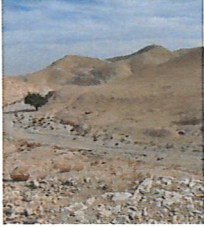


THE DRY ROAD TO ETHIOPIA

By Harald Tomesch  
*Acts 8: 26-40*



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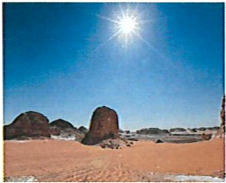
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OR

THE ROAD TO ETHIOPIA  
AT HIGH NOON



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SURPRISING DETAILS  
&  
APPLICATION

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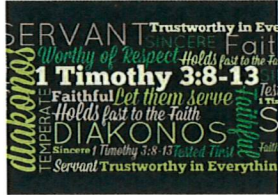
Concordia Bible Institute

Surprisingly Practical - So Here Is My Alternative Title!

- ❖ Living in the Mission of Life in the Ordinary Rhythm of Life

Keep In View The Daily Networks of Life

- ❖ Familial Network
- ❖ Geographical Network
- ❖ Commercial Network
- ❖ Vocational Network
- ❖ Recreational Network




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Setting the Stage



The Setting of Acts 8

- ❖ Acts 1:8
  - ❖ Multiple Pentecosts
  - ❖ The Word of the Lord Grew
  - ❖ Principle of Growing
  - ❖ Principle of Scattering by Persecution
- ❖ Acts 8: 26-40
  - ❖ Pivotal Point in Acts
  - ❖ Large Crowds - Personal Stories
  - ❖ Stephen the Martyr, Saul is there, now the Gospel is tested in Samaria - among proselytes
- ❖ Philip just came from a geographic area with 600 years of hostility.

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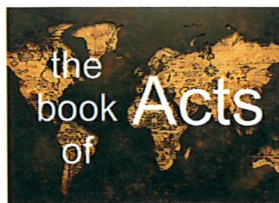
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Apostles & Deacons



□ The Switch

The Duties of Apostles (Barnabas, Hebrew)

- ❖ Called by Jesus and 'Sent'
- ❖ Eyewitness from Baptism to Ascension
- ❖ Receive the Holy Spirit - Direct Commission
- ❖ Spoke with "boldness" and preached out of their public duty (Acts 4:31).

The Duties of Deacons

- ❖ Acts 6 Called to Serve Tables-Serving Widows and more, Spirit led, baptized Ephesians 4 APOST
- ❖ An Auxiliary office (but perhaps not here) and evangelized out of their office
- ❖ Most like our calling to evangelize

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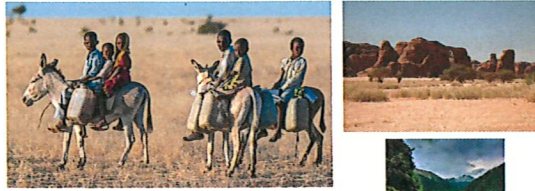
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**Ethiopia – The End of the Earth**



□ The Geography

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**Wealth to Obtain a Scroll – The Spirit to Open the Scroll**

**Highlight the Details**

- ◆ vs 26 The "south" road or the road at "high noon" vs 26
- ◆ vs 26 Gaza at the time of Jesus (the ruins from 98 BC?) or new Gaza?
- ◆ vs 27 & 29 Go ... like Abraham, approach vs 29 Go and run (runners in the Bible)
- ◆ vs 30 run like the wind (horses, chariot)
- ◆ vs 27 Behold... (missing in our translation) but for Luke!
- ◆ vs 27 Eunuch... (a circumcision gone bad) Implications! For Worship, for temple, for work? (Celibate, impotent guarding influential women) – Was he purchasing the scroll for the community or himself? One scroll or two? Greek or Hebrew?
- ◆ vs 27 Cut off from the temple (prevented from full communion)- Closest he can come to his faith are these scrolls and the hope of Isaiah 56 of Eunuchs entering heaven and the inner courts of the temple, they will have something better than sons and daughters.
- ◆ vs 28 Chariot and entourage (picture this 5 month journey each way), but God is preparing this guy with strikes against him!

