

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, “Follow me.”

⁴⁴ Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

⁴⁶ “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” said Philip.

⁴⁷ When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”

⁴⁸ “How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.”

⁴⁹ Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”

⁵⁰ Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.” ⁵¹ He then added, “Very truly I tell you, you will see ‘heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on’ the Son of Man.”

QUESTIONS**1. Who is Philip? What does the Bible tell us about him?**

- *John 1:43-52 – Jesus called him as a disciple; he is from Bethsaida, he brought Nathaniel to Jesus*
- *John 6:5-6 – Jesus tested Philip by asking him where to buy food for the multitude.*
- *John 12: 20-36 – Philip was approached by some Greeks wanting to see Jesus*
- *John 14:6-10 – Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father*
- *He is listed as one of the twelve in all the lists, often coupled with Bartholomew (Nathaniel?)*
- *He is not to be confused with Philip the Evangelist, one of the Deacons chosen in Acts.*
- *The other two Philips listed in the Bible are the sons of Herod.*

2. What does Jesus mean when he says to Philip “Follow me.”?

- *It was an invitation to follow Jesus as a disciple. Disciples were to literally follow and imitate everything about their teacher/Rabbi. If you haven't seen it, watch “Dust” by Rob Bell which tells about what it meant to be a disciple in Jesus' day. (You can find it on YouTube).*

3. What is significant about Bethsaida? Where is it located?

- *According to John 1:44, Bethsaida was the hometown of the apostles Peter, Andrew, and Philip. In the Gospel of Mark (Mark 8:22–26), Jesus reportedly restored a blind man's sight at a place just outside the ancient village of Bethsaida. In Luke 9:10-11, Jesus miraculously feeds five thousand near Bethsaida.*
- *Although Bethsaida is believed to be located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, there is disagreement among scholars as to precisely where. Since the nineteenth century, three places have been considered as the possible location of Biblical Bethsaida: the Bedouin village of **Messadiye**; the small, deserted settlement of **El-Araj** (Beit HaBek,*

"House of the Bey"); and the archaeological site (tell) of Et-Tell.^[9] Over time, the latter two locations have come to appear more likely. While Messadiye and El-Araj are closer to the Sea of Galilee, Et-Tell shows significant archaeological remains including fragments of fishing equipment. No trace of the name Bethsaida has been found in the district, but any one of the sites named would meet the requirements.

4. Who does Philip go to find after being called to discipleship? What does he tell him?

- *Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

5. What does this person whom Philip finds say to him?

- *"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.*

6. What is Philip's reply to him?

- *"Come and see," said Philip.*

7. What does Jesus say about this one whom Philip brings?

- *When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."*

8. How does this one whom Philip brings to Jesus react to Jesus' statement about him?

- *"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.*

9. What does Jesus say to him?

- *Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."*

10. What does this one whom Philip brought to Jesus react to Jesus' answer?

- *Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."*

11. And what is Jesus further declaration to him?

- *Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."*

12. What attribute of Jesus' divine power is demonstrated in this call story?

- *Jesus knows all about everyone inside and out. He knows who we are, what we've done, what we think and the intent of our heart.*

DISCUSSION

1. Jesus refers to "an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." To what Old Testament "Israelite" might Jesus be alluding in his statement?

- *He is referring to Jacob whom God later renamed Israel, who was noted for his many deceitful plans and ploys.*

2. He further speaks of a vision of angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. To what Old Testament character's vision does that allude?

- *"Jacob's Ladder"*
- *Genesis 28:10-17 And **Jacob** went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon the place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the LORD stood beside him, and said: "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee back into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said: "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not." And he was afraid, and said: "How full of awe is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."*

3. John expounds upon Jesus' ability to know the hearts of men in chapter 2, verses 23-24, of his gospel. What are some examples of how Jesus used his divine ability in dealing with the people he helped and those who challenged him in his earthly ministry?

- *²³ Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. ²⁴ But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. ²⁵ He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.*
- *Cite your own examples*