

“A Meeting with a Eunuch!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Story:** When I was a boy, my grandma Dear worked in **Hunting Park** as a seamstress. Sometimes she took us to work (upstairs, wooden floors, full of pins)
 - 1.1.1. One thing we got to do was go around with a large magnet on a string & pick up all the pins/needles the seamstresses had dropped.
 - 1.1.2. But there were always some items it wouldn't pick up (not magnetized)
 - 1.1.2.1. There was nothing in their nature to respond to the magnet.
 - 1.1.2.2. Jesus said, “if I am lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all *peoples* to Myself.” Jn.12:32
 - 1.1.2.3. Jesus also said, “These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet **you refuse to come to me** to have life.” Jn.5:39,40
 - 1.1.3. Let's watch **one more** come to the **magnetic draw** of Christ!
- 1.2. After Philips **public** ministry in **Samaria**, we now have his **private** ministry in **Gaza**.

2. **HIS MESSAGE FROM AN ANGEL! (26)**

- 2.1. From ministering to multitudes (vs.6,7) to now, *the gospel to one*.
 - 2.1.1. Philip was the kind of evangelist who was willing to leave the **public meeting** (with its excitement) to help **one soul** find peace in a private place, where only God could see.
- 2.2. Philip was **obedient to the Spirit**, going where God led him.
- 2.3. God's method for winning others **does not use organizational machinery, worldly attractions, or high-powered promotion**.
 - 2.3.1. God uses people, dedicated men/women who will simply obey the Spirit
- 2.4. This is **Philips story...how will your story read?**
 - 2.4.1. This time of year we read **the Nativity story**.
 - 2.4.1.1. **A compilation of:** Josephs story, Mary's, the Wise Men's story, the shepherd's story, the angels story, ultimately God's story.
 - 2.4.2. **How will your story read?** – You're writing a chapter today!
 - 2.4.2.1. More like a **BLOG** (a running online diary)
 - 2.4.3. If you think, “**life is boring**”. Understand, Life is **Exciting**...its just **your story** that's boring!
 - 2.4.4. **Your life can be a page turner!** - It can have a **Gripping Plot**; be an **Adventure** story; a **Thriller**; a **Whodunit!**
 - 2.4.4.1. It all starts with vs.27 “**so he arose & went!**” (obedient to God's bidding)

3. HIS MEETING WITH A EUNUCH! (27-39)

- 3.1. (27) **Ethiopian** - from 2 Greek words meaning “to burn” & “face” (a burnt-face)
- 3.1.1. The NT takes special note of this **prominent black man**.
- 3.2. **Eunuch** - Because he was a eunuch he was **prohibited from worshipping** in the congregation of God’s people (Deut 23:1 **He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD**) (see ESV for graphic details)
- 3.2.1. **But note: He travels so far to worship, even though debarred. It attests to his godliness! 😊**
- 3.2.2. In later Scriptures God took special note of **godly eunuchs**:
- 3.2.2.1. **Read Isaiah 56:4,5**
- 3.3. **Candace** – The name was **not a proper name** of an individual, but that of a **dynasty** of Ethiopian queens.¹ [Lie *Pharaoh*, or *Caesar*]
- 3.4. **Jerusalem to worship** – **Why the interest in *worshipping at the Temple* all the way down in Ethiopia?**
- 3.4.1. The monarchy of Ethiopia **claims** to trace its genealogy from **King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba** (1 Kg 10) through their son **Menelik I to King Haile Selassie**, who was deposed in 1974 some 3000 yrs later²
- 3.4.2. In those days **some people who were weary of the many gods and the loose morals** of the nations.
- 3.4.3. **They came to Judaism** and there found the **one God & the strict moral standards** which gave life meaning.
- 3.4.4. **If they accepted** Judaism & were **circumcised** they were called **proselytes**;
- 3.4.5. **If they didn’t go that length, but continued to attend the Jewish synagogues, & to read the Jewish scriptures** they were called **God-fearers**.
- 3.4.5.1. **This Ethiopian** must have been one of these **searchers** who came to rest in Judaism **either** as a **proselyte** or a **God-fearer**.³
- 3.5. (31) **How can I unless I have someone guides me, or, explains it to me.**
- 3.5.1. **My purpose for doing what I do on Sun mornings, Wed nights.**
- 3.5.2. **Neh.8:8 So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; & they gave the sense, & helped them to understand the reading.**
- 3.5.2.1. **Observation; Interpretation; Application. [What does it say; What does it mean; How do I apply it to me]**
- 3.6. (32-34) God is having this man read from one of the key Messianic prophecies pointing to Yeshua.
- 3.6.1. **Faith comes by hearing, & hearing by the Word of God.** Rom 10:17.

¹Strong, J. (1996). *The exhaustive concordance of the Bible* : (electronic ed.) (G2582). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.

