

Behold A Man Of Ethiopia

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- [0 : 0 0] I welcome you to this sadness of worship. Let us worship God by singing to His praise from Psalm 146, at verse 5.
- Psalm 146, at verse 5. Oh, happy is that man, and bless whom Jacob's God to pay, whose hope upon the Lord doth rest, and on His God is stayed.
- Who made the earth and heavens high, who made the swelling deep, and all that is within the sin, who truth doth ever keep.
- For righteous judgment executes for those oppressed that be, who to the hungry giveth food. God sets the prisoners free.
- The Lord doth give the blind their sight, but thou doubt a praise. The Lord doth dearly love all those that walk in upright ways.
- [1 : 1 5] Let us sing these verses. Psalm 146, at verse 5. Oh, happy is that man, and bless. Oh, happy is that man, and bless whom Jacob's God to pay, who took upon the Lord doth rest, and on His God is stayed.
- Who made the earth and heaven side, who made the swanity, and on His God is stayed.
- Who made the swanity, and on His God is stayed. And on His God is within the sin, who truth doth ever keep.
- Who righteous judgment executes for those oppressed that be.
- Who do the hungry giveth food. God sets the prisoners free.
- [3 : 0 6] The Lord doth give the blind their sight, The Lord doth give the blind their sight, That the dead of grace And our beauty early love And all those that walk in the bright way In the eternal God we have been reminded Of the status of the happy man Who wouldn't want always to be happy But the biblical definition of the happy man
- Is the man who has placed his trust In the God of covenant faithfulness The God of Jacob And your word reminds us that the happy man Is the man who takes delight In the law of God Who takes delight in the revelation That you have given of yourself In your truth And who meditates and reflects upon it Day and night For the days of his delight And so your word speaks of the happy man Has been like a tree That is fruit-bearing That is planted near a river
- And whose leaf never withers It is difficult sometimes For us to see ourselves In that particular light How often we feel that we are like trees And the trees that are denuded of growth Grant O Lord That as we come into the presence this day That you would indeed draw near to us Despite our unworthiness Despite our undesiredness That thou wouldst draw near to us Open your truth to our minds and hearts And open our hearts and minds to the truth That it may flow into our lives Like a river of blessing Bringing growth and spiritual prosperity

Into all of our lives Watered by the river of grace Bless, we pray thee, every home and family Represented here Bless parents and children alike We give thee thanks For the number of children that have passed And we pray, O Lord, that from that midst That you would raise up another generation Who would not be ashamed To all these To act not at some of their lives From an early age And to would indeed be shining lights In their own generation To the redemptive power And grace Of almighty God Bless, we pray thee, each home and family

Associated with the congregation Bless those unable to be present today Through thy restraint and confidence Bless those who are grieving the loss of loved ones For thou hast visited The congregation and past days And we pray to them In the solitude of their homes In residential care or in hospital care And we pray to them And we pray to them That thou wouldst bless each and all According to their varied name Bless those who are grieving the loss of loved ones For thou hast visited For thou hast visited The congregation and past days And we moment Esteemed office bearers out of their midst Grant, O Lord, that thou wouldst raise up others Who could testify to the power of redemptive grace In their lives and in their hearts

[8 : 19] Bless the congregation at this time In their continuing history As they are now vacant Grant, O Lord, that the seed that was faithfully sown In past years May yet bear fruit Keep them united as one As they wait upon thee For the unfolding of thy guidance and providence for them And lead them to a pastor of thy choosing Who would be a true under-shepherd Under thine hand In this part of thy vineyard Lead us and guide us as we further wait upon thee Help us, we pray thee Cleanse in the blood In Jesus' name we ask it with forgiveness of sin Amen Amen Now just a word to the children

I'm going to ask you a question Do you like biscuits? You're not very sure Some are not Okay You ever heard of Bible biscuits?

No, you haven't Well I'm going to tell you about Bible biscuits Have you ever heard of a biscuit And the letters of the name of the biscuit is O-R-E-O Oreo It's a chocolate brown biscuit It's got a kind of cream in the centre It's very tasty, maybe it's I don't know if it just appeals to adults But I think it might have to be the children too But why do I call it the Bible biscuit?

For the simple reason That the letters That spell the name of the biscuit Are very instructive Begins with the letter O And the letter O says to me and to you Open Do you open your Bible?

