

Study 1. An Ethiopian is Saved

READ: Acts 8: 26-39

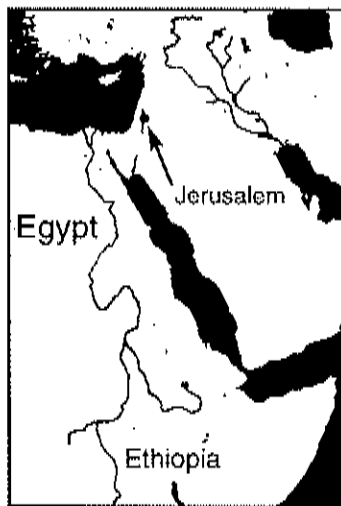


KEY VERSE: Acts 8: 35

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.”

In this final set of Studies on the topic of 'salvation', we shall consider the stories of four people, or groups of people, who received salvation, in New Testament times.

We commence with the case of a man from Ethiopia, a country in East Africa.



1. THE MAN - There is evidence in **verse 27** that he was a high ranking government official, who was trusted by his Queen. The fact that he travelled to Jerusalem (about 1,000 miles) to worship indicates that he was searching for the satisfaction which is to be found in knowing God. His position and his wealth had failed to give him true peace. He may not have been able to express it in the same words as we use today, but the fact remains that he needed to find salvation through the Lord Jesus. In this respect, we are all alike - we all need God's salvation.

2. THE MEETING - We believe that God has control over all the circumstances of our lives, and He arranges events for our blessing. In the case of the Ethiopian, God directed His servant, Philip, to the very road where the African was travelling. How remarkable, too, that the Ethiopian was, at that very moment, reading a part of the Old Testament! Indeed, he was reading that part of the prophecy of Isaiah which most clearly explains the way of salvation. In our Bible, it is known as **Isaiah chapter 53**.

The Bible states that **“God . . . desires all men to be saved”**. (**1 Timothy 2: 3 & 4**) Because this is so, He often brings people into contact with those who can explain to them the way of salvation. Perhaps, today, you will meet someone with whom you can share the Bible's truth about salvation!

3. THE MESSAGE - With Philip seated in the chariot beside the Ethiopian, it would be hard to imagine a better situation for explaining the way of salvation. Here was a man genuinely seeking for God. Added to that, the words he had just been reading were about the sufferings and death of the Saviour. So Philip **“opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him”**. The news of salvation, which Philip explained to the African, was both Bible-based and Christ-centred.

It is very important to understand that for us today the Gospel message is unchanged. Only on the basis of the sufferings, the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as taught in the Bible, can we be saved. **Read Acts 4: 12**.

4. THE MIRACLE - It is often said that 'the seeking sinner and the seeking Saviour soon meet'. So it was in this case. Philip explained the way of salvation and when the Ethiopian asked if he could be baptized, Philip replied, **“If you believe with all your heart, you may”**. To this the man answered, **“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”**. So, having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, he then confessed his faith in Him, both by word of mouth, and by being baptized. (**See verse 38**)

To be saved by God's grace is indeed a miracle in the sense that salvation does not come to us by our own efforts. It can only come about as a result of what God has done on our behalf, in the Lord Jesus.

The story finishes on a happy note - **“he went on his way rejoicing”**. (**v. 39**) He had found the Saviour, and in receiving Him, the deepest longings of his heart were satisfied. Let each of us ask ourselves the question: **“Am I trusting only in this Saviour, for my personal and eternal salvation?”**

NewLife WorkSheet

Study 1. An Ethiopian is Saved

1 A. WRITE A SENTENCE ABOUT THE ETHIOPIAN TO TELL WHAT KIND OF MAN HE WAS.

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B. WHAT EVIDENCE CAN YOU FIND IN THIS STORY TO SUPPORT THE BELIEF THAT GOD IS CONCERNED ABOUT US AS INDIVIDUALS?

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2 UNDERLINE THE CORRECT PHRASE IN EACH OF THESE SENTENCES:-

- a. The Ethiopian was ON HIS WAY TO JERUSALEM / RETURNING HOME, when Philip met him.
- b. The Ethiopian INVITED PHILIP / DID NOT ASK PHILIP to sit beside him.
- c. Philip explained the words of the prophet by REFERRING TO OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY / RELATING THEM TO JESUS AND HIS DEATH.
- d. The man was saved by BEING BAPTIZED / BELIEVING IN THE LORD JESUS.

