



**ACTS:**  
**A HISTORY BOOK**  
*Living* **IN YOU.**

*VINTAGE IDEAS FOR LIVING TODAY*

<sup>1</sup> ... That very day, the *whole* church in Jerusalem began experiencing severe persecution. *All of the followers of Jesus—except for the leaders themselves—fled to the countryside of Judea and Samaria. ...*<sup>4</sup> All those who had been scattered *by the persecution* moved from place to place; *and wherever they went, they weren't afraid or silent. Instead, they spread the message of Jesus.*


...<sup>26</sup> A heavenly messenger brought this *short* message from the Lord to Philip during his time preaching in Samaria: “Leave Samaria. Go south to the Jerusalem-Gaza road.”<sup>27</sup> *The message was especially unusual because* this road runs through the middle of uninhabited desert. **27** But Philip got up, *left the excitement of Samaria*, and did as he was told to do.

*Along this road, Philip saw a chariot in the distance. In the chariot was a dignitary from Ethiopia (the treasurer for Queen Candace), an African man who had been castrated.*

He had gone north to Jerusalem to worship *at the Jewish temple*, 28 and he was now *heading southwest* on his way home. He was seated in the chariot and was reading aloud from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

# 1st Highlight

...a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Acts 8:2



But you will receive  
power when the Holy  
Spirit comes on you; and  
you will be my witnesses  
in Jerusalem, and in all  
Judea and Samaria, and  
to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

# 1st Highlight

Those who had been scattered  
preached the word wherever they  
went. Acts 8:4



# 1st Highlight

**Philip** went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. Acts 8:5



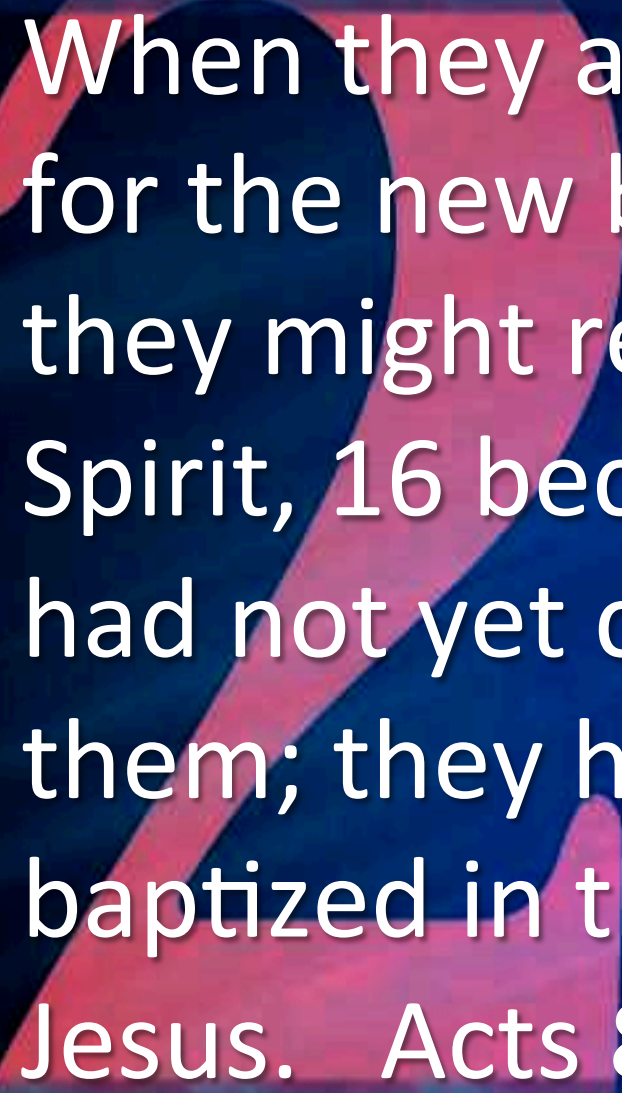
# 1<sup>st</sup> Highlight

Death of Stephen led  
to the Gospel being  
spread.



