

VBS 2022

**THE RETURN
OF THE
KING**

Day 3: Spread the News
1st-5th Grade

Spread the News

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

Each day, the students will learn a memory verse. Students who learn all 5 memory verses this week will receive a prize.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will teach the importance of being witnesses by sharing the good news of Jesus and the kingdom of God with others.

Key Verses

Acts 8:1-13, 26-40—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 28:18-20

Romans 10:17

Memory Verse - Matthew 24:44

"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Hook

Review yesterday's memory verse, Matthew 24:43

Start the class by asking, "Whose job is it to tell others about Jesus?" Maybe some will think that's a pastor's job, or a job for missionaries. Maybe some will say that's a job for Sunday School teachers or their parents.

Continue the conversation by asking them who first told them about Jesus. Share from your own experience, and explain to them that today we will learn that sharing the good news of God's kingdom isn't a job just for teachers or pastors, but for everyone who is a follower of Jesus.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

There was a man named Saul who was persecuting followers of Jesus. He was going to the homes of Christians and arresting them. Because of this, Christians fled to many different areas, but they didn't stop sharing the Gospel. Wherever they went, they continued to tell people about Jesus and God's kingdom.

At that time, a follower of Jesus named Philip traveled to the city of Samaria where he shared the good news of Jesus, performing miracles and casting out demons as he went. The people listened to his words and were filled with great joy. There was a sorcerer named Simon in that same city who also captured the people's attention, and had for some time with his magic. But as people began believing in Philip's message about God's kingdom, Simon also believed and was baptized!

Later, an angel of the Lord told Philip to go south along a certain road in the desert. As he obeyed, he saw a chariot, and in the chariot was a wealthy Ethiopian man who worked for a queen. He had come to Jerusalem to worship. The Holy Spirit directed Philip to approach the chariot and, as he did, he overheard the Ethiopian man reading the Bible. Philip asked the man if he understood what he was reading, and the man asked for Philip's help to understand.

Philip explained passage of Scripture to the Ethiopian man, and taught him about Jesus. The man believed that Jesus was the Christ, God's Son and asked to be baptized. Philip baptized him and the Holy Spirit took him away to another place. The Ethiopian man continued on his way rejoicing in what had happened!

LOOK

Yesterday we looked at what it means to be ready for Jesus' return and learned that God has given us jobs to do and different giftings and abilities that we are to be faithful with. Today we learn that one of the things Jesus has commanded all of His followers to do until He returns is to be His witnesses, going into all the world to make disciples and teach all that Jesus has commanded (Matthew 28:18-20). The good news of God's kingdom is for everyone from every nation. Jesus is King! He made a way for all to become citizens of His good and perfect kingdom. And He is coming back soon to take us there to be with Him!

After Jesus ascended, His disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Empowered to be witnesses, they began sharing God's good news. Immediately, people started to believe and God's kingdom began to grow! And that's the amazing thing about sharing the Gospel. Yes, it is true that it is a way we show that we are ready for Jesus' return, but it is also an invitation to others to prepare for His return. We are essentially proclaiming as we go, "The King is coming! I'm ready. Are you?"

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

Maybe you have already shared God's good news before and people didn't listen to you or believe you. Maybe they even made fun of you. Or maybe you're wondering, "What should I say? Who should I tell? Where should I start?" If we look at what Philip said as an example for us, we aren't really given much detail. To the crowds of people in Samaria the Bible simply tells us that Philip "preached Christ to them," (Acts 8:5) and regarding Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian man it says, "beginning at this Scripture, [Philip] preached Jesus to him" (Acts 8:35).

So what does it look like to share the good news of God's kingdom? Simply put, it looks like telling people about Jesus. From the Bible, we can tell others who He is, what He has done, and what He is going to do. We can tell them that God loves them so much He sent His only Son into the world to make a way for anyone who believes in Him to be with Him forever in His kingdom. That is news worth sharing!

But we won't always be able to invite others into God's kingdom. Today is the day of salvation, but after Jesus returns, that part of our job will be over. Today, people still have an opportunity to believe and be saved, but one day, that opportunity will be gone.

Think about the people in your life who don't believe in Jesus. What keeps you from sharing the good news with them? Our job isn't to worry about how people will respond. God will take care of that. He just calls us to faithfully share His good news until He returns. That means we should keep telling others about God's kingdom and the coming King no matter what happens or how we feel, giving an opportunity for everyone to believe in Him and become a part of His kingdom before He returns.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Matthew 24:42

Pray: Thank God for having such great news to share! Ask Him for opportunities and boldness to tell others about Him. Take time to pray for any unsaved friends or family.