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3 A. WHAT ARE THE 'SCRIPTURES'?

B. WHICH PART OF THE SCRIPTURES WAS THE MAN READING?

C. WHY WAS ISAIAH CALLED A PROPHET?

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D. ABOUT WHOM DID THIS PROPHET PROPHECY?

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4 A. WRITE OUT WHAT THE AFRICAN SAID IN CONFESSING HIS FAITH IN JESUS.

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B. IN WHAT OTHER WAY DID HE CONFESS HIS NEW FAITH?

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5 "HE WENT ON HIS WAY REJOICING." (v. 39) WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR HIS HAPPINESS?

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6 LOOK AGAIN AT ACTS 4: 12 AND EXPLAIN WHY SALVATION CAN ONLY BE FOUND IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

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7 READ ISAIAH 53 AND CHOOSING JUST ONE OR TWO VERSES, EXPLAIN BRIEFLY WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE FOR SINNERS.

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Study 4. The Christians at Ephesus

READ: Ephesians 2: 1-22



KEY VERSES: Ephesians 2: 8 & 9

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

In this final Study, we direct our attention to a group of people who had been saved, by God's grace. They were citizens of Ephesus, a large Gentile city, to which Paul and other missionaries had brought the Gospel. (See Map Study 3) The result was that many people turned from their evil ways, and became believers in the Lord Jesus.

(See Acts 19: 17-20)

Some years later, Paul wrote a letter to them. We call it 'The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians'. In it, Paul explains many things about the salvation which they had found in the Lord Jesus.

First of all, he reminds them of:-

THE CONDITION in which they were, before the Gospel came to them. There are many words, and phrases, in **chapter 2** which describe their original, unsaved state. For example, they were **“dead in trespasses and sins”**; (v. 1) they were **“without Christ . . . having no hope, and without God in the world”**. (v. 12) These statements make it very clear that they, just like ourselves, were in need of being saved.

We note also that Paul explains to them:-

THE CHANGE that had taken place in them. He contrasts, from a spiritual viewpoint, what they **USED TO BE**, with what they **NOW ARE**.

Note the following:-

- They were once **“dead”**, but are now **“made alive” (quicken)**. (See v. 1)
- They were once **“far off”**, but are now **“made near”**. (See v. 13)
- They were once **“strangers”**, but are now **“fellow citizens with the saints”**. (See v. 19)

These statements highlight some of the great changes which take place when anyone responds to the Gospel, by putting his faith in the Saviour. Every

one who does so, enters a new relationship with God; God 'seals' or 'stamps' him, as belonging to Him, by imparting the Holy Spirit to take up residence within him. *(Read Ephesians 1: 13 & 14)*

Another point which Paul emphasizes in his letter is:- **THE COST** of their salvation. To be a Christian may be costly for us, in the sense that we must break with sinful practices and associations. There may also be a cost to us in that we may suffer reproach from friends and family, on account of our commitment to the Lord Jesus. However, it is not the cost **TO US** that Paul refers to in this letter; it is, rather, the cost **TO GOD HIMSELF**. To what lengths did God go to make salvation available for us?

The answer is found in **TWO** phrases:-

- “made near BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST”** (See 2: 13)
 - “THROUGH THE CROSS.”** (See 2: 16)
- The cost of salvation is nothing less than the death of the Lord Jesus, as a sacrifice for our sins at Calvary. Because He paid **ALL** that was needful, salvation is offered to us as a free gift. *(Read Romans 6: 23)*

Finally, Paul writes to them about:-

THE COMPLETION to which they can look forward. 'Salvation' is a **PAST** experience (They **were** saved from their sins). It is a **PRESENT** experience (They **are being** saved from the daily influence of Satan). It is also a **FUTURE** experience (They **shall be** saved from God's judgment). Paul, therefore, projects their minds forward to think about **“the ages to come” (2: 7)**, when God will show the surpassing riches of His grace, in His kindness to them, in Christ Jesus. He speaks, too, about **“the fullness of the times” (1: 10)**, when all God's purposes will be completed in Christ. Then, our salvation will have reached its final and perfect state.

