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## **"He Preached Jesus To Him"**

### **Acts 8:26-40**

#### **Introduction**

1. What have you come here this morning to hear?
2. What is it that our sermons are to consist of?
3. Your answer to both these questions might be the same . . .
  - a. We have come here to hear the gospel.
  - b. That is what sermons should consist of "good news" — gospel.
4. The good news of which we so often speak is good news about a Savior and the salvation He has brought to us.
5. It is the good news concerning Jesus.
6. In Acts 8:35 Luke records this statement, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him."
7. There are three questions that I would like for us to consider this morning:
  - a. What prompted the preaching of Jesus?
  - b. Of what did the preaching of Jesus consist?
  - c. What was the result of that preaching?
8. I believe that when Jesus is preached, good things happen, even as they did in the passage read for us this morning.

[Let us begin by asking the first question . . .]

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## **I. What Prompted the Preaching of Jesus?**

### **A. ONE MAN SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND SCRIPTURE**

1. Luke introduces us to a man he simply calls "an Ethiopian eunuch" (v. 27).
  - a. Ethiopia was the land to the south of Egypt which today is part of Sudan.
  - b. He was a royal official who was in charge of the treasury of "Candice," a royal title for the "queen of the Ethiopians"
2. This man had come to Jerusalem to worship.
  - a. He was a pilgrim at one of the annual festivals — Passover, Pentecost or Tabernacles
  - b. The law of Moses (Deuteronomy 23:1) prevented eunuchs from entering "the assembly of the Lord"
  - c. The closest he could have gotten to the sacred services was the Court of the Gentiles in the general temple complex.

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- d. However, God had promised through his prophet Isaiah,

"For thus says the Lord, "To the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, to them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off." (Isaiah 56:4-5)
3. As this eunuch was traveling home in his chariot, he was reading from the scroll of Isaiah.
4. Individually owned copies of the Scriptures were rare and very expensive because they had to be copied by hand.

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### **B. ANOTHER MAN EAGER TO EXPLAIN SCRIPTURE**

1. Philip was a man full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom who was enjoying much success preaching the gospel in Samaria.
2. It was his desire to share the gospel with whomever would listen.
3. While he was still in Samaria, an angel of the Lord spoke to him, instructing

him "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza" (Acts 8:26).

- a. This was a sixty mile stretch of well worn road which led from Jerusalem down to the city of Gaza.
  - b. Gaza was the southernmost of the five major Philistine cities.
  - c. It lay near the Mediterranean coast.
4. Eager to do God's will, Philip immediately set out.
  5. Traveling along this road he noticed the eunuch riding in his chariot — he could hear him reading from the prophet Isaiah.
  6. The Spirit told Philip to "Go up and join this chariot." (Acts 8:29)
  7. When Philip asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading, he was told, "how could I, unless someone guides me?" (Acts 8:31).
  8. Upon being invited into the chariot, Philip noticed the text he was reading from, specifically that which in our English Bibles is Isaiah 53:7-8.

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"He was led as a sheep to slaughter;  
And as a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
So He does not open His mouth.  
"In humiliation His judgment was taken away;  
Who will relate His generation?  
For His life is removed from the earth."

(Acts 8:32–33, NASB95)

9. He struggled to understand about whom the author was writing, and asked Philip, "Please tell me, of whom does the prophet say this? Of himself or of someone else?" (Acts 8:34).
- a. Jewish teachers of that day struggled with Isaiah 53.
  - b. They knew that the Messiah was to be a *king*.
  - c. However, they could not reconcile this with the concept of *suffering*.
  - d. As a result, they did not believe this passage applied to the Messiah.

- e. So, they were left with the question, "To whom did it apply?"
  - 1) Some taught that it referred to Isaiah himself or some unnamed prophet.
  - 2) Others taught that it represented the nation of Israel which had suffered much for her faith.
- 10. Philip began with this Scripture and preached Jesus to him.

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## **II. Of What Did the Preaching of Jesus Consist?**

### **A. GOD'S EXALTED SERVANT (ISAIAH 52:13-15)**

"Behold, My servant will prosper,  
He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.  
Just as many were astonished at you, My people,  
So His appearance was marred more than any man  
And His form more than the sons of men.  
Thus He will sprinkle many nations,  
Kings will shut their mouths on account of Him;  
For what had not been told them they will see,  
And what they had not heard they will understand."

(Isaiah 52:13–15, NASB95)

1. Just as the nations around Israel during the days of David and Solomon were astonished that this once nomadic people had become such an exalted nation, so God's servant would be "high and lifted up."
2. Prior to His exaltation, however, his appearance would be "marred more than any man" (Isaiah 52:14).
3. Such was the result of the slapping, the scourging and the crucifixion of our Lord (Matthew 26:67; 27:26,35; Mark 14:65; 15:15, 24; Luke 23:33; John 19:1,3,18).
4. Those to whom this Servant will bring justice are appalled that He will do so

by His own injury and abuse.

5. They have never "heard" of such a thing, but now they would "understand" it.

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### **B. REJECTION OF GOD'S SERVANT (ISAIAH 53:1-3)**

"Who has believed our message?  
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?  
For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,  
And like a root out of parched ground;  
He has no stately form or majesty  
That we should look upon Him,  
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him."  
(Isaiah 53:1-2, NASB95)

1. This servant is "the arm of the Lord" that has been promised (Isaiah 50:2; 51:5,9; 52:10; 53:1) is God's ability to restore His people and all people to Himself.
2. However, the message of His coming has been disbelieved. Why?
3. For three reasons:
  - a. He comes to the earth in a quiet and unassuming way (Isaiah 53:2).
  - b. He has no extraordinary beauty or attractiveness that would draw people to him — instead, His "appearance" is quite ordinary.