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**Wealth to Obtain a Scroll – The Holy Spirit to Open the Scroll**

- ◆ Vs 29 Spirit does not give complete instructions - in parts... Note how the spirit controls where in the scriptures the Ethiopian is reading, imagine if he was reading elsewhere? Reads out loud because Greek or Hebrew was hard to read.
- ◆ Vs 28 Where does he get a scroll of Isaiah? - he has the means
- ◆ Vs 30 Evangelical Questions - Respectfully Answered:
  - ◆ Do you understand what you are reading?
  - ◆ How can I?
  - ◆ Who is the prophet speaking about?
  - ◆ Is it himself or another?
  - ◆ What prevents me from being baptized?
  - ◆ Who could baptize him in Africa? Isaiah 53:7-8
- ◆ Vs 32 Isaiah - Lamb of God, unjustly accused - Old Testament referent?
- ◆ Vs 35 - Like Emmaus - here the miracle of conversion- an example of the Great Commission - I am with you always
- ◆ Vs 36 Bold - Water! (Note the translation!)
- ◆ Vs. 39 Spirit carries Phillip away- Goes up the coast and finally to Caesarea his home town Acts 21:8 - interesting family with four daughters who prophesy - eyewitnesses of Luke 12:1-47 Luke gets this story there in Caesarea at that time.

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☐ Echoes of Emmaus (Luke 24)




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Application

- ◆ To Have a Bible & Someone to Explain your Bible is a Gift of God
- ◆ Big Heart - Love people with an awe inspiring love- if you live on mission you need to love like Philip crossing barriers, in Acts 6 he is serving widows and loves widows because God does! Philip reflects the heart of God, like Stephen the deacon Father forgive them - Aside- look at our Concordia Community - Saudi, Nigerians, our International Center - Verse 40 - Philip is going through the villages...
- ◆ Lessons from the crowds and lessons from the persons of Acts- Philip loves persons not only Crowds - like Peter in Acts 3 baptizing 3000 then healing the lame man! Those interesting the many are interested in the one (Tony Merida)
- ◆ Lessons about doing menial or common things
- ◆ Lessons about being led by the Spirit - Acts 1:8 witnesses; Acts 6 selected & full of the Spirit; Acts 8- informed and led, miraculous timing of an unexplainable movement
- ◆ Mission is influenced by our groups - vocation, recreational, commercial, family and geographical - different opportunities in each! Without excuse: those Samaritans, the desert, run, the poor, the rich, the widow, the lame? Not them, not there, not now, no not that way.
- ◆ God does lead us to people and places at the right time. We can expect, leadings, guiding and expectations of the Spirit. Look forward to when God changes your plans for His great Behold

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Application

- ◆ Lead people to Jesus through the Scriptures. Spirit and Scriptures- Philip has both. 1<sup>st</sup> point your need to know your Bible, getting prepared. Be prepared for Questions. People can be totally undone by questions. What book are you reading? When was the last time you gave a book away? Are you prepared to answer their questions?
- ◆ What do we learn about Abraham and Isaac? That story has a twofold ending - a surprise alternative ending.
- ◆ This story has an interesting ending - I have a question for you? How far did the Eunuch read? Let's read Isaiah 54:56. The Eunuch will be a dry tree no longer. Baptism allowed him into the sanctuary, past the Temple's dividing wall. (Story) The Gospel allowed him - like Isaac, one as good as dead to father children as many as the stars in the Sky - Read Psalm 68:31. It reminds me of the last verses of Acts. Paul went in and out of prison and the Gospel was being proclaimed without hindrance.

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### Acts 8:26-40

26 Now an **Angel of the Lord** said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 **The Spirit** told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet.

*"Do you understand what you are reading?"* Philip asked.

31 *"How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?"* So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

**"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,  
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.**

**33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.  
Who can speak of his descendants?  
For his life was taken from the earth."**

34 The eunuch asked Philip, *"Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?"*

35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. *What can stand in the way of my being baptized?"* [37] Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, **the Spirit of the Lord** suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. 40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

# The Eunuch of Ethiopia