Parent Question: Have you ever shared the Gospel with someone before? What happened?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Acts 8 by David Guzik

A. Saul persecutes the church.

1. ([Act 8:1](#)) The church is persecuted and scatters.

Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

a. **Now Saul was consenting to his death:** In [Philippians 3:6](#), Paul said of his life before Jesus that he was so zealous in his religious faith that he persecuted the church. Saul's supervision of the execution of Stephen was just one example of this persecution.

i. **Consenting** describes Saul's attitude, but the English translation probably isn't strong enough. The idea behind the ancient Greek word *suneudokeo* is "to approve, to be pleased with." Some people are reluctant persecutors, but Saul wasn't one of these; he took *pleasure* in attacking Christians.

ii. Saul of Tarsus – whom most of us know by his Roman name, Paul – later came to deeply regret this persecution of the church. He later wrote, *For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God* ([1 Corinthians 15:9](#)).

iii. [Acts 26:11](#) described what perhaps Paul regretted most: *And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.* Paul may have suffered many sleepless nights thinking about those whom he *compelled...to blaspheme*.

b. **A great persecution arose against the church:**

Stephen's death was only the beginning. The floodgates of persecution were now open against the Christians. Saul was only one of many persecutors of Christians.

i. This was the first persecution of the Christians as a whole. Before, the apostles had been arrested and beaten and persecuted; here, every believer was threatened with violence and perhaps death.

ii. On Sunday, January 8, 1956, on the shores of a lonely river deep in the jungles of Ecuador, natives murdered five missionaries who came to tell about Jesus. To many, this death seemed like a senseless tragedy. Many could only see five young missionaries who had their careers cut short or the five widows and fatherless children. But God did an amazing work through those five men, even in their deaths, and the blessing still reverberates through people like Elisabeth Elliot – one of the five women whose husband was murdered.

iii. In the same way, Stephen's death might seem sort of meaningless at first glance. His young ministry of power and eloquence was cut abruptly short. His ministry also seemed to end in failure – no one was immediately brought to faith, and all that came forth was more persecution against the church. But as always has been the case, the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church.

c. **They were scattered throughout the regions:** Now the Christians were forced to do what they had been reluctant to do – get the message of Jesus out to the surrounding **regions**.

i. **Scattered**: According to Boice, there are two different words in the ancient Greek language for the idea of “scattered.” One has the idea of scattering in the sense of making something disappear, like scattering someone’s ashes. The other word has the idea of scattering in the sense of planting or sowing seeds. This is the ancient Greek word used here.

ii. In [Acts 1:8](#) Jesus clearly told His followers to look beyond Jerusalem and bring the gospel to Judea, Samaria, and the whole world. But to this point, Jesus’ followers had not done this.

iii. The resulting good of the spread of the gospel leads some to see this persecution as being the will of God. God can and will use pressing circumstances to guide us into His will. Sometimes we have to be shaken out of our comfortable state before we do what God wants us to do.

2. ([Act 8:2](#)) The burial of Stephen.

And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

a. **And devout men**: Seemingly, these Jews were horrified at Stephen’s murder. Perhaps this was Luke’s way of reminding us that not *all* Jewish people of that time were enemies of Christianity.

b. **Made great lamentation over him**: Since Jewish law prohibited open mourning for someone that had been executed, Luke’s record suggests that these **devout men** publicly repented of Stephen’s murder.

3. ([Act 8:3-4](#)) Saul continues his persecution.

As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

a. **He made havoc**: This uses an ancient Greek word that could refer to an army destroying a city or a wild animal tearing at its meat. He viciously attacked Christians, including **women**.

i. “Not only did he not spare the women, but he did not stop short of seeking – and securing – his victims’ death ([Acts 9:1](#); [22:4](#); [26:10](#)).” (Stott)

ii. “The tense of that verb, whether ‘ravage’ or ‘destroy,’ is imperfect, which means that he ravaged it and kept on ravaging it.” (Boice)

b. **Those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word**: The end result was for the glory of God, because the persecution simply served to spread the message. We shouldn’t think that those who left Jerusalem left as formal preachers. Most were “accidental missionaries” who talked about Jesus wherever they went.

i. “The statement that they *preached the word* is misleading; the Greek expression does not necessarily mean more than *shared the good news*.” (Stott)

ii. We can be just like these early Christians. We can share the good news of what Jesus has done in our lives. Most people don’t come to Jesus through a professional preacher or an evangelist; they come to Jesus through people just like us.

iii. “In every church where there is really the power of the Spirit of God, the Lord will cause it to be spread abroad, more or less. He never means that a church should be like a nut shut up in a shell; nor like ointment enclosed in a box. The precious perfume of the gospel must be poured forth to sweeten the air.” (Spurgeon)

B. Philip preaches to the Samaritans.

1. ([Act 8:5-8](#)) Philip brings the gospel to the Samaritans.