Maybe you do But we have to do more than open the Bible The next letter is O-R And that means read So open And read It's very important that we read it And that we read it A little bit every day Maybe two verses or three verses Open And read And the next letter is E Enjoy Now you might not think That the Bible is something for enjoyment But I can tell you the Bible is the most exciting book In the world There's no book like it Some books Warm our hearts But this book Changes lives So Open Read Enjoy

[11 : 44] There's another O Obey Obey The Bible asks us To obey its teaching And to live by its standard So the next time You go into a shop With your mums and dads And you see the biscuit O-R-E-O O-R-E-O O-R-E-O Buy a pack And then remember What it reminds you of Open Read Enjoy Obey I hope That That will be a frequent occurrence In your life And you know The more you open it The more you read it The more enjoyable it becomes And as you obey it You will find That it changes your life Let us again sing

To God's praise From Psalm 68 And verse 31 Psalm 68 And verse 31 Those that be princes Great Shall then come out Of Egypt lines And Ethiopia The gods Shall soon Spread shelter At hands O all ye Kingdoms Of the earth Sing praises To this king For he is Lord The fool of all Unto him Praise the same I will sing down To the end Of the psalm Psalm 68 And verse 31 Five verses Those that be princes Great Shall then come out Of Egypt lines Those that be princes

Great Of Egypt Come on, God, in your blood.

Chalice, stretch out the hands. O while ye came, y'all, of the earth.

I to him praise his name. To heaven are righteous, heavens, no heavens.

With the love of his heart. Lord, his sense is my sacrifice.

In my tears at the moon.

Strength as your God, you give us life.

[illegible]

O Lord, Israel's own God is king.

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[18:14] O Lord, Israel's own God is king. O Lord, Israel's own God is king. O Lord, Israel's own God is king. O Lord, Israel's own God is king. O Lord, Israel's own God is king. O Lord, Israel's own God is king.

to him, heard him read the prophet Isaiah, and said, Understandest thou what thou readeſt? And he ſaid, How can I? Except ſome man ſhould guide me. And he deſired Philip that he would come up and ſit with him. The place of the ſcripture which he read was this, He was led as a lamb, as a ſheep to the ſlaughter. And like a lamb done before his ſheathed, ſo opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away. And who ſhall be cleared his generation? For his life is taken from the earth. And the young man had answered Philip, and ſaid, I pray thee, of whom ſpeaketh the prophet this? Of himſelf? Or of ſome other man? Then

Philip opened his mouth, and began the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. Thus they went on their way. They came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water. What hath hindered me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart thou haste? And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and the eunuch saw no more. And he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus, and passing through, he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea. Amen.

And may God bring us to us, thou reading from his truth. Let us further sing to his praise from Psalm 87. Psalm 87.

[21 : 40] Upon the hills of holiness, he his foundation sets. God, more than Jacob's dwellings are in life inside the hills of holiness. Things glorious are said on thee, thou city of the Lord.

And if your Zion shall be shed, that man and that man let, for thorn and he, that is most high in self, shall stop they turn.

There be nothing, nothing, and God may well sing in the air.

Behold, a man of Ethiopia. Luke, in this passage, which recounts what is, to my mind, a wonderful story.

The biographical detail provided informs us that he was a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and that he had come to Jerusalem fought towards it.

[26 : 06] But don't you think it's somewhat strange that although about 20,000 people were converted, from the day of Pentecost onwards, Luke, in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, doesn't give us any detail of the conversion of any of these till he comes to speak of this one man.

The conversion of one soul is of the utmost importance to the one who has foreloved them from all eternity, and thus the Bible reminds us that is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

who are not given any personal detail of the lives of the 20,000, who they were, or how the Lord worked in their lives and drew them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

none of that large number are mentioned individually until you come to this narrative.

[27 : 35] And the deduction I make from that is that Luke obviously attaches much importance to the relaying of the story of the conversion of this man.

And that makes you ask the question, why was the conversion of this man so important? What was so significant about the conversion of this man?

Well, you remember how Jesus spoke to his disciples before his ascension in the first chapter of the book of Acts.

And he says to his disciples, you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

And it seems to me that the conversion story of this one man, that in this conversion, Luke sees the beginning of the fulfillment of that prophetic utterance by the Lord Jesus.

[28 : 51] With the conversion of this one man, the spread of Christianity reaches into North Africa through his testimony and witness.

This man was to be, you might say, the forbearer of some very great and influential witnesses of Christ in that area of the world in ages to come.

Augustine was a giant in the faith.

Some present may remember and have known a man and a late Cal MacLeod. He was a retired teacher who became a lay preacher in the Stornoway congregation.

