

# A Chancellor of the Exchequer's Dilemma

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*Acts 8: 26-40.*

## **Seekers for Light.**

*Fourteen Addresses to Edinburgh Students.*

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## **Chapter 7**

### **A Chancellor of the Exchequer's Dilemma; or, The value of Scripture.**

There is a peculiar charm about the story of this eunuch, and for this reason. The most cursory glance will give every person to understand how particularly deep is the interest of God in the man thus seeking light. Now, there is not the shadow of a doubt about it, that the man who is to be the subject of the remarks I have to make this evening, was a man in downright, deep-seated earnestness in his desire to get what he felt he needed. He had not the knowledge of God. No man would journey a thousand miles under a burning sun for a mere foible, and this man had certainly taken a journey of that length — if not greater. He was returning, not, however, having found what he wanted.

I believe, without any doubt whatever, that the eunuch was an anxious, awakened, inquiring soul, seeking light, and when he returned from Jerusalem, whither he had gone up "to worship," clearly he had not got it. And, further, I am certain, that the man was in a great dilemma. "I thought" we can hear him saying, "that when I went to Jerusalem, I should find the light as to the true and living God. I have been there, and yet I have not got it." Somehow he had possessed himself of a copy of the Scriptures. Happy man! And he read them. Wise man! I wonder if you, my friend, have a copy of the Scriptures. Yes, oh, yes! Then do you read them? It is an immense thing to read the Scriptures.

I frequently come across people who have difficulties about the Scriptures, but these people are generally those, I find, who do not read them. I tell you that, because there are many such young men here, tonight. Nowadays, the learned and critical would-be friend of the young man says, The Bible is not for you to read, young man; there are so many difficulties in it, so many inconsistencies, so many flaws, and so many mistakes. Indeed! Well, I have been reading the Scriptures now for longer than many of you here have years. For seven-and-thirty years I have been studying them, and I have not found any of the discrepancies that the learned man has found out. But I found out, when I began to read the Scriptures, that I was a great blockhead at understanding them. I was little able to understand them, for I was rather like the man in this

incident, I could not understand them till a teacher came along. But, as I have gone on reverently reading, I will tell you what has happened. I have found that God has given me what He gave that man. He gave light, and the Scriptures were made plain. What used to be difficulties to me, I find now, to be exceedingly important, and exceedingly instructive; and that, what were apparently inconsistencies, really constituted some of the brightest gems of revelation that lie scattered, from the first of Genesis, to the last of Revelation, all along the page of inspiration.

No, depend upon this, God loves us a great deal too well to put into our hands a book that cannot be trusted. I say this soberly, and seriously, and I have no hesitation in saying — spite of the infidelity of the day — that I believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God, from cover to cover. And, in spite of all that is said against it, the more I study the Bible, the more do I find out its unity, its completeness, its reliability, its absolute impregnability against all the attacks of the enemy; and that it is the revelation of God to my soul. I have found light, and always increasing light, through the Scriptures. And to you I commend them most earnestly and fervently.

One reason, why I am pretty sure that this man was marked for blessing, is that he had got hold of a copy of the Scriptures, and though he did not get much light from them, he was reading them most attentively. We have the Scripture in our day, but shall I be charging you wrongly if I were to say to you, that you do not read them much? Now, you just learn a lesson from this man, I pray you.

One great charm of the passage before us is this — I see that God has His eye upon an anxious man; and He will, in a certain sense, interrupt the blessed work of His grace elsewhere — at least through a special channel — in order to meet that anxious man. My friend, you do not know how God loves you; it is not till your heart is awakened that you really know the deep interest that God has in the salvation of man. What could be more lovely than God's interest in this anxious soul. See what He does; He calls Philip away from his remarkable evangelistic work in Samaria, and sends him down into the desert to meet a man. That is God; it is not the only time He has done so. He has repeated this over and over again, but this is just a sample of the deep delight which God shows when He bends His eye upon the earth and sees the sinner groping after light, the sinner who will put himself to great labour and cost to obtain the light.