# 2nd Highlight

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. Acts 8:14



When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 8:15,16



## 2nd Highlight

If the Samaritans had received the Spirit independent of the Jerusalem church the rift between them would have perpetuated.



**I. What God wants us  
to know about the  
Ethiopian's Conversion**

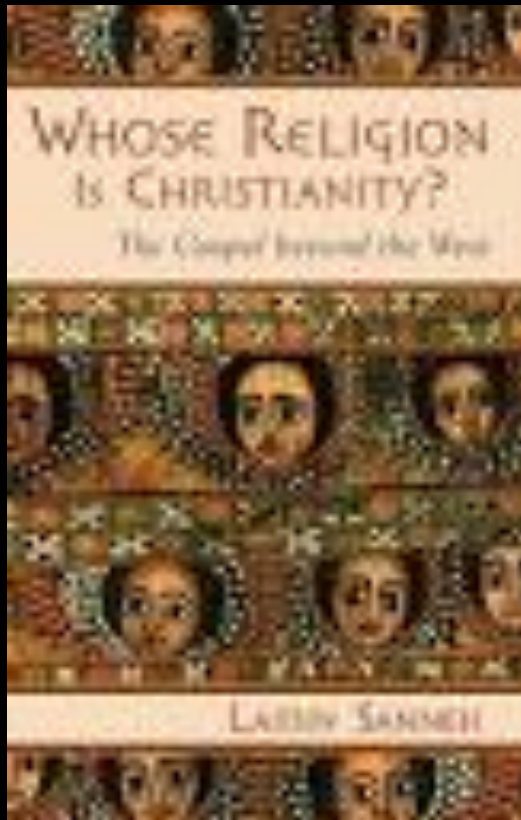
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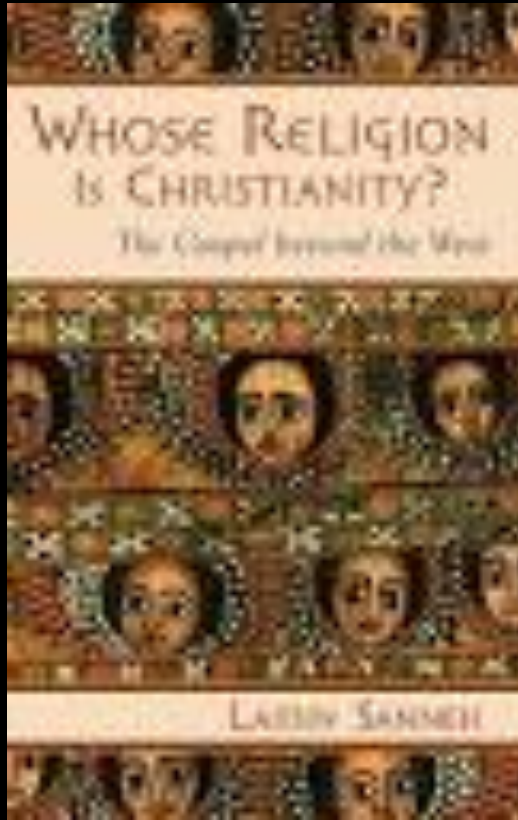
The Holy Spirit said to Philip,  
“Go over and walk along  
beside the carriage.” vs.29