I remember him telling us in the man's in Kimloch around the dinner table and the topic of Calvin and Augustine arose.

[30 : 10] And to my mind, Calum spoke an unforgettable line. Calvin, Calvin, the great reformer. And this is how he expressed it.

Calvin was a pygmy on the shoulders of Augustine. And then he went on to say, but what a pygmy.

And of course, he had his own words of expressing matters. Well, I'd like to suggest three thoughts. First, the preparatory work in the life of this man.

Secondly, the provision of divine providence. And thirdly, personal evangelism. First then, the amazing preparatory work in the life of this man.

I don't want to give the impression that Luke is giving us all the detail. But he does give us sufficient detail to be able to see how the Lord was walking in the life of this man.

[31 : 29] You know, when God begins a walk in the heart of a man or a woman or a boy or a girl, he often makes you dissatisfied with the life you've been living.

For some reason that you probably at that moment cannot understand, but perhaps understand better with the benefit of hindsight, you become tired of the life you've been living.

You become dissatisfied with the path you've been walking. And all the things that once were so precious to you and without which in your estimation that life would be totally unbearable, they seem to have become less satisfying and there's a void in your life, an emptiness that you do not seem able to fill.

And perhaps you throw yourself more into the things that gave you a measure of satisfaction only to discover that the more you throw yourself into that kind of thing, there is still no satisfaction for you.

Now do not misunderstand me, it is not always true of everyone because God deals with everyone differently, but this does tend to be a feature of his life and from the detail that we have in this account I would suggest that it was true of this man.

[33 : 19] His life had been shaken up. Humanly speaking, he had power, he had wealth, he had job satisfaction, but an element of dissatisfaction had crept into his life.

He obviously had an awareness of the existence of God, although he was still largely ignorant with regard to his conception or understanding of God God.

And that is how we all are by nature. He did not know God as his God or as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so he makes this long, long trip to Jerusalem. It was very difficult to travel in those days. It was a long and costly journey.

journey. And the implication is that he wouldn't be able to undertake this journey if he was a fool man, but free to do so because of his position.

[34 : 34] The world then was a much bigger place than it appears today. how deeply mysterious is the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

Here is this man on a personal quest, searching for answers to profound questions regarding the life of man, regarding the relationship of man to God, how he had been created, what was the purpose of life, why was he in this world, life had been shaken and yet he can't find the resolution to the unsackly that had taken place in his life and left him pursuing this quest and going to Jerusalem.

And perhaps you are present this morning and you can relate to this man, the things that were formerly so attractive, so essential to living, they have become less so.

They do not hold the same deep attraction for him. You are looking for answers to the great deep questions of life, so was this man.

And he's made the journey as the treacherer to the Ethiopian queen. He's gone to Jerusalem, to the place where Jews worship of God.

[36 : 07] And what worship would he have found in Jerusalem? Luke tells us he had come to Jerusalem to worship. As a Gentile, at the very most, all he would have experienced would have been the worship of the court of the Gentiles, the outer court of the temple precepts.

would have been noisy. Did I say it? It may have been sometimes like the beginning of a service, when people are talking before the service begins.

And you may be talking to the person beside you. Others are not paying the slightest bit of attention. The court of the Gentiles was of it like that.

It wouldn't have been a true worship experience. But he wasn't just a Gentile. And the text seems to suggest that he did own up to what he was, a eunuch.

People made themselves eunuchs in order to get jobs, like this man had. Jobs where they could be trusted. especially in the taking care of certain women, like Queen Candice of Ethiopia.

[37 : 39] Eunuchs were not allowed, according to the law in the temple. They weren't even allowed in the court of the Gentiles. So the kind of worship that this man had found in Jerusalem wasn't a great experience of worship.

church. He may well have gone to the synagogue, maybe even the synagogue of the libertines that is mentioned in Acts chapter 6. But I suggest to you that his experience was probably disappointing.

He didn't find the answers that he was looking for. book. But somehow, and we're not told, in some way, perhaps somebody urged him in the providence of God, I don't know, to purchase a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

And I'm intrigued as to what it looked like, and how he went about reading it. here is this man and he has a book of the Old Testament.

He's riding in a chariot. Now, I've no idea what kind of suspension chariots had, but I imagine that it wasn't great.

[39 : 06] It wouldn't have been conducive to easy reading. And Luke tells us he's in the chariot reading, and apparently reading aloud, which tells you that this man had received an education.

He's able to read. Perhaps you remember when you were taught to read, how you began reading aloud with huge concentration, before you acquired the necessary reading skills that enable you to dare to skim quickly over pages of script.

