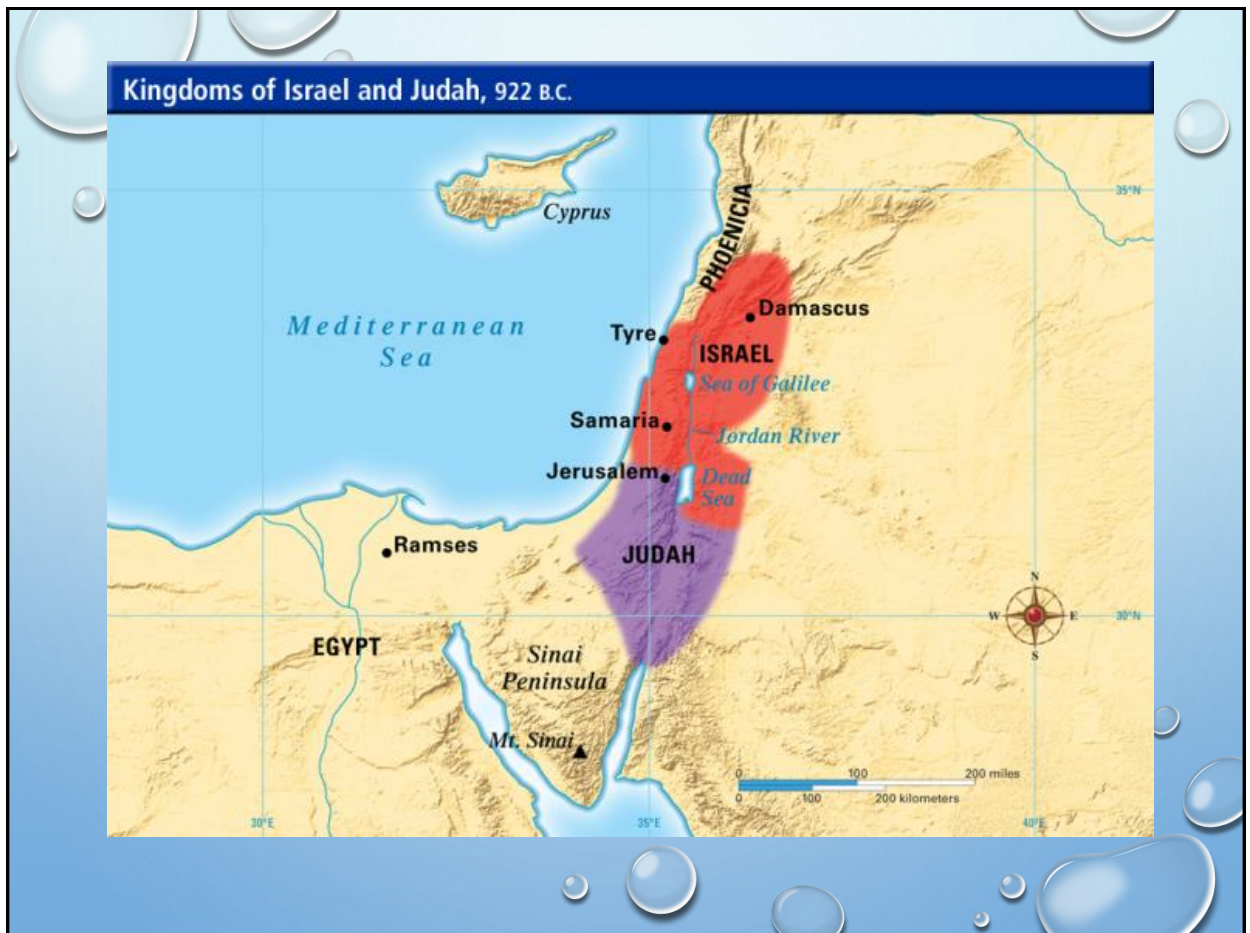
## THE GOOD

- <sup>ESV</sup> **ACTS 8:4** NOW THOSE WHO WERE SCATTERED WENT ABOUT PREACHING THE WORD.



