

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

March 25, 2018

The Ethiopian's Bible

by Frank Himmel

Acts 8 relates the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. It is a familiar account. The last time I read it I got to thinking about one detail: the Ethiopian's Bible. Consider that...

He had one. We seldom give it much thought, but the very fact that this man had a copy of Scripture is noteworthy. Books were handwritten in those days; that means they were rarer and more expensive than we think of them. The Ethiopian's Bible must have been important to him.

He knew where it was. Years ago an elder and I visited a sister who seldom attended worship. She assured us that although she was rarely at church, she regularly prayed and read her Bible. The elder asked her to get her Bible so we could all read a few passages together (I was fairly certain which ones he had in mind). Ten minutes later she finally located it! The Ethiopian, in contrast, kept his Bible with him.

He read it. The Ethiopian had been to Jerusalem to worship, "and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah" (v. 28). I assume he had either stopped for a break or else he had a driver! The point is, he did not own a Bible just to say he had one. He read it!

He read from the prophets. Did you notice what he was reading? The prophet Isaiah. Not his favorite story or his favorite psalm. There is nothing wrong with rereading those sections we especially love, but the Ethiopian was also interested in what can be the more challenging parts of Scripture.

He wanted to know its meaning. The Ethiopian was reading what has now become a familiar text: Isaiah 53, a prophecy of Jesus' death. At his point of knowledge, however, he did not understand the reference. But he wanted to, and he was glad to listen while Philip explained it to him. He knew the joy of gaining insight into God's marvelous plan. ▶



Singing

directed by

Tim Stevens

Sunday, March 25
3:00 p.m.

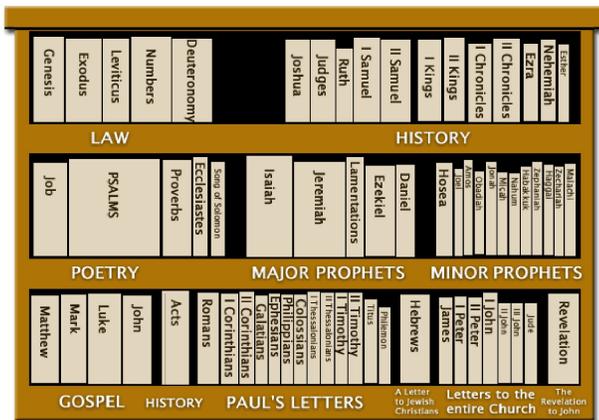
The Bible Is a Library

by Frank Himmel

The term *Bible* means a book. Yet when most of us hear that word we think of **the** book. Actually, the Bible is not a single volume; it is a collection of sixty-six books.

The forty or so men who wrote the Bible were quite diverse. They lived on three continents and spanned sixteen centuries. They had a variety of vocations, from kings to servants, from doctors to farmers. Some lived in large cities, others in remote wildernesses. Some wrote from palaces, others from prisons.

The books themselves represent a broad spectrum of literature. The Bible contains works of law, poetry, history, biography, and prophecy. Most of the New Testament books are letters, either to churches or individuals.



Despite this diversity, the Bible maintains a remarkable unity. It has a single theme: salvation in Christ. Its doctrines do not contradict. How is that possible? God directed each man as he wrote. "... no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:20-21). "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). ■

The Ethiopian's Bible - *continued from p. 1*

He acted on its message. Philip preached what Isaiah had prophesied—Jesus crucified for our salvation. That is the theme of the Bible. It is a message that calls for action on our part, acceptance of God's offer of salvation by becoming Jesus' disciples. That includes both faith in Jesus (v. 37) and baptism into Him (vv. 36, 38). The Ethiopian was anxious to act immediately on what he learned. He ordered the chariot to stop and was baptized at that moment.

His story became part of our Bible. Obviously, the Ethiopian's Bible was limited to the Old Testament. For some reason, the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to include his story in the book of Acts, part of the New Testament, which is God's revelation to all mankind for the rest of time. Why? The Ethiopian's story, along with so many others, illustrates how to be saved, how to become Jesus' disciple. Perhaps it was also included because it teaches us proper regard for the Bible. ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER SONG LEADER OPENING PRAYER LORD'S SUPPER BREAD CUP CONTRIBUTION PRAYER SERMON/INVITATION CLOSING PRAYER	Adam Gibson Carlos Garcia Mark Clifton Steven Turner Mike Zachry Greg Winget Tim Stevens Albert Lee Harrison	Chris Brooks John Baucom Josh Baucom Daven Daniel