As we finish this set of Studies, perhaps we should all ask ourselves some questions! Have I personally been 'saved by grace, through faith'? Am I living each day in the enjoyment and strength of my salvation? Do I eagerly anticipate its completion, when my Saviour comes back to earth to reign?

NewLife WorkSheet

Study 4. The Christians at Ephesus

1 USING ACTS 19: 17-20, WRITE A SENTENCE TO SHOW HOW THE GOSPEL MADE PROGRESS IN THE CITY OF EPHEBUS. (2)

2 A. READ EPHESIANS 2: 8, AND EXPLAIN WHY IT IS ONLY "BY GRACE" THAT WE CAN BE SAVED. (Remember that 'grace' is 'undeserved favour'.)

B. WHAT DID PAUL MEAN WHEN HE WROTE, "NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANYONE SHOULD BOAST"? (EPHESIANS 2: 9)

3 PAUL TELLS THE CHRISTIANS THAT, AT FIRST, THEY WERE "WITHOUT CHRIST". (2: 12) WRITE OUT 2: 13, AND UNDERLINE THE PHRASE WHICH IS THE OPPOSITE OF "WITHOUT CHRIST".

4 ONE PERSON MIGHT SAY, 'Salvation cost God a great deal'; ANOTHER MIGHT SAY, 'Salvation is a free gift'. EXPLAIN HOW BOTH STATEMENTS ARE TRUE.

5 SALVATION, AS THE STUDY HAS SHOWN, IS PRESENTED IN SCRIPTURE AS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE. LOOK UP THESE REFERENCES, AND WRITE PAST, PRESENT OR FUTURE IN THE SPACE AFTER EACH REFERENCE TO INDICATE WHICH ASPECT OF SALVATION IT RELATES TO.
 Titus 3: 5 Romans 5: 9 James 1: 21
 2 Timothy 1: 9 Romans 13: 11

6 HEBREWS 2: 3 ASKS, "HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?"
 A. WRITE A SENTENCE SUGGESTING SOME WAYS IN WHICH PEOPLE TODAY MIGHT 'NEGLECT SALVATION'.

B. WRITE ANOTHER SENTENCE TO EXPLAIN WHAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE 'NEGLECTED SALVATION' MUST DO, IN ORDER TO BE SAVED.

7 WRITE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED ABOUT GOD'S SALVATION, FROM THESE FOUR STUDIES.

100
 Total marks for this Unit

Return your study sheets to:
 PBS Centre or to:

25
 Total marks for this study

This study sheet belongs to:

Study 2. The Jailer at Philippi

READ: Acts 16: 19-40



KEY VERSES: Acts 16: 30 & 31

“And he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ ”



God uses many different means to bring people to faith in His Son. Study 1, has shown us how God directed His servant, Philip, to a lonely stretch of road to meet an Ethiopian who was seeking salvation. In addition, it has shown how the Scriptures can play a major part in a person's salvation. This Study points to the fact that unexpected and destructive events, like an earthquake, can be God's 'voice' to us, resulting in our salvation. Perhaps you can identify people and even events, which were used by God to bring you to the Saviour!

We can be sure that Paul and Silas found the experience of being arrested, beaten and imprisoned very distressing, yet they did not allow themselves to be cast down! Their trust in God remained unshaken, as is indicated by their praying and singing. (v. 25) This, in turn, prepared them for what was about to happen - first, the earthquake and then the enquiry of the badly shaken prison officer: **“What must I do to be saved?”**

This question about salvation has frequently been asked! Many people have put the emphasis upon “DO”, thinking mistakenly that being saved is the result of their own efforts. Read again **Ephesians 2: 8 & 9** and **Titus 3: 5**. If what we do can save us,

we might very well ask why the Lord Jesus had to suffer and die upon the cross at Calvary.

The reply given by Paul and Silas, **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved”** gives us the true way of salvation.

1. Here is a CONCISE ANSWER. Hundreds of books have been written about salvation, and thousands of sermons have been preached about it. But what a concerned person, such as the jailer at Philippi, needs is a short, clear answer.

2. Here is the CORRECT ANSWER. This answer agrees fully with the entire message of the Bible on the matter of our personal salvation. It is faith in the Lord Jesus which brings perishing sinners to a position of complete security. **See John 3: 16, John 3: 36 and John 5: 24.**

3. Here is a CHRIST-HONOURING ANSWER. It had the effect of turning the mind of the prison officer away from anything that he could do to earn salvation. Instead, it directed him to the One who had died, been buried and raised again.

