

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 7 w/Answers

Acts 8:26-40

Last week we studied the stoning of Stephen and found that as a result, the Gospel spread out from Jerusalem. Those who departed Jerusalem continued to proclaim the Gospel as they traveled forth. We followed Philip and his evangelical ministry into Samaria as he took the Gospel message to the Samaritans.



This week we will continue to travel with Philip as God calls him to the desert road and his encounter with the Eunuch from Ethiopia. From this, we will better understand the impact that we can have on the lives of others if we will only heed and follow God's call. Another very clear message is that the Gospel was and is for everyone, not just the Jews; and we will once again look at finding Christ in the Old Testament.

For this week then, let's read Acts Chapter 8:26-40 then answer the following:

1. Philip hears God's call and immediately heads down the road to Gaza. Along the way he approaches a Eunuch from Ethiopia. Without reading past verse 28, if we were Jewish, why is this scene so amazing? What clues are contained in verses 27-28 that tell us this is an unusual event?
 - a. Deuteronomy 23:1
 - i. ANSWER: No circumcised man can enter the congregation of the Lord
 - b. His country of origin was:
 - i. ANSWER: Africa
 - c. The verses tell us he had gone to Jerusalem to:
 - i. ANSWER: Worship
 - d. He was reading a text written in:
 - i. ANSWER: Hebrew
 - e. His position was:
 - i. ANSWER: Government Official - Secretary of the Treasury
 - f. We know he was a man of prominence and wealth, because he was riding in a CHARIOT and reading a MANUSCRIPT (Isaiah).
2. Parked on the side of the road, the Eunuch does not realize that God is sending someone to answer his questions. Philip, traveling the same road, does not realize that God is sending him to minister to this man until he is close, and the Holy Spirit tells him to go the chariot. How does Philip engage the Eunuch in conversation?
 - a. ANSWER: He asks him if he understands what he is reading.

Philip took the Eunuch's question and, beginning with the verses he was reading, explained Christ to him. His explanation led to the Eunuch receiving Christ and desiring to be baptized. Could we do the same today? Consider the following questions about finding Christ in the Old Testament.

3. Why is it even important to be able to find Christ in the Old Testament? We have the New Testament and the entire Gospel message, the Roman Road and so many other approaches to spreading the Gospel, why bother with the Old Testament?
 - a. John 5:39
 - i. ANSWER: Jesus instructed us that the Scriptures testify about Him.
 - b. John 1:45
 - i. ANSWER: Philip previously himself acknowledged that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets.
 - c. John 4:25-26
 - i. ANSWER: The Samaritan woman at the well knows of the Messianic prophecy and ultimately recognizes Jesus as its fulfillment.
 - d. John 12:38
 - i. ANSWER: References Isaiah's prophecy related to Jesus.
 - e. Matthew 8:17
 - i. ANSWER: References Isaiah's "suffering servant" prophecy.
 - f. Luke 22:37
 - i. ANSWER: References Isaiah's pronouncements in Isaiah 53:12.
 - g. Luke 24:25-27
 - i. ANSWER: Jesus recounts all of the scriptures referencing his coming.
 - h. Luke 24:44-47
 - i. ANSWER: Jesus preaches that he is the fulfillment of that which was "written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms".
4. So, based on the above, we see that it is the Old Testament that validates Jesus is the Messiah. Without it, how would we know? Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of all Scripture. If we were presented with a similar situation as Philip's, how would we perform? What would we do? Let's look at that for a moment. Who was it that led Philip to the Eunuch in verse 29, and do you think He would have led Philip there without equipping him for the task?
 - a. ANSWER: It was the Holy Spirit, who of course would not have done so if he was not equipped for the task.

5. Can you do what Philip did, i.e., take a passage about Christ from the Old Testament and tie it to Jesus being the long awaited Messiah? Again, consider that Philip didn't start with the passage in Isaiah - the Eunuch did. We should be prepared as well, should someone be reading an Old Testament passage about Christ and have a question. We should be confident that the Holy Spirit will lead us; and our knowledge of the Old Testament should be such we could reasonably answer the question. I would bet you would do better than you suspect. Here are a few to try out; jot down a brief description of why the following refers to Christ:
- a. Genesis 1:26
 - i. ANSWER: Use of the adjective "our" refers to Jesus as part of the Trinity.
 - b. Genesis 14:18
 - i. ANSWER: Refers to Melchizedek, the priest of the God; i.e., a picture of Christ.
 - c. Genesis 18 through 19:1 (Compare especially 19:1 with 18:2)
 - i. ANSWER: Additional references to the Triune Deity
 - d. Joshua 5:13-14
 - i. ANSWER: God sends his Commander, Jesus, to Joshua.
 - e. Leviticus 16:32 (compare with Hebrews 2:3 and Hebrews 5:1-10)
 - i. ANSWER: Direct reference to Jesus making the sacrifice and atonement for all people.
 - f. Psalm 110:4
 - i. ANSWER: Another reference to Melchizedek/Jesus as the eternal priest.
 - g. Daniel 3:19-25
 - i. ANSWER: Jesus, the Son of God, walks with, and protects, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.
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As we can see, even from this very fundamental look at the Old Testament, all of the Scripture speaks to Jesus as the Christ – and to the existence of the Triune God – long before creation. It is also quite evident that having an understanding of the Old Testament greatly strengthens and enlarges our understanding of New Testament passages and the ministry of Jesus while He walked the earth.

Our faith is built on a strong foundation through Christ, and our understanding of God's Holy Word not only validates this faith, but points to the certainty of Christ's coming again and to our eternal home with Him.

I hope that this brief lesson has inspired you to learn more about the Old Testament and about Christ's role from before the beginning of Creation. I also pray that it will help you recognize that by following God's leading, even on a dusty road to the desert, we can help others come to a saving knowledge of Christ.

As you reflect on this lesson, remember that the Eunuch was an affluent Government Official from a foreign land (Africa); yet Philip did not hesitate to help this foreigner understand God's word and learn of Christ. Let us pray that each of us will have that boldness, that eagerness to serve, and that willingness to share our faith with anyone, anywhere, and at anytime.

In our next lesson, we will be studying about another journey, on another road – the road to Damascus and the conversion of Paul.

Have a great week everyone.

Yours in Christ,

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