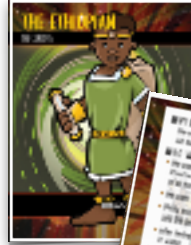


The curious

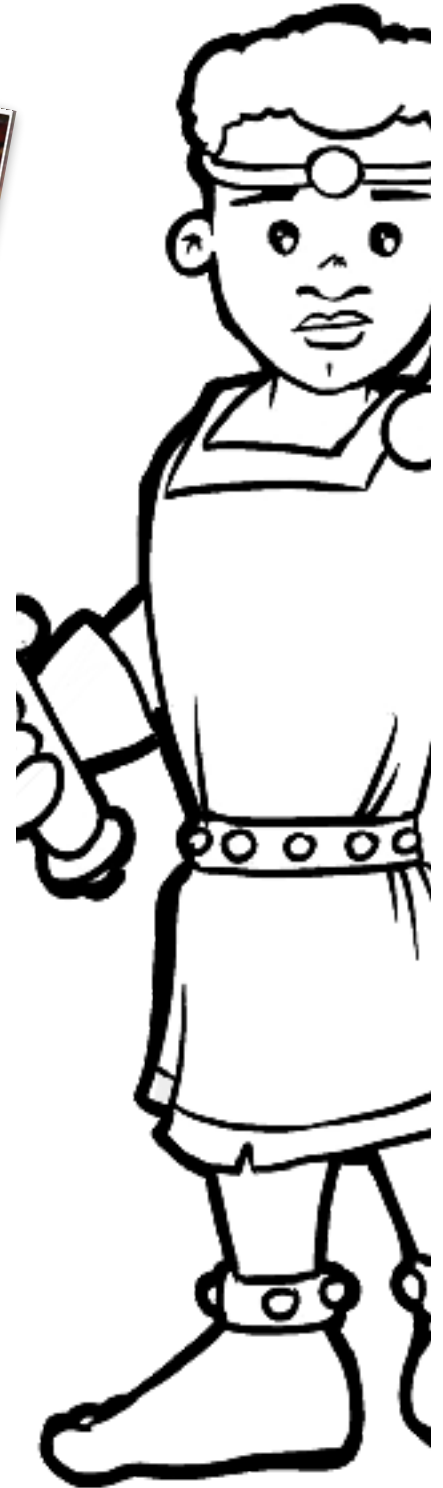
WHO WAS THIS PERSON?

- The Ethiopian mentioned in the Bible was a high official in the court of Candace, the queen of Ethiopia (Acts 8:27).
- The Ethiopian was a eunuch (Acts 8:27). In ancient times, male court officials (eunuchs) were often castrated at a young age to help them behave appropriately with the king's harem.
- The Ethiopian was superintendent of all her treasures (Acts 8:27).
- The Ethiopian was in Israel to worship the Lord at the temple (Acts 8:27).



WHAT IS THIS PERSON KNOWN FOR?

- On his return trip to Ethiopia, he met Philip the evangelist and it really changed his life (Acts 8:26-40).
- Philip, one of the first seven deacons, went to preach the Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8:4-8). Then he was visited by an angel who told him to go on a road to Gaza in the desert (Acts 8:26).
- On the road, the Ethiopian eunuch was in a chariot and he was reading the book of Isaiah. At that moment, the Spirit told Philip to approach the chariot, and he heard the eunuch reading aloud from the book of Isaiah.
- Philip asked the Ethiopian if he understood what he was reading. The eunuch replied, "How can I, unless someone instructs me?" And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him." (Acts 8:31). The passage the Ethiopian eunuch was reading was: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter. And as a lamb is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. He was humiliated and received no justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth?" (Acts 8:32-33; Isaiah 53:7-8).
- The eunuch wondered who the prophet was talking about. "Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?" (Acts 8:34). Philip took the opportunity to explain the passage: it was a prophecy about Jesus Christ, who gave his life to save the world. As Philip explained salvation, the Ethiopian believed.
- When they came to a watering place by the road, the eunuch asked to be baptized (Acts 8:36). Philip agreed and the eunuch stopped the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and "Philip baptized him." (Acts 8:38)





- "When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:39).

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PERSON HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN GOD'S STORY?

- **God asks us to go and tell the whole world about Jesus.** Philip received instructions and did not hesitate to obey. He immediately obeyed this message from God. He did not ask questions or argue with God. He did not tell God he would do it later, he went immediately where God told him to go. What would your response be if God clearly told you to go? Would you obey immediately or would you make excuses and delay your departure for a time you would prefer?
- **God can speak to us.** It is important to stop and recognize if God is clearly asking us to do something. Has God clearly spoken to you and told you what to do? Sometimes people think that God has only spoken to people in the Bible. Perhaps children might think that God only speaks to adults? In 1 Samuel 3:1-18, God spoke to a young boy named Samuel. At first, Samuel didn't know it was God. When the priest Eli realized that it was God speaking to Samuel, he told him what to do. Samuel heard God's voice at a very young age. Today, God speaks to children too (John 10).
- **Did you know that not everyone who comes to church is necessarily saved?** Many people come to church like the Ethiopian. They have a desire to know God and they come to church because it is the place where they hope to learn more about Him. Philip is an exciting example of an obedient disciple of Jesus! Sharing the Good News is like knocking on the door of people's hearts. Sometimes God tells you to share with someone and they don't even seem to hear what you are saying. Sometimes you share the Good News and the person says, "I always wanted to know how to be saved, but no one told me. It's like a door that opens wide for you to share and pray with that person to become a believer in Jesus! The result is not up to you, all you have to do is talk about Jesus and the Spirit will do the rest.
- **We must be able to explain the scriptures.** The man told Philip what he had read. God had prepared Philip well, so with ease he entered into dialogue with the man and "So beginning with this same Scripture, Philip told him the Good News about Jesus." (Acts 8:35). There will come times in your life when you will be asked to open the Word of God with another. Much misinformation about the Bible is spread. We need to equip

ourselves, like in Sunday school, to be able to explain what the Good News in the Bible means to our friends.

- **The Holy Spirit can guide us.** The angel asked Philip, "Go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza." (Acts 8:26). If Philip did not have a good relationship with the Holy Spirit, he would not have listened to the angel's command. We must develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit in order to listen and obey Him. The Holy Spirit will speak through scripture or circumstance and we must allow Him to accomplish His will in our lives. We may not know what impact we are making in that person's life. We must learn to obey and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Pose the following two questions to your children, one at a time. Allow for interaction and discussion, letting them share their thoughts while you guide the conversation.

- What life lessons can I learn from this Bible character about how I should and should not live?
- Based on what I have learned from this Bible character, how can I live in a way that is pleasing to God.

MORE IN GOD'S WORD

Challenge yourself to find five minutes each day for a week, to quiet your spirit, finding a spot where you are not distracted, and practice just listening to God and being in tune with Him. Take your Bible to that quiet place. Use some of that time to pray, and some time to just meditate on His Word. Keep your ears and your heart open to what God is wanting to say to you. It's not a matter if IF He wants to talk to you. He does want to speak. But, He also wants you to be ready and positioned for listening, so you can actually hear in your heart what He is saying. Then, respond in obedience with a heart that is open to what God would have you to do. God called Samuel three times. How many times is He calling you? The more you spend time in His presence, the less He will have to try calling you over and over again. Maybe you will hear His voice the very first time He calls!