4. Here is a CONCLUSIVE ANSWER. **“You will be saved.”** God wants us to be assured about our salvation! We need not be vague and uncertain! Put simple, personal trust in the Saviour who died for your sins, and **YOU WILL BE SAVED!**

For the jailer, and indeed for his entire household, it was a night of salvation! They all heard **“the word of the Lord”, (v. 32) “they believed” (v. 34)** and were **“baptized”, (v. 33)** A new joy filled their hearts, and with it came a sympathetic attitude towards Paul and Silas who were suffering painfully as a result of the beating they had received.

To be saved is a personal and inward matter, the result of putting one's trust in the Lord Jesus. But we should understand that the genuineness of our faith is shown by changed behaviour and attitudes. Do your words, your actions and attitudes 'tell others' that you have been saved?

NewLife WorkSheet

Study 2. The Jailer at Philippi

1 WHEN YOU HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THIS STUDY, WRITE A SENTENCE TO EXPLAIN AT LEAST TWO WAYS IN WHICH GOD DRAWS PEOPLE TO HIMSELF FOR SALVATION.

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2 A. THE ARREST OF PAUL AND SILAS IS RECORDED IN v. 19. WRITE A SENTENCE TO TELL WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM BETWEEN THEIR ARREST AND THEIR BEING PUT IN PRISON.

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B. WHAT DOES THE FACT THAT PAUL AND SILAS "WERE PRAYING AND SINGING HYMNS TO GOD" SHOW ABOUT THEM?

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3 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE:-

- a. The prison doors burst open.
- b. The prison officer allowed all the prisoners to escape.
- c. Silas shouted, "*Do yourself no harm; for we are all here*".
- d. Paul and Silas fell down before the jailer.
- e. The jailer and his family were baptized, as Christians, that night.

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4 EXPLAIN, AS CLEARLY AS YOU CAN, WHAT IT MEANS TO "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST".

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5 'IT IS FAITH ALONE WHICH SAVES, BUT FAITH THAT SAVES IS NEVER ALONE.' EXPLAIN WHAT THIS MEANS, USING THE CASE OF THE JAILER TO ILLUSTRATE YOUR ANSWER.

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6 WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY THAT RECEIVING GOD'S SALVATION IS A VERY PERSONAL MATTER?

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7 WHAT EXPLANATION CAN YOU GIVE FOR THE JOY EXPERIENCED BY THE JAILER IN THIS STUDY (v. 34) AND BY THE ETHIOPIAN IN THE PREVIOUS STUDY? (ACTS 8: 39)

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Total marks
for this study

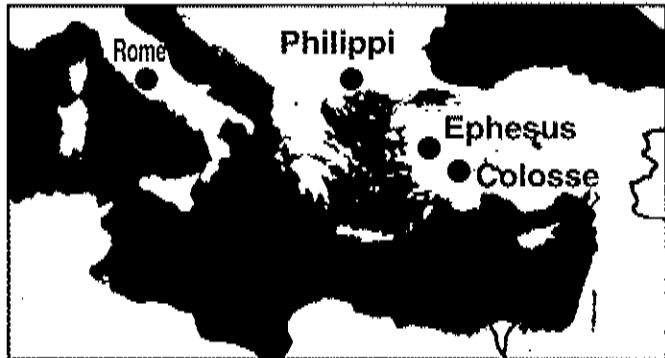
Study 3. A Runaway Slave Saved

READ: Philemon: 1-25



KEY VERSE: Ephesians 4: 32

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.”



Onesimus is one of the lesser known men of the New Testament. Almost everything we know about him is found in Paul's short letter to Philemon. The facts are as follows:-

A. Onesimus was a slave (v. 16) owned by Philemon, who appears to have been a well-to-do Christian in Colosse. (See map)

B. Onesimus, it would seem, wronged his master, probably by stealing from him. (See verses 18 & 19) 'Onesimus' means 'profitable' or 'good for something', but at this stage of his life he was failing to live up to his name. Paul notes this in verse 11! We might say he became 'good for nothing'!