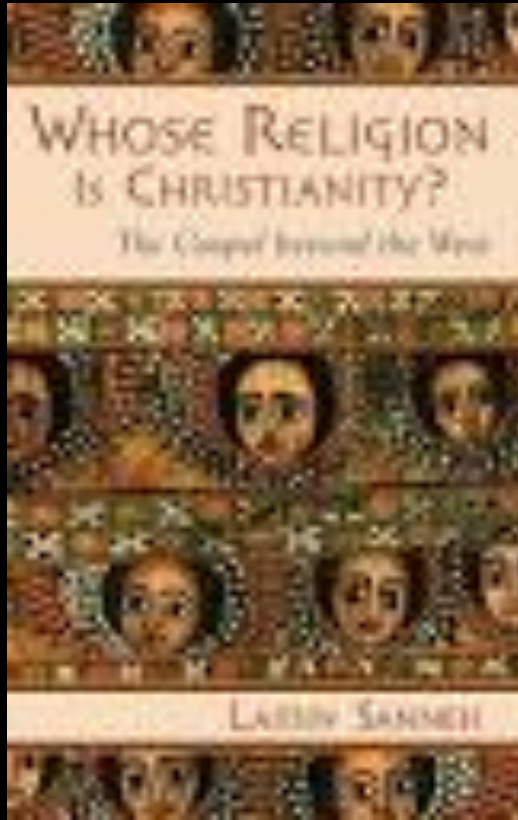
Dr. Lamin Sanneh  
Yale Divinity School



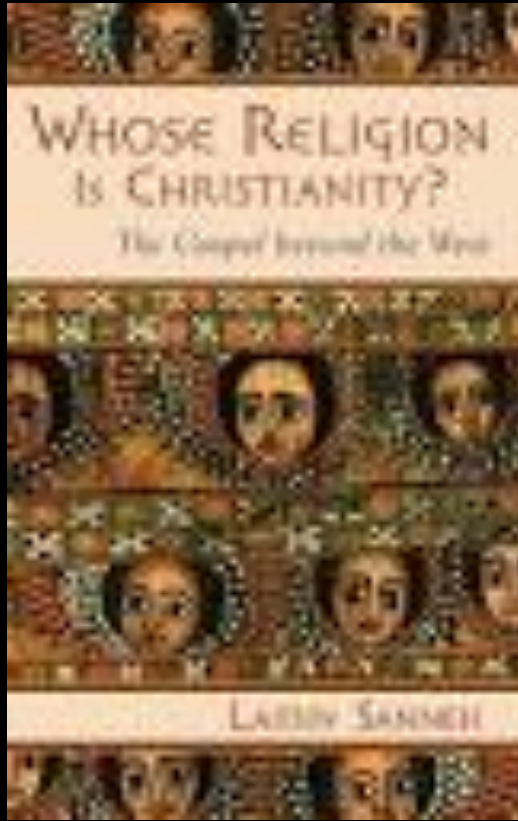
Whose Religion is  
Christianity?



In 1900, there were nine million Christians in Africa. Most of them were Copts, in Ethiopia



In the year 2000  
there were 380  
million.



Not only is Christianity growing through conversion seven to ten times faster than the population; it's growing four times faster than Islam.



“The [African] old religions provided the rules, rewarding good conduct and punishing wrong, but they had only a limited ethical range ... Christianity answered this historical challenge by a reorientation ...”



“The people sensed in their hearts that Jesus did not mock their respect for the sacred or their [outcry] for an invincible Savior, and so they beat their sacred drums for Him until the stars skipped and danced in the skies.”





“After that dance the stars weren’t little anymore. Christianity helped Africans to become renewed Africans, not remade Europeans.”