But, you know, one shouldn't be too derogatory about reading aloud. Reading aloud can still be useful.

And I would suggest that even reading aloud from the Bible can be very useful. Just reading a verse aloud to yourself.

You know, rather than just letting your eyes skim over it, take the verse, say it out loud, and perhaps it will resonate more with you when you read it out loud.

[40 : 35] Of course, you can't hear that when you're amongst other people, but when you're on your own, read out loud. And I think maybe we're meant to deduce too, at this point, that the chariot have stopped.

That's the impression I get. And this man is reading. He's able to concentrate more. And of all the books in the Old Testament that you would want a seeking soul to read, to find the answer to his quest, I think the book of the prophet Isaiah fits in very well.

And of all the chapters in the Old Testament that you would want a seeker to place his eyes upon and read from it. Wouldn't it be Isaiah chapter 53?

So, don't you get the impression that there is something of a preparatory hand at work, that the sovereignty of God has been at work in the life of this man?

And that brings me to my second thought, the wonderful provision of divine providence. What are the chances of a man reading Isaiah 53, and at the same time coming across a man?

[42 : 14] And do you know what Luke has written? And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise and go toward the south unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem and to Gaza, which is desert.

Go to a desert place was the message that was communicated to Philip the evangelist. Remember, it was through the ministry of Philip that the gospel was brought to Samaria, as we're told at the outset of the chapter of which we're going to read part.

And that ministry was richly blessed by the Lord. We're told the people with one accord, gave heed unto those things which Philip did, hearing and seen the miracles which he did, and then Luke was on to say, there was great joy in that city.

You could say it was a time of real spiritual awakening. And Luke tells us that Peter and John were sent to assess what was taking place in Samaria.

Obviously, reports had gone back to Jerusalem. And you can't help but wonder were some skeptical in Jerusalem of the reports they were fearing in Samaria.

[43 : 49] It wouldn't surprise me there are always inevitably skeptics of the work of grace. Of course, there were always to be those who follow the crowd at a time of spiritual awakening like a man called Simon.

And Luke tells us that his heart was not white in the sight of God. God and from this place of revival and blessing Philip was being asked to go to a desert place.

From the hub of spiritual activity to a desert place. And I think most of us would have concluded Philip was doing a good walk.

Let's keep him in Samaria. But to go to a desert place, what a conquest. rest. And that the Lord knows what he's doing.

It reminds me of the late Reverend Murdoch McCauley who was minister at Black. He had been minister of government before he was called to Black in the mid-1950s, about 1956 or 7.

[45 : 20] And Gavin was experiencing much blessing under the ministry of Mr. McCauley and he was asked to go to Black.

Now the reason I know this, I was present in the congregation when he intimated his retirement. I had just newly married and my wife comes from there.

And he told the story that he wrote a letter declining the call to back. And he was ready to post it.

And his wife asked him the question, are you sure that you're doing right? back? And that made him reflect more on the call that was at rest to him.

And he never posted that letter. And subsequently he accepted the call to back. But very shortly into his ministry and back, he lost several of the current then office papers, works, which made him even wonder more, had he done the right thing.

[46 : 44] But his wife proved to be far more spiritual than him. And subsequent years demonstrated that that is where the Lord wanted him to be.

No, not suggesting anyone has back connections, that that was a desert place thing or anything like it. But here is Philip being asked by the Lord to go from a place of spiritual prosperity to go to a desert place.

And whatever else we might learn from this, can we not make the deduction that the Lord is not dependent on any man for his cause to prosper.

He is well able to take care of his own and his own church. Philip was not indispensable to the work in Samaria, neither are we indispensable to the work in our own day and generation.

There were many in Samaria. Were the many more important than the one? And I suppose our inclination might be to say yes, stay in Samaria, Philip.

[48 : 08] Was the one more important than the many? No. But you see, this was the Lord's assessment. If Philip thought that being sent to Samaria was odd, to be sent to the road that is a desert place, must have seen stranger still.

Who could be there? I don't know if he stopped for several hours, wondering what in the world he was supposed to be doing on the desert road, until he saw the dust of a chariot coming towards him.

And in this chariot is a man who is seeking for God and is reading Isaiah 53. And Philip has the presence of mind to ask him, do you understand what you are reading?

Now, what do you think were the chances of a man concerned about your soul, meeting a man like Philip, full of faith and the Holy Spirit, in such a remote location, a man who understood the teaching of Isaiah 53 and was well able to answer the question of this deeply puzzled court official, should it out of itself serve to highlight the amazing providence of God?

