

# The Ethiopian Eunuch

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] So Acts chapter 8, and in the church Bibles, it starts on page 1101. Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, Go south to the road, the desert road, that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.

So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake, which means Queen of the Ethiopians.

This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot, reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. The spirit told Philip, Go to that chariot and stay near it.

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. Do you understand what you were reading? Philip asked.

How can I, he said, unless someone explains it to me? So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. This is the passage of scripture the eunuch was reading.

[ 1 : 1 1 ] He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth. The eunuch asked Philip, Tell me please, who was the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?

Then Philip began with that very passage of scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they travelled along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptised? And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptised him.

When they came up out of the water, the spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

[ 2 : 1 8 ] Philip, however, appeared at his otis, and travelled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns, until he reached Caesarea. Well, thank you, Aoife.

So, up until now, in our study of Acts, Luke, the writer of Acts, has repeatedly drawn our attention to the mass conversions that have happened in the early church.

Really, up until this point, Luke has told us about large groups of people who have become believers. And for example, in Acts chapter 2, verse 41, we are told about 3,000 were added to their number that day.

In Acts chapter 2, verse 47, we're told the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. In Acts chapter 4, verse 47, we're told, The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Up until this point, in the early church, we have been told again and again and again about large groups of people that have become believers.

[ 4 : 1 7 ] Well, now, really, for the first time in the early church, Luke, the writer of Acts, tells us in detail about the conversion of a specific individual.

Up until now, we have been told. Up until now, we have been told. Up until now, we have just been told that, you know, another thousand have been added to the church. Another group, more and more have been added to the church.

But now, for the first time in the book of Acts, Luke tells us in detail about the conversion of a specific individual.

As someone said, in relation to conversion, Luke now breaks away from his pattern of telling us about the masses, and now tells us in detail about a specific individual.

And out of all of the people that he could have told us about, Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us about this Ethiopian eunuch.

[ 5 : 3 0 ] Clearly, the Lord wants us to learn something from this man's specific conversion. We're told about this man's conversion in detail for a reason.

Well, I think that we're told about this man's conversion in detail to show us or to remind us of at least two things about the very heart of our God.

This man's specific conversion, I think, shows us and reminds us that our God has a heart for the one, and he has a heart for the nations.

Luke has told us about all of these groups of people becoming believers, but now he stops. And he tells us about the conversion of this one man, I believe, to show us God's heart for the one, and God's heart for the nations.

So just for a few moments, on this Father's Day, we're going to look at this passage, and really we're going to look at our Heavenly Father's heart for the one, and his heart for the nations.

[ 6 : 54 ] So first, let's consider our God's heart for the one in this passage. Well, we see God's heart for the one in this passage, in how God very intentionally sent Philip away from the city of Samaria, where mass conversions were happening, and he sent him out onto this remote desert road off the beaten track, in order to cross paths with this one Ethiopian eunuch, so that he could tell him the good news about Jesus.

Philip was in Samaria, and you'll see that there on the map with the red circle. Well, we know from earlier in chapter 8, for example, chapter 8, verse 12, that many conversions were happening in Samaria.

Many men and women were coming to know the Lord Jesus in Samaria. People were coming to know Jesus, left, right, and center. And Philip was involved in all of this.

Philip was the one who was preaching the gospel to them. As someone said, at this time, God was at work in Samaria.

Revival was happening there. And where God is moving and working, that is the place to be. Philip was being used in incredible ways in Samaria.

[ 8 : 34 ] Many, many conversions were happening there under his preaching. Yet in the midst of all of that, in verse 26, the Lord, through this angel, sent Philip far, far away from all that was happening in Samaria, in order to go all the way down, you see on the map, to this very remote desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza.

Why? In order to reach just one. This Ethiopian eunuch.

The one is worth it to our God. This was not like saying to Philip, head home to Durrus, to Baladi Hobway, instead of the Korah Way.

This was not telling him to go slightly out of his way. No, 70 kilometers away from this revival that was happening, the Lord sent Philip down this barren, deserted road from Jerusalem to Gaza.

A road that many Jewish people did not travel because it is known for its bandits and it's known for its robbers. And it's meant to be a very exposed road.

[ 9 : 56 ] Yet the Lord sent Philip all the way down there, away from all that was happening in Samaria, away from the revival where you'd imagine the Lord wanted him to stay.

No, he sent him all the way down to this road from Jerusalem to Gaza, just so Philip could cross paths with this one Ethiopian eunuch so that he could tell him the good news about Jesus.

The one is worth it to our God. God has a heart for the one. Our God has a care for the one.

And we see in this passage that the Lord cared so much for this Ethiopian eunuch, for this man, that he would take Philip away from this big revival where in general people flock to.

No, the Lord sent Philip away from this revival and sent him all the way down this barren, isolated, dangerous road so that he could tell him about Jesus.

[ 11 : 04 ] I think that all of this in many ways reminds me anyway of the parable of the lost sheep. When the shepherd left the 99 to go out to find and to seek after the one.

I think that's similar to what the Lord did here. The Lord sent Philip out to leave the masses, to go out and to find and seek after the one.

Our God has a heart for the one. The one is worth it to our God. The Ethiopian eunuch was worth it to our God.

And you as a believer here today, you are worth it to our God in that how many Philips, so to speak, has the Lord put across your path and my path in order to help us come to know him on our journey.

