

Acts 8:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

Analysis

The Ethiopian eunuch was a 'man of great authority' under Candace, queen of Ethiopia, with charge over her treasury. Despite his power and wealth, he sought God, traveling to Jerusalem to worship. His status as a eunuch meant he couldn't fully join the Jewish community (Deuteronomy 23:1), yet Isaiah prophesied eunuchs would have a place in God's house (Isaiah 56:3-5). His reading Isaiah while returning shows sincere spiritual hunger. Reformed theology sees God's electing grace reaching across barriers - race, social status, and physical condition - to save whom He will.

Historical Context

Ethiopia (Greek Aithiops) likely refers to Nubia/Kush, south of Egypt in modern Sudan. 'Candace' was a dynastic title for queens, like 'Pharaoh.' Ethiopian Jews existed from ancient times, possibly tracing to Solomon and Sheba or to Jewish merchants and exiles.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the eunuch's conversion demonstrate that no one is beyond God's saving reach?
2. What does his journey to Jerusalem reveal about authentic spiritual hunger?
3. How does God bring salvation to those physically or socially excluded from religious community?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἀναστὰς	ἐπορεύθη·	καὶ	ἰδοὺ,	άνήρ	Αἰθιοπῶν		
And	he arose	and went	And	behold	a man	of Ethiopia		
G2532	G450	G4198	G2532	G2400	G435	G128		
εὐνοῦχος	δυνάστης	Κανδάκης	τῆς	βασιλίσσης				
an eunuch	of great authority	under Candace	G3588	queen				
G2135	G1413	G2582		G938				
Αἰθιοπῶν	ὃς	ἦν	ἐπὶ	πάσης	τῆς	γάζης	αὐτῆς	ὃς
of Ethiopia	who	had	the charge of	all	G3588	treasure	her	who
G128	G3739	G2258	G1909	G3956		G1047	G846	G3739
ἐληλύθει	προσκυνήσων	εἰς	Ἱερουσαλήμ					
and had come	for to worship	to	Jerusalem					
G2064	G4352	G1519	G2419					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 68:31 (Parallel theme): Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

Zephaniah 3:10 (Parallel theme): From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

Psalms 87:4 (Parallel theme): I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there.

Jeremiah 38:7 (Parallel theme): Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin;

Matthew 12:42 (Parallel theme): The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

John 12:20 (Worship): And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

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