

THE BOOK OF ACTS

ACTS 8:26-40 | LESSON SUMMARY

The Ethiopian Eunuch

ACTS 8:27, "And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship..." (ESV)

- Wealthy and Devout
 - Candace = Kandake
 - The African queens of Ethiopia (the Nubian Queens) were well-known and not only wealthy, but powerful also
 - This man is on pilgrimage and "he was reading the prophet Isaiah." (8:28)
 - He had come "to worship"

Pilgrimage

ACTS 8:29, "And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." (ESV)

- The Ethiopian Eunuch came to worship and is intently reading Isaiah when Phillip is instructed by the Holy Spirit to approach him
 - A pilgrimage of this distance would have been a significant undertaking
 - Approximately 1,500 miles
 - An important official like him would have required a caravan
 - Scrolls were expensive



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ACTS 8:31, "...And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him." (ESV)

- Isaiah is not light reading!
 - Isaiah 53
 - His confusion actually shows his understanding of various Jewish interpretations
 - Judaism has a long history in Africa
 - Some date it back to the time of Solomon, but considering how prominently Africa is featured in the Old Testament, this is hardly surprising
 - As soon as Phillip explains this passage to the Ethiopian Eunuch, he enthusiastically accepts, saying, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

ACTS 8:38, "And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." (ESV)



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- Phillip baptizes the Ethiopian Eunuch
 - And that's where this impressive conversion narrative becomes even more miraculous...

"...the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away..."
(Acts 8:39, ESV)
 - This type of supernatural teleportation only occurs a few times in Scripture...
 - Elijah: 2 Kings 2:11 (Obadiah fears it 1 Kings 18:12)
 - Ezekial: Ezekial 8:3
 - Enoch: Hebrews 11:5
 - Jesus

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Heather Preston, *The Kandake; a Missing History*, C. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, Randall Price, *Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archeology*, *The Holman Bible Atlas*