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He was despised and forsaken of men,  
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;  
And like one from whom men hide their face  
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him."  
(Isaiah 53:1-3, NASB95)

- c. He will be "despised" and "forsaken" because He takes upon Himself

the "pains" and "sickness" of the world (Isaiah 53:3).

4. This Servant will come to take away the sins of the world, but no one will pay any attention to him.

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### C. THE SERVANT'S CARRYING OF OUR SIN (ISAIAH 53:4-6)

"Surely our griefs He Himself bore,  
And our sorrows He carried;  
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,  
Smitten of God, and afflicted.  
But He was pierced through for our transgressions,  
He was crushed for our iniquities;  
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,  
And by His scourging we are healed."

(Isaiah 53:4-6, NASB95)

1. In these verses, Isaiah answers the question concerning why this Servant of God should suffer.
2. He would suffer, not because of anything which He had done.
3. It would be "our griefs" that He bore, "our sorrows" that He carried.
4. He would be "our transgressions" and "our iniquities" which caused Him to be "pierced through" and "crushed."
5. We have "peace" because He was punished — we are "healed" by His wounds.

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"All of us like sheep have gone astray,  
Each of us has turned to his own way;  
But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all  
To fall on Him."

(Isaiah 53:4-6, NASB95)

6. As John Oswalt said, "We," the blind, rebellious people of God . . . are the sheep who have gone astray, but he is the one who gets beaten for our willfulness!"

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**D. THE INJUSTICE AND MISTREATMENT HE RECEIVES (ISAIAH 53:7-9)**

"He was oppressed and He was afflicted,  
Yet He did not open His mouth;  
Like a lamb that is led to slaughter,  
And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers,  
So He did not open His mouth."

(Isaiah 53:7, NASB95)

1. In these verses, Isaiah draws our minds to the innocence of God's servant.
2. We also see His willing submission to the unjust treatment He receives.
3. Twice, Isaiah wrote, "He did not open His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).
  - a. He remained silent while being questioned by "the chief priest and the elders" (Matthew 27:12).
  - b. When Pilate asked Him, "Where are You from?", Jesus did not answer (John 19:9).
  - c. Herod "questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing" (Luke 23:9).

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"By oppression and judgment He was taken away;  
And as for His generation, who considered  
That He was cut off out of the land of the living  
For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?  
His grave was assigned with wicked men,  
Yet He was with a rich man in His death,  
Because He had done no violence,

Nor was there any deceit in His mouth."

(Isaiah 53:8-9, NASB95)

4. He was "cut off" in the prime of life, deprived of any descendants (v. 8).
5. All of this for a man who "had done no violence," nor in whom there was "any deceit" (v. 9).

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## E. THE ATONEMENT HE PROVIDES (ISAIAH 53:10-12)

"But the Lord was pleased  
To crush Him, putting Him to grief;  
If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,  
He will see His offspring,  
He will prolong His days,  
And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.  
As a result of the anguish of His soul,  
He will see it and be satisfied;

(Isaiah 53:10-11a, NASB95)

1. Why did these things happen to this Servant?
2. God intended that it should be this way.
3. What good father among us would wish for his son to be crushed?
4. We could only wish this is some unquestionably greater good could be obtained.

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5. God, Himself, provides us with the answer (v. 11).

"By His knowledge the Righteous One,  
My Servant, will justify the many,  
As He will bear their iniquities.  
Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great,  
And He will divide the booty with the strong;



Because He poured out Himself to death,  
And was numbered with the transgressors;  
Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,  
And interceded for the transgressors."

(Isaiah 53:11b-12, NASB95)

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### **III. What Was the Result of Philip's Preaching of Jesus?**

#### **A. BAPTISM FOR SALVATION (ACTS 8:36-38)**

"As they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him."  
(Acts 8:36–38, NASB95)

1. Luke records that their travel brought them to a certain body of water.
2. Upon seeing the water, the eunuch responded to Philip's preaching, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" (v. 36).
3. No doubt, Philip's preaching of Jesus included baptism.

"Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." (Acts 22:16, NASB95)

"Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21, NASB95)

4. The result was that the eunuch stopped the chariot and both men went down into the water.
5. There Philip baptized (immersed) this Ethiopian official into Christ.

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## **B. REJOICING (ACTS 8:39)**

"When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:39, NASB95)

1. Following the eunuch's baptism, Luke tells us that the Spirit of the Lord snatched (to seize, carry off by force) Philip away.
2. While the eunuch would never see this man again, he was able to go "on his way rejoicing" (v. 39)
3. Why could he rejoice?
  - a. No longer did he have to bear the guilt of his sin.
  - b. Through his baptism he had died to his old life and become a new person in Christ.
  - c. He was now a child of the King of kings — he was a Christian.
  - d. He now had an inheritance that was "imperishable and undefiled" one which would not fade away, reserved in heaven for him (1 Peter 1:4).

## **Conclusion**

1. What is it about the preaching of Jesus that so changes lives?
2. It is the story of a Savior.
3. It is the story of God's active pursuit of those who are lost in order to bring them salvation.
4. It is the story of a new life free from the guilt and bondage of sin.
5. Today, we too have water.
6. What prevents you from being baptized?
  - a. Do you believe in Jesus?
  - b. Will you confess that belief?