²Stern, D. H. (1992). *Jewish New Testament commentary*

³*The Acts of the Apostles*. 2000, c1976 (W. Barclay). The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. (68). Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

- 3.6.2. Isaiah 53 was the chapter Philip used, that **wonderful picture of the Lamb of God**.
- 3.6.3. **Look at the question in 33b** – He died, so who will pass on his name & heritage? [Philip probably said, “It’s a lament, but unwarranted, because Messiah came back from the dead!”]
- 3.7. (35) Philip is called an evangelist (21:8), & like any wise evangelist, he began communicating **the Good News about Jesus at the point of interest and concern of his hearer!**
- 3.7.1. **Unwise evangelists, like unwise salespeople**, sometimes use a prepared “**pitch**” that does not speak to the concerns of their “**customer**”; their message proves irritating, like scratching where it doesn’t itch.
- 3.8. (36) The **Holy Spirit** is the Lord of the Harvest, and it’s through Him that we have the power to witness (Acts 1:8).
- 3.8.1. The Spirit opened **the way** for Philip to come to the man;
- 3.8.2. The Spirit opened **the Scriptures** to the seeking sinner;
- 3.8.3. The Spirit opened **the sinner’s heart** to the Savior.
- 3.8.3.1. **A man** can’t be saved who **doesn’t understand** what he’s doing
- 3.8.3.2. And only **the Spirit** can teach the sinner the truths of the Gospel
- 3.8.4. **When the Spirit brings a prepared servant and a contrite sinner together, there will be a harvest!** 😊 (Warren Wiersbe)
- 3.9. The Ethiopian proved his faith by his **baptism**.
- 3.9.1. It was by **baptism and circumcision** that the Gentile entered the Jewish faith.
- 3.9.2. In New Testament times baptism was largely **adult** baptism.
- 3.9.2.1. The 1st record of “**infant baptism**” was when the **Roman Emperor Valens** insisted his dying son be baptized in AD 370.
- 3.9.2.2. The *Catholic Council of Mela* made infant baptism law in AD 416.
- 3.9.2.3. **Infant Baptism** is sometimes referred to as **paedobaptism** from the Greek **pais** meaning “child.”
- 3.9.2.4. It’s contrasted with what is called “**believer’s baptism**,” or **credobaptism**, from the Latin word **credo** meaning “**I believe**”, (i.e. only baptizing individuals who personally confess faith in Jesus, therefore excluding small children)
- 3.9.3. **It symbolized 3 things:**
- [1] It symbolized **cleansing**. As a **man’s body** was cleansed by the water, so **his soul** was bathed in the grace of Christ.
- [2] It marked a **clean break**. We are told how 1 missionary when he baptized his converts made them enter the river by one bank and sent them out on the other, as if at the moment of baptism **a line was drawn** in their lives which sent them out to a new world.[we should incorp]

[3] Baptism was a real union with Christ. As the waters closed over a man's head he seemed to *die with Christ* and as he emerged he *rose with Christ*.⁴

3.9.3.1. Q: Have you been baptized...if not, why not?

- 3.10. (39) **Philip** was caught away for a ministry elsewhere(*his mini-Rapture*); **but the treasurer** went on his way **rejoicing!**
- 3.10.1. When Philip preached Jesus **in Samaria**, there was **great joy** (8).
- 3.10.2. And when he presented Jesus **in the desert**, he sent the new believer on his way **rejoicing**.
- 3.10.2.1. **Joy** is one of the evidences of true conversion.
- 3.10.3. It was said of the **Rich Young Ruler**, that he went away **sad**; It is said about **this Eunuch** he went away **rejoicing!**
- 3.10.4. Lk.15:4,5 – It was said of a **shepherd** who finds his **lost sheep**, “**when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.**”
- 3.10.5. Lk.15:9,10 - **The woman** who found **the lost coin** said, “**Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!**”
- 3.10.6. Lk.15:23,24 – **The father** of his **lost prodigal son** said, “**bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.**”
- 3.11. C. S. Lewis said it best regarding **Joy**, “Our Lord finds our desires not **too strong**, but **too weak**. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition, when **infinite joy** is offered to us, **like an ignorant child** who wants to go on **making mud pies in the slum** because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a **holiday at the sea**. We are far too easily pleased.”
- 3.11.1. **In Your presence is fullness of joy!** – Ps.16:11

4. HIS MINISTRY IN AZOTUS! (40)

- 4.1. (40) **Azotus**/Ashdod today(of the Gaza Strip), is 1 of 3 port cities(Haifa & Elat) & is 25 miles south of Tel Aviv.
- 4.2. **Until he came to Caesarea** – some 40 miles north of Tel Aviv.
- 4.2.1. There he **married & settled down** (21:8,9).
- 4.3. **What did we learn from Philip?** Philip was **not** a man to **act on his own authority**; **Nor** one who sought to carry out a mission **in his own power**; He was a **God-sent servant**; And a **spirit controlled worker**; When the "Spirit of the Lord" directed Philip to **go to a certain place he arose and went**; When the "Spirit of the Lord" told Philip to **speak to a certain person**, he obeyed with a **cheerful willingness**.

⁴The Acts of the Apostles. 2000, c1976 (W. Barclay). The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. (69). Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

- 4.4. This is **Philips story**...how will **your story** read?
- 4.4.1. Throw your **mind-windows** wide open...it can be an awesome story!
- 4.4.2. Now that you've "**discovered God**" you'll find out it's a **continuous discovery**.
- 4.4.2.1. Each day is **rich** with **new aspects of Him & His working**.
- 4.4.3. **God wants to write a good story...of your life!**
- 4.4.3.1. **Bad decisions** make **bad stories!**
- 4.4.3.2. You mess up, God says, "ok" "let's make a story out of this."
- 4.4.3.3. Decisions come into your life **like Joseph & Potiphar's wife** & he decides, "***I don't want this to be my story, or my wife's, or my kids.***"
- 4.4.4. **God is still love-hungry.**
- 4.4.4.1. **And desiring to pour out His love upon new "Philips".**
- 4.4.5. **Find souls dead to God, looking sadly out of hungry eyes.** [Frank Laubach]
- 4.4.5.1. **And bring them to Jesus!**