Here is the providence of God and opportunity for evangelism coming together, and through the exposition of Philip, this form of repositive comes to an understanding of God's way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and the evidence is it is decided to be baptized.

[49 : 59] See, here is water, what has hindered me to be baptized? In other words, what prevents me from being baptized? You find the same word used of those who heard the gospel message in the house of Cornelius, and who were also baptized.

Can any man forbid or withhold water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And actually, the book of the Acts of the Apostles concludes with these very words, where we are told how Paul spent the last two years of life, preaching the kingdom of God, teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him, the same word again, without him, God.

And what Luke is stressing, I believe, is how God opens ways so that the gospel message is spread, despite the intense level of opposition in a sin-duckened world and in sin-duckened hearts.

Every obstacle is removed. You know, we are prone to say, yes, and then we insert that.

Yes, I would like to do that, but. God takes away the reasons for this hesitant bat.

[51 : 39] He bats you into a corner so that you have no excuses left. What is hindering you today from joining with the people of God?

What is the obstacle that you see that is so huge and is preventing you from joining the fellowship of those who gather here every week to worship the Lord Jesus Christ?

What is preventing you from joining them when they gather together for prayers? Step too far? Eh?

Is it the but? yes, you would like that? Well, the Lord is able to take that bat out of your life.

And so you notice the profession that this man is. Philip says to him, there's no reason for you not to be baptized if you believe without your heart.

[52 : 53] God. And you notice the profession that he makes. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

There you have an expression of faith. And in that expression of faith you find knowledge. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

In other words, there's the knowledge imparted by the Holy Spirit of God. There is also conviction in that statement. This man believes that the Jesus he professes is unable to save sinners.

And then there is trust. He trusts Jesus with the salvation of his soul. The only hope I have. this man says, who my faith in Christ is to rest everything in Christ.

And so we have a remarkable conversion. And it seems that Luke not only wants us to grasp this remarkable conversion, but he wants us to catch the larger picture.

[54 : 08] Because there's a bigger picture that here the gospel is flowing from Jerusalem in obedience to the command of Jesus to the apostles.

As it is written, Luke writes in his gospel that Christ should suffer on the third day, rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations.

Beginning from Jerusalem, you are witnesses of these things. That message had begun is going to the ends of the earth. This man was reading the prophecy of Isaiah and the impression I get is that he had been redeemed from the beginning.

In chapter 11, this is what he would have read. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people from Assyria, from Egypt, from pastors, from Cush.

And Cush of course is Ethiopia. The Cushites were the Ethiopians. And in Isaiah 11, 11, this Ethiopian would see a prophecy that one day God would draw his people from Cush from Ethiopia.

[55 : 21] Wouldn't it be altogether extraordinary if he had gone on reading from Isaiah 53 and into Isaiah 56 and in verses 3 to 5, let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, the Lord will surely separate me from his people.

Let not the eunuchs say, behold, they are a bright tree. For thus says the Lord, to the eunuchs who keep my samples, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and an embedded of sons and daughters.

I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. How meaningful that would have been to the eunuchs who couldn't have sons and daughters. God has given this extraordinary promise that in the kingdom of God will establish in the one about whom he was reading in Isaiah 53 there would be a place for the broken, the people who have no rights or privileges, the outcasts of the world, a place for people as far away from Jerusalem as Ethiopia and Yunus.

And there's a sense that we have here a remarkable expansion of God's gospel ways in the new covenant so that this man could very well have said just as I am, just as I am, Ethiopian, black, Yunus, Gentile, O Lamb of God I come.

Teaching us among other things of the all and simply nature of the grace of God and Christ that receives gentle and dual life into the warm embrace of divine love.

[57 : 13] Have you experienced it? Has it touched upon your heart and life? And that brings me to my final point. The amazing inter-paragogy what in the life of this man, the wonderful provision of divine providence, personal evangelism.

Where do we see that? In the way in which Philip approaches and speaks to this man. One-to-one evangelism.

When you see the willingness and the courage and the wisdom of Philip, he doesn't have to engage in any pre-evangelism. You know, sometimes those who go out with the gospel, you've got to go through all kinds of contortions.

And perhaps you ask all kinds of silly questions just to get an opportunity as it were, to get the gospel message in. But here there's no pre-evangelism.

The man was reading Isaiah 53. The pre-evangelism had already been done in the providence of God. And this man engages in a fascinating dialogue between himself and the Jonah.

