

# Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

Acts 8:26-40

September 29, 2024

## I. Introduction

- A. Two Confessions
  - 1. I have preached this sermon before.
  - 2. I got the outline from Adrian Rogers.
- B. Two Seekers
  - 1. The Ethiopian – vs. 8:25-40
  - 2. Cornelius – vs. 10:1-48

## II. The Salvation of the Ethiopian – vs. 26-40

- A. A Willing Servant – vs. 26-27a
  - 1. Philip is first guided by an angel (v. 26) then by the Holy Spirit (v. 29)
  - 2. He is told to go south to the road that goes between Jerusalem and Gaza (one of 5 chief cities of the Philistines)
  - 3. This command was odd because he left a lot of people who were responding to the Gospel to go to a desolate area. See Barclay, p. 70.
  - 4. He did as commanded and went! See also 9:11, 15, 17; Jonah 1:2, 3: 3:1-3.
- B. A Worshipping Seeker – vs. 27b-28
  - 1. A seeker is not manmade (Romans 3:11; Matthew 16:17). A seeker is someone God is drawing to Himself (John 6:44, 65).
  - 2. He was an Ethiopian
    - a. “Ethiopia here refers not to modern day Ethiopia, but to ancient Nubia, the region from Aswan in southern Egypt to Khartoum, Sudan.” BKC (200+ mile trip)
    - b. Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary say the trip was 750 miles one way; thus, modern Ethiopia.
  - 3. He was a eunuch.
    - a. Deuteronomy 23:1 most likely refers to men who voluntarily become eunuchs for pagan worship from temple services, but not from seeking the God of Israel.
    - b. Jesus spoke of eunuchs in Mt. 19:12
  - 4. He was a court official and treasure of Candace (a title for the Queen Mother)
  - 5. He had come to Jerusalem to worship. See 10:1, 2

- 6. He had considerable wealth to own a chariot and have a private driver. Another possibility is this was a caravan-type journey and “chariot” refers to an ox-drawn wagon.
  - 7. He was reading from Isaiah the prophet. (normally people read out loud.)
  - 8. He was religious; he read God’s Word; he was a seeker of truth; he was sincere but lost!
- C. A Witnessing Spirit – v. 29
    - 1. The Holy Spirit serves here as a guide. He will bring to you or send you to those seeking salvation. See 10:19-21; 13:2
    - 2. The Holy Spirit must be present for salvation to occur. See John 3:5; Titus 3:5
    - 3. U.I.P.s: Unidentified Inner Promptings
  - D. A Waiting Sinner – vs. 30-34
    - 1. Philip asks if he understands what he is reading.
    - 2. The eunuch invited Philip to explain God’s Word to him. This illustrates John 6:44, 45, 65
    - 3. He was reading from Isaiah 53:7, 8. In Isaiah 56:3-5, the Lord commends eunuchs who follow Him.
    - 4. The most important question asked is in verse 34!
  - E. A Wonderful Savior – v. 35
    - 1. Jesus is who Isaiah wrote about. See John 5:39; 12:40-42
    - 2. He is the Lamb of God. John 1:29; Revelation 13:8
      - a. His death was voluntary. John 10:17, 18
      - b. His death was vicarious. I Peter 2:24; 3:18
  - F. A Waiting Saint – vs. 36-39a
    - 1. It would seem that this man had been spoken to before and knew about believer’s baptism.
    - 2. If the mode of baptism was not immersion, water (a body of water) would not have been necessary.
    - 3. Salvation always precedes baptism – v. 37
      - a. (Verse 37 is not in many of the older manuscripts but is not in any way biblically incorrect.)
    - 4. Phrases like, “They both went down in to the water”, and, “they came up out of the water” clearly describe immersion.

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5. Why be baptized?
  - a. Jesus was – Matthew 3:13-17
  - b. Jesus commanded it – Matthew 20:19
  - c. For conscience sake – I Peter 3:21
- G. A Willing Servant and a Witnessing Spirit – vs. 39b-40
  1. We end where we started with Philip again going where the Spirit led.
  2. Philip, like Elijah (I Kings 18:12) was physically transported by the Holy Spirit from one location to another. (Azotus = Old Testament Ashdod was 20 miles north of Gaza.)
  3. Philip continued to spread the Word.
  4. He is talked about again in 21:8, (20 years later).

### III. **Personal Challenge and Application**

- A. We are clearly told to do the work of personal evangelism.
  1. Acts 1:18
  2. II Corinthians 5:18-20
  3. I Peter 3:15
- B. Would you be willing and able to?
  1. Answer the question of one like the Philippian jailor (Acts 16)?
  2. Go to someone like Cornelius in chapter 10 and tell him about Jesus?
  3. Go sit next to someone God tells you to, like this eunuch?
  4. Go and tell those God has laid on your heart?