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

a. **Philip:** Like Stephen, he was one of the men chosen to serve the church family in practical ways when the dispute regarding Hellenist widows arose ([Acts 6:5](#)). He was one of those forced to flee persecution ([Acts 8:1](#)), ending up in Samaria.

b. **Preached Christ to them:** After the Jews had rejected the gospel again, we see God extending the offer of salvation in Jesus out to other peoples, beginning with the Samaritans.

c. **The city of Samaria:** 600 years before this, the Assyrians conquered this area of northern Israel and deported all the wealthy and middle-class Jews from the area. Then they moved in a pagan population from afar. These pagans intermarried with the lowest classes of remaining Jews in northern Israel, and from these people came the Samaritans.

i. Generally speaking, the Jews of that day hated the Samaritans. They considered them compromising half-breeds who corrupted the worship of the true God. "There was deep-seated prejudice, amounting almost to hatred, standing between the Jews and the Samaritans." (LaSor)

ii. James and John (and the other disciples as well) once thought that the Samaritans were only good for being burned by God's judgment ([Luke 9:51-56](#)).

iii. Jesus' experience with the Samaritan woman at the well ([John 4](#)) and His story about the kindness of a Samaritan ([Luke 10:25-37](#)) illustrate the natural tension between the Jews and Samaritans of that time.

iv. Yet, Philip **preached Christ to them**. Because Jesus had worked in him there was no room for this kind of prejudice in his heart or mind. He wasn't a racist towards the Samaritans.

d. **Hearing and seeing the miracles which he did:** Philip came presenting the gospel, with signs and wonders following as an impressive confirmation. When the people found Jesus, **there was great joy in that city**.

i. Undoubtedly, one reason there was such fruit was that Jesus had sown the seed in Samaria during His ministry ([John 4:1-26](#)). Now Philip reaped the harvest.

ii. The **great joy in that city** came from great sorrow and pain in Jerusalem. It came from the reality of spiritual power (**the miracles which he did**). But it especially came as Philip **preached Christ to them**.

iii. "Beloved friends, I delight to preach to you all the doctrines which I find in God's Word; but I desire always to preach the person of Christ above the doctrine; the doctrine is but the chair in which Christ sits as a Prophet to instruct us." (Spurgeon)

2. ([Act 8:9-13](#)) Simon the Sorcerer believes.

But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. But when they believed Philip as he preached the

things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

a. **A certain man called Simon:** This Simon had a fair degree of local fame. He was honored as one who didn't only *have* the power of God; they said of him **"This man is the great power of God."**

b. **Who previously practiced sorcery:** In the Bible **sorcery** is associated with occult, magical practices – and often with the taking of mind and mood altering drugs. Whatever *real* power Simon had, it was from Satan, not God.

i. The specific wording indicates that Simon was a *magi*. In the ancient world there was a class of astronomers and scientists known as magi ([Matthew 2:1](#)), but local wizards and sorcerers also took the title. They used it to prey on the ignorance and superstitions of the common people.

ii. "Ramsay describes the magi (esp. the lower sort who appealed to the widespread superstition of the ancient world) as the strongest influence that existed in that world and one that must either destroy or be destroyed by Christianity." (Williams)

c. **And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries:** The Samaritans wrongly assumed that because Simon had *real* spiritual power, it was from God – yet that simply wasn't the case.

d. **But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ:** Those who had previously been **astonished** by Simon and **his sorceries** now **believed Philip** and what he preached. He brought the message of the gospel and they believed it.

i. Those who believed proclaimed their faith when they **were baptized**. "There is no hint of any deficiency in their faith. Certainly Philip recognized none, else he would not have baptized them." (Williams)

e. **Amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done:** Simon was convinced by Philip's preaching and amazing miracles, to the point where he declared belief, was baptized, and **continued with Philip**. Simon became a follower of Philip and his ministry.

i. At this point – up to [Acts 8:13](#) – there is nothing to indicate that Simon's belief was false or insincere. Yet it will be tested by his conduct and response over time.

C. Philip preaches to the Ethiopian.

1. ([Act 8:26-28](#)) Philip, led by the Holy Spirit, is directed to an Ethiopian government official.

Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.

a. **Arise, and go toward the south:** We might have thought that Philip would object to leaving the great success of the work in Samaria to go out to the desolate desert, but God had a plan in it all. Philip submitted to God's plan.

i. "Philip was the front-line man. He seemed to be utterly indispensable. Yet it was at precisely this moment when God called him to leave the area." (Boice)

ii. If one heard the call to leave such a blessed, fruitful ministry, one likely would think it was the devil speaking and not the Lord. One might think, “Not now” or “Not me” or “Not there.”

b. **This is desert:** Leaving fruitful ministry to go to a **desert** is foolish from man’s perspective, but wise if directed by God. What could be more foolish than to leave a place of prospering ministry and go to a desert road?

i. “There were two roads from Jerusalem to Gaza, and the Spirit commands Philip to take the one that was seldom used.” (MacArthur)

ii. “If Christ is hindered, it is because some Philip is not willing to go!” (Morgan)

iii. “We have seen him, from the day of Pentecost on, moving on *multitudes*; we now trace his motions in the *individual*, and see him in his individual dealing and leading – observing how he guides *one believer* and leads *one inquirer*.” (Pierson) Philip wasn’t the only one being led by the Spirit. The man of Ethiopia was also, though he didn’t yet know it.

c. **A man of Ethiopia...had come to Jerusalem to worship:** On the desert road, Philip encountered an Ethiopian proselyte to Judaism returning from Jerusalem – reading the Bible!

i. This **Ethiopia** – much larger than modern-day Ethiopia – was the land where the Queen of Sheba came from, who saw the glory of Solomon’s kingdom and professed faith in the God of Israel. It’s possible that pieces of the Jewish faith were passed on through the centuries to men like this servant of the queen.

ii. “He was a noble man on a noble search.” (Hughes) We can’t say if the Ethiopian found God in his visit to Jerusalem, but he certainly found the Word of God – and reading the Word of God would lead him to God.

d. **Of great authority...who had charge of all her treasury:** The Ethiopian was a successful man. Yet his success obviously didn’t answer all the questions in his life. He knew he needed some real spiritual answers in his life, and he was seeking God.

i. **Candace** was the title for certain female royalty in Ethiopia.

e. **He was reading Isaiah the prophet:** The Ethiopian was hungry for God’s Word. Typically, the scroll would cost him a lot of money, so it showed that he really wanted to read and know God’s word.

2. ([Act 8:29-31](#)) The Ethiopian invites Philip to explain the Bible.

Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and overtake this chariot.” So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

a. **The Spirit said to Philip:** It took real boldness for Philip to go right up to the Ethiopian’s chariot and speak to him, but that is what the Holy Spirit told him to do.

i. The Ethiopian was a rich man, a man of power, and at least in some way a celebrity. Yet Philip knew he needed Jesus just as much as anyone else. We should never fear speaking to those who are considered to be important people about Jesus.

ii. We often shrink back from speaking boldly about Jesus, and the world lets us know we shouldn’t talk about such things. But the world does not hesitate to impose its own message on us. We should be just as bold to the world about Jesus as the world is bold to us about sin.

b. **Heard him reading:** It was common in the ancient world to read aloud. Philip knew what the Ethiopian was reading by listening as he read.

c. **Heard him reading the prophet Isaiah:** Philip knew at that moment that God had given him an open door, a prepared heart. Plainly, God had arranged this meeting between Philip and the Ethiopian; this is a wonderful example of how God opens doors for evangelism. God directed Philip because God had already arranged an open door.

i. One of our greatest jobs in preaching the gospel is to simply pray for open doors. Then, having prayed for open doors, we must keep alert to the opportunities God presents.

ii. Philip was effective as an evangelist because he knew how to flow with what the Holy Spirit wanted to do. He was truly led by the Spirit, not by his own whims and feelings.

d. **Do you understand what you are reading?** It was good for the Ethiopian to read the Bible, but unless **understanding** was brought to him, there was little benefit from his reading. But God had brought someone (Philip) to bring understanding.

i. "It was a good question – inoffensive, yet a subtle but gracious offer to explain the passage if the Ethiopian official was interested in receiving one." (Boice)

ii. **How can I, unless someone guides me?** This is the proper question of anyone who wants to understand the Bible. We should never feel bad if we need to be taught before we can understand many things.

iii. It is wonderful when we come to understand the great truths of the Bible on our own, but God also has a place and a purpose for teachers among the followers of Jesus.

iv. To get more understanding from our Bibles, we must plunge in. Butterflies wander over the flowers in the garden and accomplish nothing, but bees plunge right down into the flower, and carry away essential food. We won't get anything if we just hover over our Bibles; we have to dive right in.

3. ([Act 8:32-35](#)) Starting at the Isaiah passage, Philip preaches Jesus to the Ethiopian.