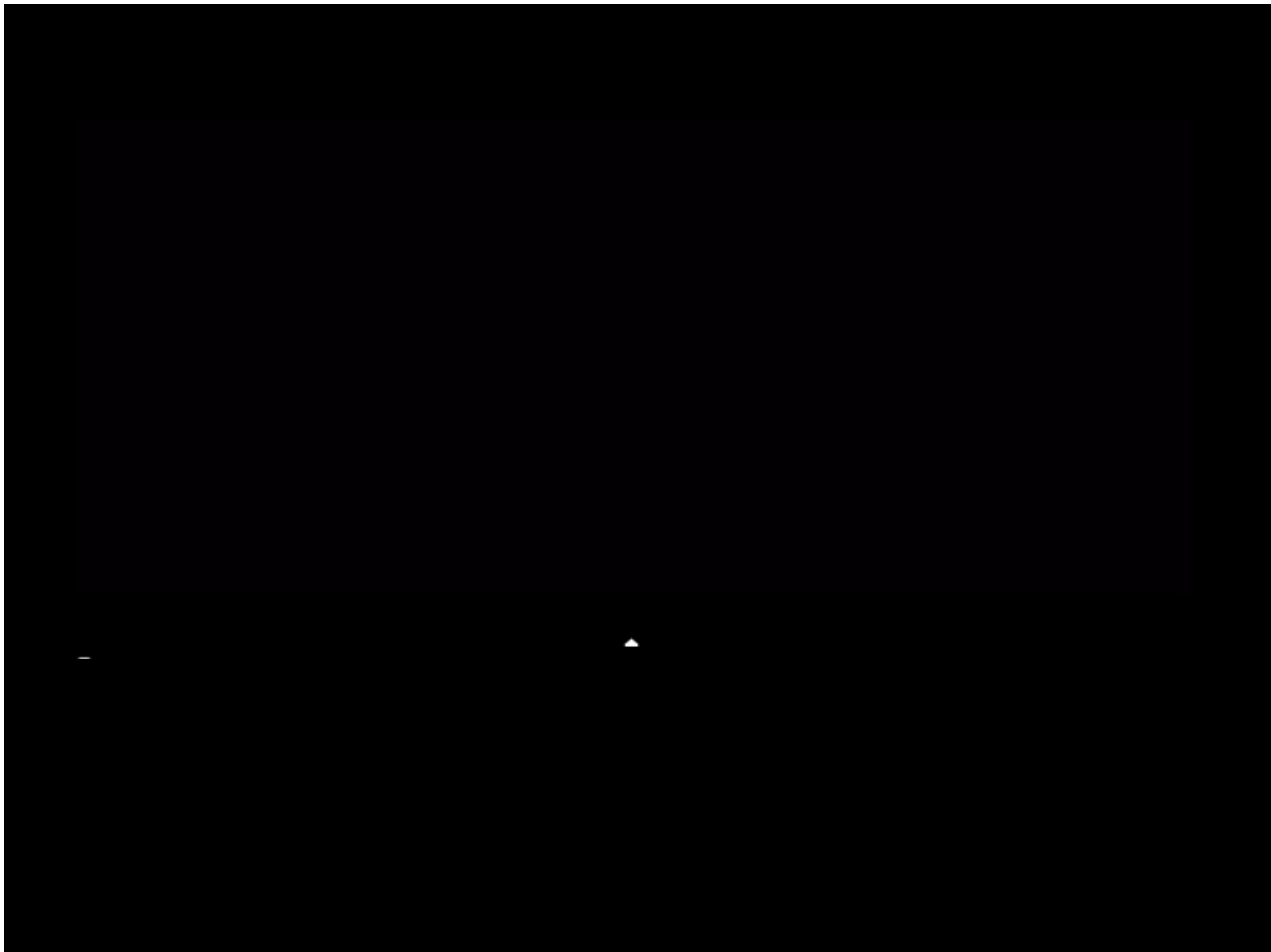


**11. The picture of a  
heart compatible  
with conversion.**

Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”<sup>31</sup> The man replied, “How can I, unless someone instructs me?” And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him.

The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?”

As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?”