I think you as a believer can say you are so worth it to the Lord because I think whether you realize it or not, the Lord has done for you what he has done for this Ethiopian eunuch.

[12:28] As a believer, as an individual, the Lord has done for you and for me what he has done for this man in that he has sent all sorts of people across our path to help us in our journey of coming to know him.

You see, just like the Ethiopian eunuch, we are all testimonies of God's heart for the one because as believers in all sorts of ways he has put all sorts of people across our path whether we realize it or not, he has maybe even sent several Philips across our path, so to speak, to help us on our journey of coming to know him.

As believers, we are worth it to our Lord. He has sought after every single one of us in different ways with different people in order to draw us to him.

The one is always worth it to our Lord and we are all testimonies of that. He might have sent some people completely out of their way to go across our path but he has done it.

He has done for us what he has done for the eunuch. And that's what happened here. The Lord used Philip to help this Ethiopian eunuch come to know him. This man was reading the book of Isaiah but he didn't understand about Jesus so the Lord used Philip to tell him about Jesus through the scriptures and his life would never be the same again.

[14:06] This man believed, verse 38, he was baptized. In verse 39, he went on his way rejoicing. He finally understood all about Jesus.

He understood that he had been forgiven. He had been set free. He understood that he was a new creation in Christ. After coming to know him, he believed, he was baptized, and he went on his way rejoicing.

He went on his way praising the Lord. I just wonder, who are the ones in your life that you would love to see rejoicing after coming to know the Lord?

Who comes to your mind when you think of someone that you would just love to see come to know the Lord? Well, I think we can be encouraged this morning knowing that our God has a heart for the one and there is no one that is too far away from him that cannot be reached.

I really enjoyed what David shared last week when he told the story of someone who he knew in his life who it just seemed was so far away from the Lord.

[15:35] You know, it just seemed it was almost impossible for this person to come to know the Lord. It just seemed so unlikely and we can all relate to that. It just seemed that this person would almost never come to know the Lord.

Well, as David shared last week, just a few weeks ago, that person walked in here on a Sunday morning and sat down, now a believer. And I really appreciated David sharing that because it was a reminder that no one is too far away from our God that cannot be reached.

If the Lord can send Philip, true and angel, away from this great revival all the way down this isolated, dangerous, desert road just to reach this one Ethiopian eunuch, well then he can definitely reach the one that each of us have in mind when we think of that person who it almost seems impossible to come to know him.

Let's continue to pray for that one knowing our God has a heart for the one. And just to add to that, just for a minute, along with God's heart for the one, we also see God's heart for the nations in this passage.

Because if we just look for a moment of where this man was from, well verse 27 tells us that he was from Ethiopia. And verse 27 tells us he was an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandek, which means queen of the Ethiopians.

[17:21] This man was from Ethiopia. And from what I could find, it seems that this place in that day was located south of Egypt.

In that day, it was called the ancient kingdom of Ethiopia. And it corresponds today to modern day northern Sudan. Well, I thought it was very interesting that in that day, to the Greeks and to the Romans, this place, the kingdom of Ethiopia, actually represented to them the outer limits of the known world.

One scholar said, at one point, the Romans actually considered this place, Ethiopia, to be the very edge of the world. There's writings where they believed that if their chariots went beyond this place, they'd fall off into nothing.

So what we see here in this passage with the conversion of this Ethiopian eunuch is God's heart for the nations, God's heart for the ends of the earth on full display.

Remember Acts 1.8, the Lord Jesus said, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

[ 18 : 53 ] The Lord did hear what he said he would do. He brought Philip from Samaria to the ends of the earth to reach this man. We see here God's heart for the nations, his heart for the very ends of the earth on full display.

God has a heart for every tribe, for every tongue, and for every nation. So folks, just looking at our passage this morning, I think we can see God's heart for the one in this passage.

And we can see his heart for the nations. Well, as believers, as a church, let us, with the Lord's help, seek to follow our God's heart.

let us have a heart for the one and let us have a heart for the nations. Let us never, ever think that one person is not worth it.

And sometimes I kind of hear that or I've heard that maybe over the years that, oh, there's only one or two coming or something along those lines. Let us never, ever think that one person is not worth it.

[ 20 : 09 ] it's always worth it even just for the one. If one is reached, they'll reach another and another and another.

As someone reminded me on Friday, there's always a bigger plan. This one man would bring the gospel to the continent of Africa.

and in church history it's recorded that this Ethiopian eunuch was kind of the father of the gospel going to Africa. The revival was happening in Samaria but God went out to reach one in order to reach a whole continent.

It's always worth it even just for the one. There's always a bigger plan. So let us have a heart for the one and let us have a heart for every corner of this world.

Let's pray together. Lord, we thank you that we are told about this one man. We thank you that under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Luke took a break from telling us about the masses.

[ 21 : 22 ] He took a break from telling us about another thousand or another group and we're told about this one man. And thank you that we can see through this man's conversion we can see your heart for the one.

And thank you that we are all testimonies of that because you reached each one of us. You found us, Lord. You helped us to come to know you and we give you the praise and the glory for that.

And Lord, we see that this one man would bring the gospel to so many more. So help us, Lord, to never ever think that just one person is not worth it and help us to have a heart for every nation.

And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.