

Acts 8:25-40

Philip Witnesses

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Saul, Stephen, Samaria, and Simon

25 So, when they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, and were preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

- *Saul*

- vs.1 – *Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death*
- vs.3 – *Saul began ravaging the church*

- *Stephen*

- vs. 2 – *Some devout men buried Stephen*

- *Samaria*

- vs.5 – *Philip went down to the city of Samaria*

- *Simon*

- vs.9 – *Now there was a man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city*

Going south

26 *But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.)*

- *An angel of the Lord*
 - Not the Lord himself, but a messenger
- *Get up and go south*
 - He had been in Samaria
- *The road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza*
 - Gaza is located southwest of Jerusalem
- *So he got up and went (vs.27)*



What brings you to these parts?

27 ...and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship,

- Luke notes certain facts about this man¹
 - He's from Ethiopia
 - From North Africa
 - He has great authority
 - *Candace* was the dynastic title of Ethiopian queens
 - He was in charge of royal treasury
 - A position that most likely came with wealth
 - He came to Jerusalem to worship
 - Lit. *had come to Jerusalem worshipping*
 - He was reading Isaiah (vs.28)

¹borrowed from Merryman

How shall they understand?

29 Then the Spirit said² to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot."

- Romans 10:12-17
 - *Whoever will call...*
 - Calling ← Believing ← Hearing ← Preaching ← Sending
 - *Faith comes by hearing...*
- *Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah*
 - How did he know that the passage was from Isaiah?
 - *"Do you understand what you are reading?"*
- *[The Eunuch] invited Philip to come up and sit with him*
 - *"Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?"*
 - Does this demonstrate the importance of Biblical mentorship?³
- Are there any takeaways for our evangelism?

²seemingly different than the angel giving him directions

³or the necessity of the "Church" interpreting the Scriptures

It is written

32 Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this:

- **Isaiah 53:7-8:**

He was oppressed and He was afflicted,

Yet He did not open His mouth;

Like a lamb that is led to slaughter,

And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,

So He did not open His mouth.

By oppression and judgment He was taken away;

And as for His generation, who considered

That He was cut off out of the land of the living

For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?

Who is this guy?

34 *The eunuch answered Philip and said, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?"*

• Questions

- What did the Eunuch know/not know?
- How would he have viewed the Messiah?
- "*[T]here is no evidence that anyone in pre-Christian Judaism ever thought of the Messiah in terms of a Suffering Servant.*"⁴

• Answers

- *Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from **this Scripture** he preached Jesus to him. (vs.35)*
 - See also Luke 24:27
 - *Preach* – greek is *euaggelizō*; to tell good news⁵ (vs.35)
- Would his message be any different than that of the other apostles?

⁴Longenecker, by way of Constable

⁵Basis for the word "evangelism"

Now is the time

36 As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

- *What prevents me from being baptized?*
 - Was this an extension of vs.12?
 - Constable: *"The Jews required water baptism of Gentile converts."*
 - Deuteronomy 23:1 says physical eunuchs could not convert
- *[37 And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]*
 - Does not exist in the earliest Greek manuscripts⁶
 - Is it canonical?
 - Baker says a scribe might have added to words to indicate the man's faith was genuine, unlike Simon the Magician
 - Does this passage contradict any other Scripture without the verse?

⁶Hence, the brackets in the NASB

Dunkin' Eunuchs

38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.

- *Baptized* – greek is *baptizō*
 - Did Philip have the ecclesiastical authority to baptize?
- *The Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away*
 - *Snatched* – to seize, carry off by force
 - Same word used in 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- *The eunuch...went on his way rejoicing*
 - Irenaeus said he became an evangelist to his people⁷
 - However, there is “no evidence of a Nubian church exists before the fourth century.”⁸

⁷Irenaeus, Against Heresies, 3, 12, 10.

⁸<http://www.biblicaltheology.com/Research/PerkinsR01.html>

Going home

40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

- Azotus is about 20 miles north of Gaza
- *[Philip] kept preaching the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.*
 - Doesn't seem to be phased by being suddenly "caught away"