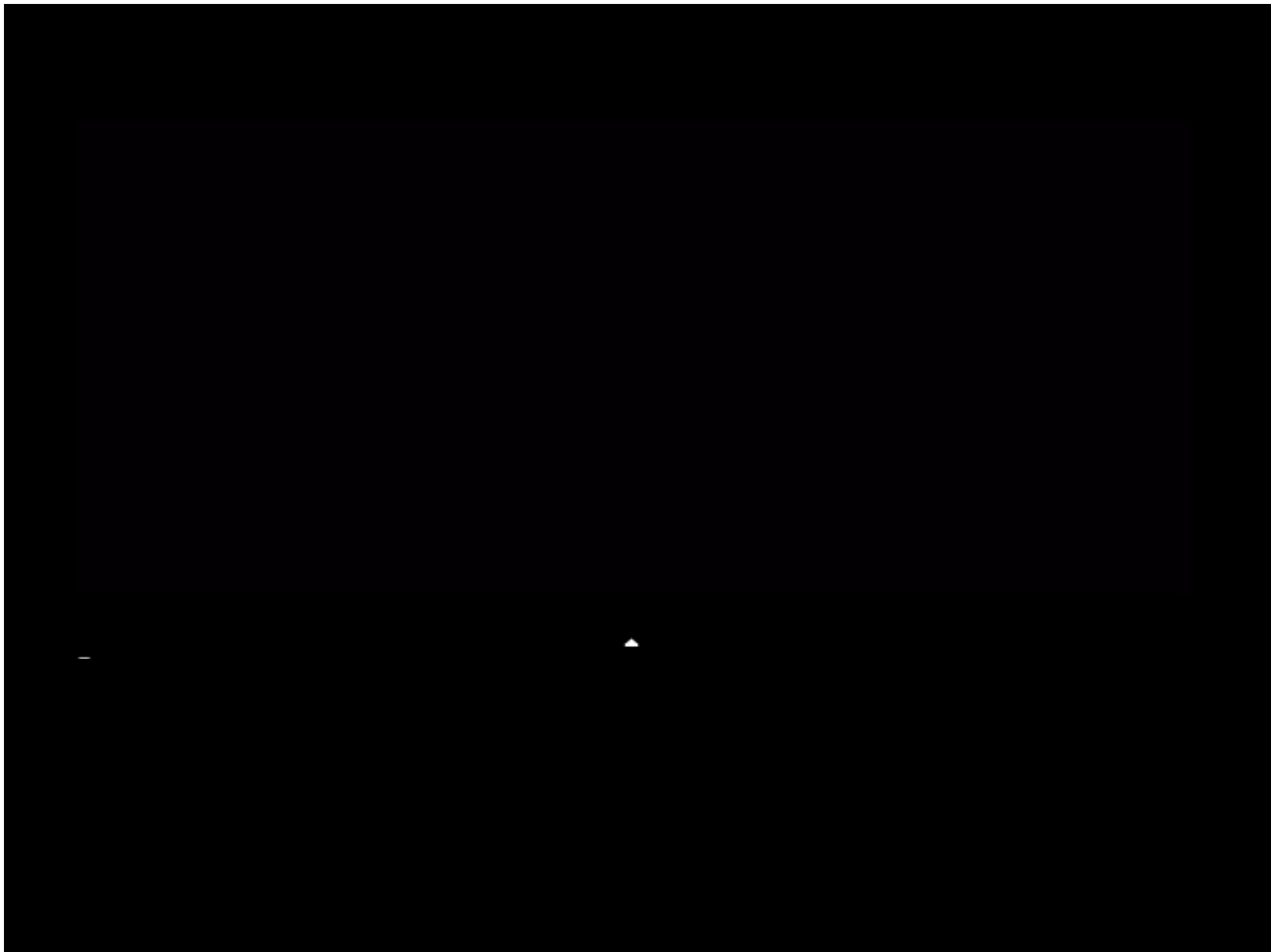


*He's a powerful,  
official from Ethiopia  
A prime minister*



*He's can read*

*He's a owned an  
Isaiah scroll*



So he started running until he was even with the chariot. Philip heard the Ethiopian reading aloud and recognized the words from the prophet Isaiah.

**Philip:** *Do you understand the meaning of what you're reading?*

**The Ethiopian: 31** *How can I understand it unless I have a mentor?*

Then he invited Philip to sit in the chariot. Acts 8:30,31

**36** Eventually the chariot passed a body of water beside the road.

**The Ethiopian:** *Since there is water here, is there anything that might prevent me from being ceremonially washed through baptism and identified as a disciple of Jesus*



**III. What is the key  
element of conversion?**



“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter. And as a lamb is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.<sup>33</sup> He was humiliated and received no justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”

Acts 8:32,33

The eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and he was now returning.