[58 : 38] The Jonah says, to Philip, I pray he couldn't speak if the prophet did, of himself or of some other man. Wouldn't you love someone to ask that question?

You know, who's looking for the answers to life? It's almost like the rich young man who came to Jesus asking, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

He was this money. He hadn't found God in Jerusalem. But he had found something, he had found a copy of the scriptures and he was reading it. So you know, that's a step in the right direction.

You'll read your Bible too. scripture. Do we know how valuable the scripture was? I don't know.

But if you've learned your short of catechism, you might remember that one of the questions in the short of catechism is this, what do the scriptures principally teach? And the answer, the scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.

[59 : 56] Here now is a man confronted by the scriptures and in reading the scriptures, questions will be stimulated in his heart and mind.

And do you see what Philip did? Luke announces Philip opened his mouth, began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus.

He preached unto him Jesus. Now, if you go back to verse 5 of the chapter, we are told that Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them.

It's the same person whom Philip preaches, but with a different emphasis. The Samaritans were looking for Messiah, once borne out by the conversation Jesus had with the woman of Samaria by the well.

Remember how she said to Jesus, I know that Messiah is coming. But here in this one-to-one between Philip and the eunuch, it is Jesus that is preached.

[61 : 12] Why? Well, the man is reading about the sufferings of Jesus. And you will remember how Jesus himself addressed all of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.

when Saul asked the question, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. He didn't say, I am Christ, he could have, but he said, I am Jesus.

Philip preached Jesus, the Jesus who was despised and rejected of men. He uses the name that was cast out.

And I get the sense that Philip could have taken anybody from anywhere in the Old Testament to Jesus. He was so full of Jesus.

He was so in love with Jesus that it didn't really matter where in the Old Testament he had begun, he would have gone to Jesus. But what a wonderful thing to say about Isaiah 53, where Jesus is, at the very heart of the passage, he told him the good news or he preached to him Jesus.

[62 : 30] And so he's baptized. Luke is giving us an example of a mercy. But that's not the issue here.

This man needed to learn about the claim of discipleship so he's baptized. And then note the final thing that Luke wants to see in this.

Philip is taken out of the picture. He's off to Azotus and eventually to Caesarea. But what the final little picture tells us is this.

As the story comes to an end, this man, this year, he went on his way rejoicing. at the beginning of the story, he's a shaken man.

He doesn't have answers to the greatest questions of life. At the close of the passage, he's found the answer, and the answer is Jesus. Because he's the answer to every question, he's found the one that has set him free, he has found the one that has given his life meaning and purpose, he's found the one that has filled the God-shaped void in his life, and he's rejoicing.

[63 : 47] And I like to think, as he's going in his chariot, bumping along on the road to Egypt, and eventually to Ethiopia, that he's singing as he rejoices.

What do you think he's singing? Well, I'm going to suggest this, but I don't believe it's what he was actually saying. Jesus, the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast, but sweeter far thy face to see, and in thy presence rest.

But you get the idea. His life has been turned around, and Jesus now, sat the very center of his life.

What a beautiful story of Gemini, sovereign conversion, a man from Ethiopia. Behold, says Philip, a man of Ethiopia, a changed man now, a converted man, a believer, one who lives for Jesus.

Ah, my friend, is that true of you today? Let us pray. the turn of and ever one, all with heart thee, for the life-changing one, that is done by thee, and can only be done by thee, in the lives of sinners, so that they come to rejoice in the Jesus, of whom they were ignorant and did not know, until that moment of enlightenment arrived in their lives.

[65 : 47] Oh, may it be true of each and all, and the glory shall be thine. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Amen. Let us conclude by singing to God's praise by Psalm 98.

O sing a new song to the Lord, for wonders he hath done, his right hand, and his holy hour, the victory of one.

The Lord God, his salvation, hath caused to be known, his justice, and the heathen sight, he openly hath shown.

down to the end of the verse marked forth. O sing a new song to the Lord. O sing a new song to the Lord, the wonders he hath done, heard With high conjunct his holy arm, in victory alone.

The Lord God is a nation, a constituent.

[67 : 35] It's just yet in the heaven's eye, he openly has won.

The mind for the rest of the world is a nation, a nation, a nation.

All ends of the earth have seen. Let all the earth have seen.

To the Lord send forth a joyful night.

Give God your voice a loud to him. Take your precious and rejoice.

[69 : 11] Amen. Amen. Now we may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the Father, the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit, rest on and abide with you all, now and forever. Amen.