Let us look for a moment at Philip, and see what he was about at this time. Our narrative occurs just after the tremendous persecution, following upon the death of Stephen, who was rejected, and sent to heaven with a message from the Jewish nation to their King. Without doubt Stephen was the messenger who carried up that remarkable message of which the Lord speaks in the nineteenth of Luke. "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return . . . but his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19: 12- 14). Jesus had come to His own (the Jews) full of grace, but they refused Him, and cast Him out. Not content with that, when the Holy Ghost came down, they refused the further message of grace, which was unfolded in Acts 2, 3 by Peter; and afterwards referred to by Stephen, in Acts 6, 7, where he narrates the guilt of the nation, and charges them with their sin. While "they gnashed on him with their teeth," he lifted up his eyes, saw the heavens opened, and "the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." In plain language, he beheld the glory-crowned Saviour. The Man whom they refused, and put to death, he saw crowned in glory, at the right hand of God. When he said that, they could stand it

no longer. "They cast him out of the city, and stoned him" (Acts 7: 58). They sent him after the Saviour, whom they had crucified, with the message, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

That was the end of the dispensation of God to the Jews. Though guilty of the murder of their Messiah, grace yet lingered over them, till Stephen's death completed the breach between the nation and God. You will remember that our Lord Jesus Christ, after He rose from the dead, commanded His apostles "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24: 47). Further, He said, "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8). But why begin at Jerusalem first? Because God always begins with the worst spot, and the worst man in this hall tonight will, most likely, be the one who will be saved tonight Jesus said to them, Begin at the spot where My blood was shed; where they clamoured for My death: preach forgiveness there, and then go to Samaria, and after that to the uttermost parts of the earth.

In fulfilment of this command, then, we find that Philip has gone down to Samaria. The gospel began to be preached in Jerusalem; but the Jew would not have it The Holy Ghost's testimony was refused, and Stephen was sent up with the message, We do not want Jesus at all. Then the Spirit of God works in the widening circle, and down goes Philip to Samaria. He is elsewhere called "Philip the evangelist" (Acts 21: 8), but he was not an evangelist to begin with. His was a case of a man faithful to his trust, and then developing the gift God gave him. Philip was one of seven men set apart to look after the treasury and the poor (see Acts 6: 1-61 That is what you would call a deacon. He was appointed to look after the money, and to see to the poor; but after Stephen's death "there was a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. . . . Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8: 1 -4).

Philip finding himself at Samaria, sees he has nothing to do as a deacon, and thinks, I can tell the people about Jesus; and we read of him that he "preached Christ unto them" (Acts 8: 5). Mark that! It is very instructive. It was not the first time Samaria had heard the gospel. You remember, that one day the blessed Lord sat by the well of Sychar, weary, and out came a wretched sinner, a woman, with an empty heart, and an empty water jug — figurative of her condition. She met Jesus; and He began to speak to her, in the fulness of His grace, about "the gift of God," "living water," and "eternal life" (see John 4: 1-42). At length, in the conversation, He touched her conscience, as He said, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." Come back to Me. She answered, "I have no husband." Oh! no, said the Lord, I know it, you are living in open sin. "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband." Go, and call your husband, and come back to Me; come back to the Light. Light was beginning to work in her soul.

A little more conversation followed, and then you recollect she took refuge in ignorance, and that is what many a soul delights to do today. "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things" (John 4: 25). "Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee, am he" (ver. 26). It is very noticeable that there are only two people to whom the Lord

in His travels through this earthly scene made a revelation — a positive declaration of Himself. One was this outcast sinner of John 4, the other the outcast saint of the ninth of John. The blind man is cast out, and Jesus asks him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered, and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." It is not a bad thing to be an outcast. that is my experience. I know something about it. And what do you find when outcast? That you are in Christ's company, and cannot get along without Him.

The Lord reveals Himself to this woman, and she at once goes into the city and says to the people, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John 4: 29). She was not afraid of Him. No, His grace won her heart. And was not she a sinner? I do not think there is one here worse morally than that woman. There is perhaps no person here tonight but fancies she was infinitely worse than they are, and yet this woman trusted Christ, and she went and said to everybody who knew her, "Come, see a man, that told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" And the Samaritans came out of the city, and got the Lord to go into it, and abide for two days. And then, you remember, they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4: 42). There was a good deal of work done in Samaria then, and it did not stop when Jesus left. It went on, and in Acts 8 I find the illustration of the words used by the Saviour in John 4, "One soweth, and another reapeth" (ver. 37). Philip, coming down into Samaria with the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, reaps, for we read, "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake" (Acts 8: 6). There must have been a marvellous work. People nowadays do not believe in conversion; but when I come to Scripture I find a whole city moved. And Samaria was no small city, though not perhaps as large as the town you and I dwell in.