The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth." So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

a. **He was led as sheep to the slaughter:** In God's wonderful planning, the Ethiopian was reading the amazing and specific prophecies in [Isaiah 53](#) describing the sacrificial, sin-bearing work of the Messiah to come.

b. **I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?** Regarding this passage from [Isaiah 53:7-8](#), the Jews of that day had different ways they understood the identity of this suffering servant.

- Some thought the suffering servant was the nation of Israel itself, as Israel had suffered greatly in wars, exile, and persecution.

- Some thought the suffering servant was Isaiah writing about himself.

- Some thought the suffering servant was the Messiah, but they found this hard to accept, because they didn't want to think of the Messiah suffering.

c. **Beginning at this Scripture:** Philip talked about more than this passage from Isaiah, but he started there.

He began at common ground with the Ethiopian, but made his way to talking about Jesus. It was easy to talk about Jesus **beginning at this Scripture**.

i. Because the whole Bible points to Jesus in one way or another, we really can begin at any passage and find where it leads to Jesus.

d. **Preached Jesus to him:** Philip's effective preaching consisted in explaining *who Jesus was* (**like a lamb... preached Jesus**) and *what He has done for us* (**He was led as a sheep to the slaughter**). Explaining who Jesus is and what He has done for us is the essence of the gospel.

i. Too many preachers today focus on what we must do for God, but the gospel begins with and is founded upon what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.

ii. Philip preached Christ in Samaria ([Acts 8:5](#)) and he **preached Jesus to** this Ethiopian. We can be sure it was the same Jesus he preached in Jerusalem. He didn't need a different Jesus or a different message for different audiences.

4. ([Act 8:36-38](#)) The Ethiopian believes and is baptized.

Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then 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." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

a. **And the Eunuch said:** The Ethiopian himself was ready to respond to the gospel. This was a work of the Holy Spirit, not a tribute to Philip's salesmanship.

b. **See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?** This shows that the Ethiopian did in fact believe, and that he wanted to be baptized to declare his belief. He saw the truth of God and knew that it was *for him*.

i. "Maybe Philip even ended his explanation of the gospel with an appeal for baptism like Peter did at Pentecost." (Hughes)

c. **If you believe with all your heart, you may:** Philip insisted that the Ethiopian **believe with all his heart** before being baptized. In a nutshell, this describes how we should respond to the gospel: **Believe with all your heart**.

i. The devil himself has the faith of the head, but he hates the truth in his heart. God wants His truth not only in our heads, but also in our hearts. We may intellectually know that Jesus died for the sins of the world, but do we know in our hearts that He died to cleanse *our* sins?

d. **I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God:** This confession of faith, taken in all that it means, is the essential belief for anyone who will come to God. We must believe in the *person* of **Jesus**, in all that He is and has done as **Christ**. We must believe that He is the Divine **Son**, and that He is the **Son of God** sent from the Father to accomplish the salvation of all those who will believe with all their hearts.

i. When the Ethiopian said "**Jesus Christ**," he confessed that Jesus is the Messiah (**Christ**). He agreed with his mind and heart that Jesus is the sin-bearing servant that Isaiah described and Jesus fulfilled.

e. **Went down into the water:** Clearly, Philip immersed the Ethiopian in baptism. This was not sprinkling, but immersion.

5. ([Act 8:39-40](#)) Philip's mysterious departure.

Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

a. **The Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more... Philip was found at Azotus:** Suddenly, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away as he and the Ethiopian came out of the water. He was then transported supernaturally in some way to the former Philistine city of **Azotus** (also known as Ashdod).

i. This is a strange, perhaps unprecedented event in the Scriptures. But a similar thing happened when the disciples' boat came immediately to its destination ([John 6:15-21](#)), and a similar thing will also happen when the church is *caught up together with Him* at the rapture ([1 Thessalonians 4:15-18](#)).

b. **He went on his way rejoicing:** The joy of the Ethiopian, even after Philip's strange departure, shows that his faith was firmly rooted in God, not in Philip.

i. The Coptic Christians – greatly persecuted today in Egypt – trace their spiritual heritage back to this Ethiopian official.

c. **Passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea:** This shows that Philip started preaching not only to Samaritan cities, but also the Gentile cities – such as Caesarea. This is the very beginning of the gospel's spread to the end of the earth – as Jesus commanded in [Acts 1:8](#).

i. No wonder Philip is the only one in the New Testament specifically given the title, "The Evangelist" ([Acts 21:8](#)). [Acts 21:8](#) finds him still in **Caesarea**, doing his work of evangelism there.