C. Like many others who do wrong, Onesimus fled, perhaps hoping to avoid punishment. The evidence available to us indicates that he went as far as to Rome. We have no information about how he travelled, how long his journey took, or what experiences he had on the way. We can, however, picture him in the great metropolis of the world, a lonely, wayward young man who needs, above everything else, God's saving grace. In many ways, he is a 'picture' of each of us, in that we have all sinned against God and our sins have separated us from Him; hence our need of salvation.

D. Paul, at the time of Onesimus' arrival in Rome, was being held as a prisoner there. It was not a case of Paul having committed crimes; his imprisonment was on account of his faithfulness to his Lord and to the task which God had given him to do. In the providence of God, Paul and Onesimus met, most likely in the prison. We can be sure that Paul would not miss any opportunities of speaking to the runaway slave about the Gospel, and about his need to repent of his sins, and put his trust in the Saviour.

E. That is just what happened! As a result of Paul speaking to Onesimus, he was saved. Paul refers to his salvation as being like the birth of a child. (v. 10) In spiritual terms, Paul had become 'father' to Onesimus whom he looks upon as *“my son”*!

F. Onesimus developed quickly in his new life as a Christian. It was soon very evident that he had finished with his former sinful way of living. He was 'a new man', whose conduct now agreed with the meaning of his name. (*“NOW profitable”* - see v. 11) Paul believed that the right course of action for Onesimus was to return to his owner whom he had wronged. Paul therefore wrote this little letter, as an explanation; in it he urges Philemon to welcome Onesimus back, *“no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you”*. (v. 16) Very generously, Paul offers to take responsibility for any debts which Onesimus may have incurred. (See v. 18)

The story of Onesimus emphasizes TWO important points for us:-

1. God can save even the worst of sinners. However sinful and evil a person may be, if he will repent and turn to the Saviour, he will be saved.

(Read 1 Timothy 1: 15)

2. When we are saved, our lives change. The thief became *“a faithful and beloved brother”*. (Colossians 4: 9) If we allow God's Word to guide us, little by little our conduct comes into line with His will for us. 'Salvation' not only saves us from the punishment which our sins deserve, but it also preserves us from the evil which is around us and within us.

Study 3. A Runaway Slave Saved

1 WRITE SHORT ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS:-

- a. Who was Onesimus' master?
- b. In what city did he live?
- c. Where did Onesimus go, when he left his master?
- d. Whom did he meet there?

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2 IN WHAT WAYS DOES ONESIMUS PORTRAY OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION, BEFORE WE ARE SAVED?

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3 IMAGINE PAUL SPEAKING TO ONESIMUS ABOUT THE GOSPEL, IN THE PRISON AT ROME. WHAT DO YOU THINK PAUL WOULD TELL HIM?

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- 4** A. WHAT DOES THE NAME 'ONESIMUS' MEAN?
- B. IN WHAT WAY DID HE NOT LIVE UP TO HIS NAME?
- C. WHEN HE WAS SAVED, HIS BEHAVIOUR CHANGED, AND HE BECAME A LIVING EXAMPLE OF WHAT *EPHESIANS 4: 28* REQUIRES A CHRISTIAN TO BE. WRITE IT OUT.

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5 A. WHEN A PERSON IS SAVED, HE IS "A NEW CREATURE/CREATION". SEE *2 CORINTHIANS 5: 17*. IN WHAT WAY WAS THIS TRUE OF ONESIMUS?

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B. WHEN WE ARE SAVED, WE BECOME MEMBERS OF 'THE FAMILY OF GOD' AND WE ENTER INTO NEW RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS. WRITE THE WORDS WHICH PAUL USES TO DESCRIBE HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH ONESIMUS IN THESE VERSES:-

- a. *Philemon v. 10*
- b. *Philemon v. 16*
- c. *Colossians 4: 9*

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6 A. WRITE OUT THE KEY VERSE.

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B. EXPLAIN IN YOUR OWN WORDS WHAT THIS WOULD MEAN FOR PHILEMON IN HIS FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH ONESIMUS.

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7 NOTE HOW PAUL OFFERED TO PAY FOR ALL THE WRONGS WHICH ONESIMUS HAD DONE. (SEE *VS. 18 & 19*) IT REMINDS US OF HOW THE LORD JESUS BECAME RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OUR SINS UPON THE CROSS! READ, AND WRITE OUT *ISAIAH 53: 5*.

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