Well, the evangelist came down and preached Christ. Why Christ? for you will see presently that he preached Jesus to the eunuch. Why Christ? Because He was the ascended One. The Samaritans were to know that the One whom the Jew had refused — the Jesus whom they had once had in their midst — was now the exalted One at the right hand of God. Philip preached Christ, and what was the result? "There was great joy in that city" (ver. 8). It was a charming scene. I do not know what you feel, but if there be a place you can point out to me as the spot where God is blessing the preaching of His Word to the saving of souls — that place has a great attraction for me. Here, then, you see the work of God going on. Philip, used of God, preaches Christ, and Christ is being believed on, with the result that there is "great joy" in the city. I will ask you, my friend, have you found great joy from the preaching of Christ? I do not say, Have you ever heard the gospel? as who has not heard the gospel over and over again; but I will ask you, Has it produced great joy in your heart? May it do so tonight, if never before, as it did in the city of Samaria, with its populous multitudes, and in the solitary desert with its single anxious soul. Whether it be Christ proclaimed, or Jesus unfolded, the result of the tale, in either case, was joy.

And. now, we read, "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert" (ver. 26). Observe that it was the angel of the Lord. Presently when he comes within sight of the eunuch the Spirit speaks. The reason is this — the angel, in Scripture, is often used in the way of

providence to direct people to the light, whereas the Spirit deals always with the soul. I will quote a scripture to you on this point. Perhaps you do not believe in the ministry of angels. Do you not? I do. "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1: 13, 14.)

I think the angel who was sent forth to minister to this eunuch would indeed be a happy angel, because he was sent forth to be a ministering spirit to an heir of salvation. That angel had the sense that he had a most important commission, as he came to Philip and bade him take that journey, and carry to that man the news that he was one of the "heirs of salvation." Are you, my friend, an heir of salvation? You say, How can I tell? I think if you were in earnest you could tell. Am I an heir of salvation? I would not dream of speaking to you tonight if I were not sure I was an heir of salvation.

The angel of the Lord tells the evangelist to leave his blessed work in Samaria and "go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert" (ver. 26). The journey was between fifty and sixty miles, and Philip might naturally think that nobody would be there. There were two roads he might have gone by, but Philip took the right road. When God sends a messenger to meet an anxious soul you may depend upon it He will see to it that His servant takes the right road. Here I see Philip took the right road. Perhaps you do not believe in the guidance of God in these minutiae. Well, you have only to read Scripture, and you will see how He leads His servants to meet an anxious soul. Let us follow this obedient servant.

"And he arose and went" (ver. 27). That is a lesson for every Christian. There is no hesitation in Philip's mind. The only business of the servant is to obey. When I have been preaching the Word in a certain town, people have often said, "You will come again?" "I do not know." "But surely you will come again?" "I do not know." "Why?" "I will wait till the bell rings," said I. "What do you mean?" A true servant does not move of his own free will, so to speak, he waits till the bell rings. The bell rings here, and the man of God, the servant who is called, is ready. The command is, You leave all this wonderful preaching and conversion in the city of Samaria, and go down to the desert. The desert! Reason may have said, Why, there is nobody to preach to there; there is nothing to be seen in the desert. What does Philip do? "He arose and went" He obeyed. That is the point. He was a good servant, an obedient servant, and thus was fitted to meet His Master's mind. God had His eye upon an anxious, light-seeking man, and He had an obedient servant ready to carry the light to him.

"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, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet" (vers. 27, 28).

Some people would tell me he was not her Chancellor of the Exchequer. Well, I am not very careful about the label put upon him, but here I read, he "had the charge of all her treasure." He was a man thoroughly trusted, with an immense amount of money going through his hands. He had evidently a high place in the confidence of his royal mistress; but, notwithstanding all that, there was a want in his heart. This man, we find, had gone up to Jerusalem to worship. No

doubt he was a Jewish proselyte. That is to say, he had heard of Judaism, had heard of the law, and that the land of Israel was the spot where God was to be worshipped. Seeking after God, he had taken this thousand-mile journey from beyond the southernmost confines of Egypt — how long he took the scripture does not tell us — but he reached Jerusalem. There was where he expected to find light, and to find God. What did he find? What many people find in Christendom today — ritualism, formalism, sacramentalism, but not the light of God. No, he did not get that. I do not doubt he found the temple full, and the priests sacrificing. But what had taken place? Why, the One who was Himself the antitype of every sacrifice had been there, but had been rejected! The temple was turned into a den of thieves, and the very house of the Lord had become a house of merchandise. The Lord Himself had been rejected; and I think I can see that Ethiopian looking for the manifestation of the presence of God, but seeing nothing but plenty of form, and plenty of ceremony. Of life — life according to God — he saw nothing. There was moral and spiritual death everywhere.

