

GOING TO JERUSALEM

Act 8:27 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,

What was so important that the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away from a great revival in Samaria to the desert on the way to Egypt? “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 (Acts 8:26). The answer is that there was an African man earnestly reading the Bible. This African man had gone to Jerusalem to worship. Centuries ago God commanded Pharaoh to let his people go that they worship him. How it must have pleased God that a foreigner had come all the way from Africa to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! I speak as an African when I say that today most Africans long to travel, not to Jerusalem, but to the West in search of a better life. There is not one African who comes to Europe to find Jesus or the treasures of the Kingdom of heaven. Rather, they come in search of the treasures of Europe.

John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

John 6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

However, I still believe there are many Africans who prefer to travel to Jerusalem rather than the physical treasures of the West. To go to Jerusalem is a metaphor to seek the God of heaven who was manifested in the flesh. To go to Jerusalem is to walk in the footsteps of one other than Abraham who forsook everything in search of God. What was he looking for? “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Hebrews 11: 8-10). Every other place Abraham went, he dwelt in tabernacles because the righteous are only at home in Jerusalem. What did he find in Jerusalem.

Gen 14:18 *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.*

Gen 14:19 *And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:*

Whoever goes to Jerusalem will never return empty handed. Melchizedek was none other than God. He foreshadowed the Lord Jesus Christ in that he was both a priest forever before Aaron and administered bread and wine to Abraham. Bread and wine clearly represent the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (John 6:51). The Lord Jesus also first revealed the meaning of the bread and wine in Jerusalem and gave it to his apostles. In other words, it is only in Jerusalem spiritually speaking that the mystery of salvation is revealed. It was in Jerusalem that the disciples entered into a covenant with the Lord Jesus and were filled with his Holy Spirit, speaking in the tongues of angels. Let us go to Jerusalem!

Act 8:30 *And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?*

Now, there can no doubt that this man genuinely loved God and was a spiritual man. Had he been a Pharisee, he would have made a big show of reading the Bible while in Jerusalem in the hearing and sight of thousands. But an individual who is only in the company of his servants and returning home in the desert, and yet reads the word of God, is surely one who loves God. Will God not see this? Does he not know? “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2:19). To love God has serious consequences – ones that are all good. As he read the Bible, Jesus sent Philip freshly anointed from his blessed trip in Samaria. God could trust Philip with this African man whom he loved dearly because Philip had just ministered with love to the Samaritans – the supposed enemies of the Jews.

Act 10:34 *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:*

Act 10:35 *But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

May the Lord Jesus take every African to Jerusalem! This Ethiopian eunuch was clearly very rich in earthly terms. He did not go to Jerusalem for the flesh. If an African comes to the West today and tells immigration that he came to get a hold of the Gospel and worship Jesus, they wouldn't believe a word of what he is saying. The Ethiopian eunuch could say that silver and gold he had much, but such as he had was of no value to him. He read his Bible in the desert. God took the children of Israel to the desert and gave them his word on Mount Sinai. Elijah heard the still small voice of God in the desert in Horeb. John the Baptist first received the call to declare Jesus in the desert where the people went. The apostle Paul was personally taught the mysteries of the Bible in the desert in Arabia. "To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus" (Galatians 1:16,17). The word of God appears to best be served in the desert environment where there is no distraction – only the desert sand below and God above.

***Psalm 46:10** Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*

Let us go to Jerusalem! From Jerusalem God sent Philip. The preachers from Jerusalem will come straight to the point: do you understand what you are reading? Everything in the desert is about the truth – the bare necessities of life. There is no time for diversions and unnecessary additions, both in word and action. We are in the desert of the world spiritually speaking, saints of the Lord. Words must be rationed, and energy conserved. Come to the point! Salvation is extremely urgent. First give salvation in the desert before anything else. People become impatient because of the heat and scarcity of food. Remember the children of Israel and their impatience when Moses delayed coming down from the mountain?

***2Corinthians 6:2** (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

We must tell people that God is one and alone (Deut 6:4). He is not a Trinity! This same, one God was manifested in the flesh (I Tim 3:16). Jesus is the Father and the Son of God at the same time (Isaiah 9:6; Matt 16:16). Next, one must repent, be baptized in Jesus' name and receive the Holy Spirit, which is not another member of the Trinity but the Spirit of Jesus (Gal 4:6). God, then, commands us to live a holy life aligned with his holiness (I Peter 1:16)
Amen!