## 2. SAMARITAN CONVERSIONS (8:5-8)





## THE CONFLICT

- BOTH JEWISH AND SAMARITAN LEADERS TAUGHT IT WAS WRONG TO HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH THE OTHER.
  - EACH CONSIDERED THEMSELVES THE TRUE ISRAEL



## TEARING DOWN WALLS

- <sup>NAS</sup> **ACTS 8:5** AND PHILIP WENT DOWN TO THE CITY OF SAMARIA AND *BEGAN* PROCLAIMING CHRIST TO THEM.
  - THIS WAS SHOCKING
  - FAITH IN THE GOSPEL AND LOVE OF JESUS SHOULD LEAD US TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOURS AS OURSELVES EVEN IF THE WORLD TELLS US WE SHOULD HATE THEM

## GENDER EQUALITY

- <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 2:18** EVEN ON MY SERVANTS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT IN THOSE DAYS, AND THEY WILL PROPHECY.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 5:14** NEVERTHELESS, MORE AND MORE MEN AND WOMEN BELIEVED IN THE LORD AND WERE ADDED TO THEIR NUMBER.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 8:3** BUT SAUL ... DRAGGED OFF MEN AND WOMEN AND PUT THEM IN PRISON.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 8:12** BUT WHEN THEY BELIEVED PHILIP AS HE PREACHED THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, THEY WERE BAPTIZED, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN.

## ETHNIC EQUALITY

- <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 8:14** WHEN THE APOSTLES IN JERUSALEM HEARD THAT SAMARIA HAD ACCEPTED THE WORD OF GOD, THEY SENT PETER AND JOHN TO THEM. <sup>15</sup> WHEN THEY ARRIVED, THEY PRAYED FOR THEM THAT THEY MIGHT RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, <sup>16</sup> BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT HAD NOT YET COME UPON ANY OF THEM; THEY HAD SIMPLY BEEN BAPTIZED INTO THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS. <sup>17</sup> THEN PETER AND JOHN PLACED THEIR HANDS ON THEM, AND THEY RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT.



3. APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING (9-25)

# SIMON

- STARTED WELL
  - <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 8:13** SIMON HIMSELF BELIEVED AND WAS BAPTIZED. AND HE FOLLOWED PHILIP EVERYWHERE, ASTONISHED BY THE GREAT SIGNS AND MIRACLES HE SAW.
- FINISHED POORLY
  - <sup>NIV</sup> **ACTS 8:21** YOU HAVE NO PART OR SHARE IN THIS MINISTRY, BECAUSE YOUR HEART IS NOT RIGHT BEFORE GOD.



## EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

1. WHEN IT COMES TO OUR PLANS
  - DAY TO DAY AND LONG-TERM
2. WHEN IT COMES TO WHO WE MINISTER TO
  - NOT ALWAYS OUR FAVOURITE PEOPLE
3. WHEN IT COMES TO HOW OTHERS TURN OUT
  - SAUL VS SIMON



# CONCLUSIONS



- BE GLAD THINGS DON'T ALWAYS GO ACCORDING TO OUR PLANS

- <sup>NAS</sup> **ISAIAH 55:8** "FOR MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS, NEITHER ARE YOUR WAYS MY WAYS," DECLARES THE LORD. <sup>9</sup> "FOR AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGHER THAN THE EARTH, SO ARE MY WAYS HIGHER THAN YOUR WAYS, AND MY THOUGHTS THAN YOUR THOUGHTS.

- GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY  
HIS WONDERS TO PERFORM;  
HE PLANTS HIS FOOTSTEPS IN THE SEA  
AND RIDES UPON THE STORM.

- PLAN PRUDENTLY BUT REST IN GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

- <sup>NAS</sup> **JAMES 4:13** COME NOW, YOU WHO SAY, "TODAY OR TOMORROW, WE SHALL GO TO SUCH AND SUCH A CITY, AND SPEND A YEAR THERE AND ENGAGE IN BUSINESS AND MAKE A PROFIT." <sup>14</sup> YET YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOUR LIFE WILL BE LIKE TOMORROW. YOU ARE *JUST* A VAPOR THAT APPEARS FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND THEN VANISHES AWAY. <sup>15</sup> INSTEAD, YOU *OUGHT* TO SAY, "IF THE LORD WILLS, WE SHALL LIVE AND ALSO DO THIS OR THAT."

- DEEP IN UNFATHOMABLE MINES  
OF NEVER FAILING SKILL  
HE TREASURES UP HIS BRIGHT DESIGNS  
AND WORKS HIS SOVEREIGN WILL.