After a little he turned to go down to his house — disappointed — yes, I am free to say, in a perfect dilemma. "What shall I do now?" he thinks. "I have left the land of heathen darkness, to go to a place where I expected there would have been light, but there is none." What had taken place? He, who was the light, was rejected. You recollect Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8: 12). He also said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9: 5). When the eunuch reached Jerusalem, the light of the world was not there; He had been transferred to heavenly glory. There was no light in Jerusalem. There was plenty of form, plenty of ceremony, plenty of ritual; but the whole thing was empty profession; and this poor man, disappointed, and in a deep dilemma as to where the truth and the light of God were to be found, turned his steps homewards, not having gained one single bit by going to Jerusalem! Dear man! what he really wanted, was not Jerusalem, but Jesus. That is what you want too, my anxious friend. What does Jerusalem represent? What I find people in great numbers believe in today — religious forms, and observances. Stop a bit, though. Have you Jesus? Do you know Jesus? The eunuch knew not where to find Him. He may possibly have heard of the death of the Lord. He may have heard how He was refused by the people. He may also have heard of Stephen's death. These things I cannot say. He makes himself, however, the possessor of a portion of Scripture, and with this priceless treasure in his possession, though he did not yet know its value, he takes his way home.

We find him in his chariot, reading the prophet Esaias; and, depend upon it, now as then, if you can only find a man that has got hold of the Scriptures, and is reading them, you will notice that God will send some Philip to that man's side, sooner or later. Yes, if you are in downright earnest to get the truth, you will get it. This man was in earnest in seeking for light, and the knowledge of God. God saw this, and prepared the way for his receiving what he sought. Do you say this is a strange case? I could tell you of numberless cases such as that. Let me tell you one.

Not very long ago, one Monday morning, there was a telegraphist at work in the west of England. The young man was in very deep anxiety about his soul. He had been awakened by God's Spirit, and he was an anxious, troubled man. He knew he was not right. He longed to have Christ. On the Lord's Day previous he had gone to three separate places of worship, in deep desire that he might get something for his troubled soul. He got nothing. Monday morning came, after he had spent a sleepless night in anxiety about his soul, and he went to his duties.

Feeling that he would go mad if he did not get relief and forgiveness, he was in the act of prayer to God when he heard the peculiar tick-tick that let him know his station was called for. He went to his instrument, took out his pencil, and wrote down the name and address of the sender of the message, and then the name and address of the addressee. Then came the message, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1: 7). Repeating the message, he cried, "Thank God, I am saved: I have got it: I see it!" And he said, telling a friend of mine afterwards, "That 'LAMB OF GOD,' that 'REDEMPTION,' that 'BLOOD,' that 'RICHES OF HIS GRACE,' went right down into my poor heart, and no one in the whole world could have had greater joy than I had that Monday morning."

God caused that telegram to be the means of bringing peace to that young man. What did he do then? He wanted to see to whom the telegram was sent, and so, instead of giving it to the telegraph boy to deliver, he went himself with it, so that he might see who was the recipient of the message. He carried the telegram to a house not far off, and to the young girl who opened the door he said he had a telegram for So-and-so. "Ah! that's for me," said the girl. She read it, and she found peace also. Asked the meaning of the telegram, she said that she had been anxious about her soul for a fortnight. Her master was not a Christian, but his brother, who was a decided Christian, had been staying at the house for some time. Through his reading of the Scriptures with the family in the mornings and evenings, the servant girl became quite anxious. In her distress of soul on Sunday afternoon, she made bold to write to her master's brother, telling him that she was very anxious about her soul, and begging him to kindly write, and tell her what to do to be saved. The Christian man sent the telegram instead of writing. Why? Because God wanted to give the young man peace. God is good; God is love; God is light; and God loves to bless you. He delights in blessing. That was a strange case, you say; I do not think it was any stranger than the eunuch's.

"Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (ver. 29). It is a very nice thing when the Spirit guides you to the right person. He always does direct us to the right person, if only we are subject, and ready, like Philip, to go at the Lord's bidding. Well, he goes near, and as he runs along by the side of the chariot he heard the traveller read. "Go near." God does not say, Go into the chariot Oh, no! God says, "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" I see the evangelist; he runs along, and gets up to the chariot. The man in the chariot is deeply interested, and as Philip is running along he hears him reading. What was he reading? "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth" (Acts 8: 32, 33; Isa. 53: 7, 8). As he reads, all of a sudden he is startled by a voice, which he had never heard before, asking, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" (ver. 30.) His answer was very simple, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" He owns his ignorance, and then he does another thing, "he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him" (ver. 31). I should like if you would invite me to come that I might speak to you; do not you do it, if you do not mean it. If you do not want Christ, do not ask me; nothing gives me greater pleasure than to get a letter saying, "May I have half an hour with you? May I see you?"

But this man "desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." He was in earnest. If he had not been in earnest, do you know what he would have said? He would have replied, "What business have you got to put such questions to me?" That is the sort of answer you get from careless people, when you ask them about Christ They say, "What right have you got to speak to me about these matters? I keep these things to myself." I will tell you why, my friend. Because you have not got very much to keep. I find that the people who, as soon as you draw near them, button up their coats tight, so to speak, do so because there is not very much inside. If there was much inside, it would burst out You will always find, in the person who has received the truth of the grace of the Lord, that his heart expands to others. That was just so in the instance of the telegraph clerk; the man got blessing himself as the telegram passed his way, and he wished to communicate it to others.

I do not ask you to request me to have a talk with you; but take this advice from a saved man: If you are not saved, let me implore you, get a downright, red-hot Christian, that is the kind of Christian to get, and set him down beside you. Will you do it? Oh! you say, I do not think I would like that. Ah! then you are not very keen. Take a lesson from the keenness of this man; he takes a thousand miles' journey to get the truth, and is willing to take up beside him this unknown man, if only he be able to open the Scriptures to him.

Well, Philip, I read, goes up, takes his place by his side, and then the passage of Scripture was discussed. It was a remarkable one, in the fifty-third of Isaiah, a part of Scripture which describes the terrible rejection of Jesus by the Jew. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth." You have only to go back to the gospel history to see the fulfilment of the prophecy. When Jesus was taken before Pilate, He answered nothing before His judges. "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." He was dealt with most unrighteously. "And who shall declare his generation?" Everybody refused him. "For his life is taken from the earth."

The eunuch does not understand the scripture, and now he says, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." It was a lovely start he got — I mean, a beautiful starting-point for the evangelist The scripture points to the very moment when the Lord, dying on the cross, was bearing the curse and sin of man upon Him. Beginning at that scripture, he "preached unto him Jesus." I have no doubt he carried on the story down through other scriptures; for I am sure of this, there is nothing helps a man to understand Scripture like other scriptures. It is all the Word of God, and you cannot give too much value to the Word. It is all sacred, and if you have to deal with doubting souls, let them have nothing but Scripture, and plenty of it.

He "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Why Jesus? Why not Christ? He brings before him all the personal grace of Him who bears that name. Jesus means, Jehovah the Saviour; and what a wonderful awakening it was for that heathen proselyte. He had gone to Jerusalem to find light, and the knowledge of God, but he found nothing there but formalism and ritualism. They had not satisfied his heart. But now Philip tells him of Jesus, the Son of God, who came to earth to suffer and die for sinners, and who, before His birth, was named Jesus — "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Philip unfolds to him how Jesus came into this world that He might save man. He opens up the Scriptures, and preaches unto him Jesus. It is a charming name, the name of Jesus! Has it sounded sweetly in your heart yet? Oh! that name of Jesus; think of the grace of His life, His holy, spotless, sinless life! Think of what His death was; think of how He gave Himself in love for you, for me!

He told him of Jesus — Jesus the Saviour. Friend, I want to tell you of Jesus; it is Jesus you need, and Jesus that wants you, and Jesus who alone can save you. Jesus was the answer to the deep dilemma of the eunuch's heart That is to say, he had not found anything in Jerusalem, and he could not understand the Scriptures; but he has here unfolded to him the story of the birth, the life, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus; his eyes are opened, and light gets into his soul. He begins to understand the truth. All he sought, he found wrapped up in the person of Jesus. Oh! the blessed name, the charming name — Jesus! Is it attractive to your heart? Do you love the name of Jesus? Is His name precious to your heart? If you are a Christian, the name of Jesus is very precious to you. If you are not one of the Lord's children, you know Very little about Him. I ask you this, however, What are you going to do with this mighty Saviour? Are you going to bow to Jesus? Are you going to render your heart up to Jesus? There is a day coming when you will be glad to render up your heart to Him. I ask you to receive Him tonight, for you cannot tell what is to be the next thing in your soul's history.

