



# Philip Tells the Ethiopian About Jesus

Acts 8:26-40



BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## Philip Obeyed God's Leading

According to Acts 8:4-8, Philip was preaching Christ, healing people, and bringing great joy to a Samaritan city. But God had another plan for Philip, which included guiding the first non-Jewish convert to faith in Jesus and God's plan resulted in Christianity being taken to Ethiopia. Philip responded in obedience.

Since the Ethiopian eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, we can assume he knew something of the Jewish faith. He may have been fully committed to the faith because he had traveled quite a distance to worship, perhaps as far as 200 miles! He had likely been inspired by his time of worship, because he was reading from Isaiah as he rode along. We might find it strange that Philip could hear what he was reading, but it was common in ancient times to read aloud. In fact, the language was such that sounding out the words was almost necessary.

## Philip Was Prepared for Questions

At the Holy Spirit's prompting, Philip overcame not only any fears or questions about non-Jews becoming Christians, but also any racial prejudice he may have had. The Ethiopian was a native of what is now northern Sudan and was black-skinned. God is not concerned with the color of our skin, and neither was Phillip.

Philip had no difficulty answering the Ethiopian's questions. He had probably been answering the same types of questions from the Samaritans. God had prepared the right person to present the gospel to the Ethiopian on the road.

When Philip told the man about Jesus, the Ethiopian apparently expressed belief immediately. Baptism was taken very seriously in the early church. Philip must have been fully convinced of the certainty

and sincerity of the Ethiopian's belief, because he consented to baptize this traveler.

## The Jesus Connection

Having completed his task, Philip was again sent on his way by God. The text seems to indicate that God miraculously swept him away, on to his next mission. The Ethiopian continued on his way, and tradition tells us that he spread the message of Christ in Ethiopia, soon baptizing the queen and others there.

We often don't know why God guides us to do certain things. But when we know what God wants us to do, we must respond in faith and action. Who knows what God will do through us if we respond faithfully to the guidance of his Holy Spirit?

In what area of your life is God leading you to listen closely to his voice? You can write your prayer here.

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**Philip listened to God's voice and jumped into action.** Show

your child the connection between sound waves and movement! Over an open-mouth container, stretch a piece of plastic wrap. Rubber band it tightly. Let your child shake some salt on top. Have your child bang a pan and a spoon very close to the salt. Watch the salt jump from the invisible sound waves. Tell your child that when we pray or read something from the Bible, we are listening to God, and sometimes we get excited and want to tell others about it.

**Daily Challenge**

**This week, your child learned** that we listen to God. Your child committed to one of the following Daily

Challenges to listen to God. Help your child weave faith into life this week and follow through on the challenge!



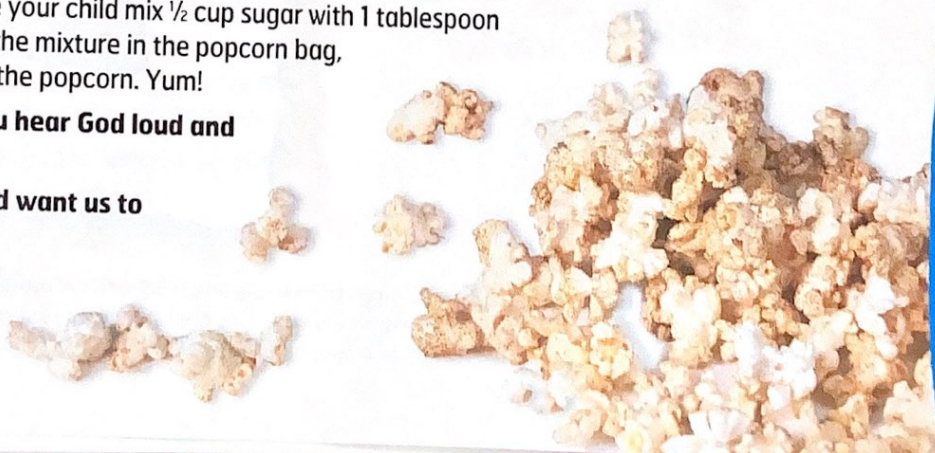
**Put a bag of microwaveable popcorn in the microwave.** Put it on for the minimum popping time, usually 3 or 4 minutes.

Stand away from the microwave with your child, and listen to the popping start and wane. Talk about how we can listen to God when his voice is loud and clear (as in the Bible) and when it is soft and less obvious (as when the Holy Spirit nudges us to do something kind).

If you wish, you can have your child mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar with 1 tablespoon cinnamon in a bowl, put the mixture in the popcorn bag, and shake it so it covers the popcorn. Yum!

**ASK** @ When can you hear God loud and clear?

@ Why does God want us to listen to him?



**What I Learned Today...**

**Bible Time:** This week's Bible passage (Acts 8:26-40) tells us that we can listen to God. When an angel of the Lord told Philip to get up and go, Philip left without question or hesitation. He met an important Ethiopian who just happened to be reading the words of the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked if he could help the man understand what he was reading. Philip was more than happy to tell him the good news about our awesome Savior. How wonderful life can be when we listen to God!

**Key Verse:** The Holy Spirit will teach you (adapted from John 14:26).

1. Draw a picture of God talking to you, and then hang it in your room to remind you that we can listen to God.
2. Play a game of Follow the Leader with your friends. When you're finished playing, tell your friends that God wants us to listen and follow him.
3. Ask a family member what his or her favorite thing about God is—and then listen carefully to what he or she says.