

Be Prepared for God's Perfect Timing

International Bible Lesson

Acts 8:26-39

Sunday, October 28, 2012

“And the eunuch 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 at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:34-35—KJV).

“The official asked Philip, ‘Tell me, of whom is the prophet saying this? Of himself or of someone else?’ Then Philip began to speak; starting from this passage of scripture, he told him the Good News about Jesus” (Acts 8:34-35—GNB).

“The eunuch asked Philip, ‘About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet [Isaiah] say this, about himself or about someone else?’ Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus” (Acts 8:34-35—NRSV).

An Ethiopian eunuch travelled to Jerusalem to worship God. Knowing how to read Hebrew, he bought a scroll of the prophet Isaiah to take home. Though The Great Isaiah Scroll from Qumran is almost twenty-five feet long and about eleven inches high, the eunuch had almost finished reading the lengthy Book of Isaiah before he started home.

With perfect timing, an angel told Philip to go down to the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. With perfect timing, the Holy Spirit told Philip to go to the eunuch's chariot as it came toward him. With perfect timing, Philip heard the eunuch reading from Isaiah, chapter 53. With perfect timing, the eunuch asked Philip for help to understand the scripture passage he was reading. With perfect timing, Philip used the exact passages from Isaiah that he heard the eunuch reading to explain how Jesus fulfilled the prophecy. With perfect timing, the eunuch came to believe in Jesus as his Savior and they came to enough water for Philip to baptize him. With perfect timing, the eunuch could now interpret Isaiah so others back home could come to believe in Jesus as their Savior.

When believers reflect on how and when they came to know the Lord Jesus, or trust in the Bible, or experience spiritual transformation, or grasp an opportunity to serve God, they recognize the perfect timing of God. In addition, they praise God for using a variety of people and ways to reach them and give them new life.

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Thinking Further

1. Before Philip met him, in what ways did the eunuch indicate that he wanted to obey God?

2. In what ways did Philip prepare himself to help the eunuch come to faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized?

3. In what ways did the angel and the Holy Spirit help Philip and the eunuch?

4. How important is reading and studying the Bible for both believers and unbelievers in Jesus Christ? Give a reason for your answer.

5. When the eunuch returned to Ethiopia, do you think he taught others in Ethiopia about Isaiah the prophet and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and about the importance of repentance and baptism? Give a reason for your answer.

Read the verse by verse commentary on this lesson at the BibleLessonForum.com. See the recommended study and worship resources at SmallChurchResources.com.