Christ is worth knowing as your Saviour; and I am sure if you had met that eunuch a little later, a few miles down that sandy road, and asked him about Jesus, he would have told you a marvellous tale of the joy the knowledge of that Saviour gave him. As they went on their way, I have no doubt Philip told the eunuch much about the death and ascension of Jesus, as well as the atonement that He had made; how He had met the needs of man as well as all the claims of God; how He had destroyed Satan's power, and put away sin; and how the grave had been opened, and the stone rolled away, not to let Jesus out, but to let you and me look in to see there the proof and trophy of His victory. The folded grave-clothes tell us that He annulled death. That, and much more, would Philip tell him. Presently they come to "a certain water," and what does the man say? I do not read that Philip said anything about baptism, but the eunuch says, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Now, what did he mean by this? He had heard of the life and death of the Lord, and he learned that Jesus had gone into the grave and risen again. He seems to say, "He came into this scene for me, and has died out of it; and now I should like to identify myself with Him, even if it be only in the figure of baptism. In this water I would like to put on His name." That is what the eunuch practically said, as he enlisted on the, side of the rejected Jesus. So to speak, he took the shilling in his chariot, and he donned the red coat, and went at once on the parade-ground, as he was baptized. He took up this position, — I would like to be stamped from this hour forward as a man who has got the name of the Lord Jesus upon him. That was the meaning of his being baptized. The eunuch took the name of Christ upon him, and he carried the Word into his own country.

It is not said that Philip told him to be baptized. No; but the man's heart was right, and he easily learned the truth. As they came up out of the water, we read that "the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." No doubt this was a miraculous intervention of God; and mark, it was not only the eunuch who saw it. That man was not driving his own chariot that day; somebody else was driving it He had a good equipage, and I expect there were a good many servants looking on.

It is a fine thing when the master takes a stand for Christ; you will generally find that then a blessing comes to the servants as well.

And what is recorded next? "The eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." I can say honestly, that I have gone on my way rejoicing for thirty-seven years now since the Lord saved me; and if you receive the Lord tonight, you can go on rejoicing as well. You get into your soul the sense — the Lord has loved me, and saved me by the value of His atoning work. If you do that, and believe God's Word, then you may go on your way rejoicing. Let me say this, a Christian is a man who really is entitled to be happy. I know people say to me, Christianity is a dull thing. Dull! why you never made a greater mistake! I remember a fashionable young lady coming to me and telling me she wanted to come to Christ. I met her some days afterwards, and I put it to her, "Have you come to Christ?" She looked the reverse of happy. "I am trying to give up the world," said she. "Just that," I said, "you have not come to Christ." "Well," she said, I have made a sort of profession of Christ, but I am not happy." That is not it at all. If you yield your whole heart to Christ, and believe the gospel, then you may go on your way rejoicing, as well as the eunuch or the man who addresses you, because every Christian knows he is saved through the blood of his Saviour, and hence is entitled to rejoice in the Lord.

The truth is, that Christ has died, and risen again for us, and the Christian lives in the ascended Saviour. What gives a person joy and peace? Looking at Christ, feeding on Christ, and dwelling in Christ. There is nothing more blessed than to be a downright — what I call a backbone Christian. Do you understand me? I said to a young medical student today, "My dear fellow, you have no backbone in you." And he said, "I quite feel that you are right, doctor; there is no earnestness, no go about me." A man without backbone, you know, is a helpless sort of article. There is no fervour, no rigidity, no energy about him. What is wanted is the spirit which says, Let me know what I have to face, and by grace I will face it.

Now if you are converted, young man, hoist your colours. You say it was all very well for the eunuch, no one saw him. I do not agree with you there; I am sure a good many people looked on, and, what is more, he became the carrier of the gospel to his own country — for that it got in, there is no mistake. Would it not be a happy thing, my friend, if you were to take the gospel where you live? Let me encourage you. You make up your mind to believe this night; trust the Lord Jesus, and confess Him. Remember, "that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10: 10). If you were to do that, you would go on your way rejoicing.

This chancellor's dilemma is over. Jerusalem yielded him nothing save the Scriptures. From them he hears of Jesus, believes Him, confesses Him, and witnesses for Him, and then goes on his way rejoicing. God give you, my friend, to do exactly the same.