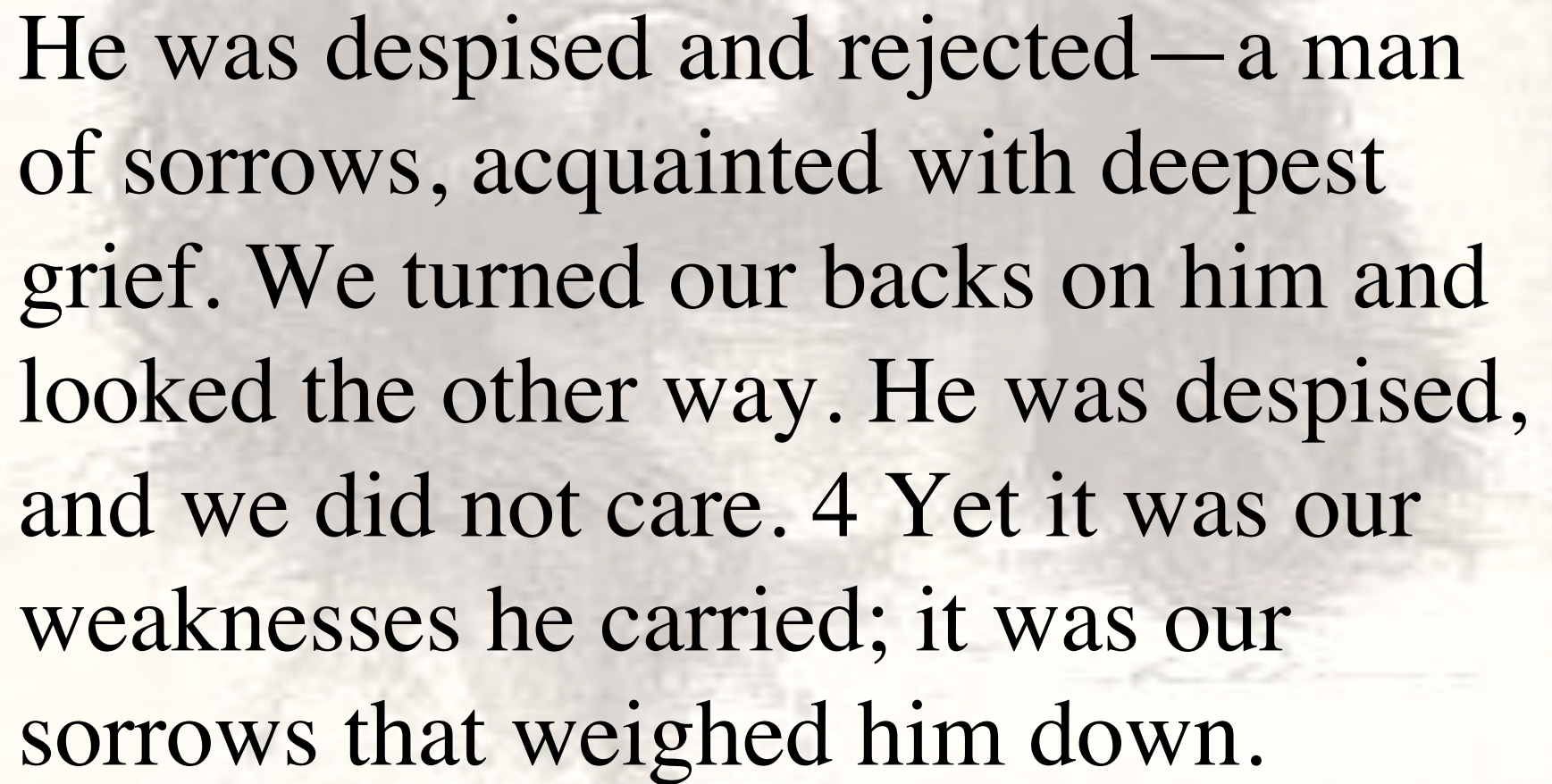
Acts 8:27,28



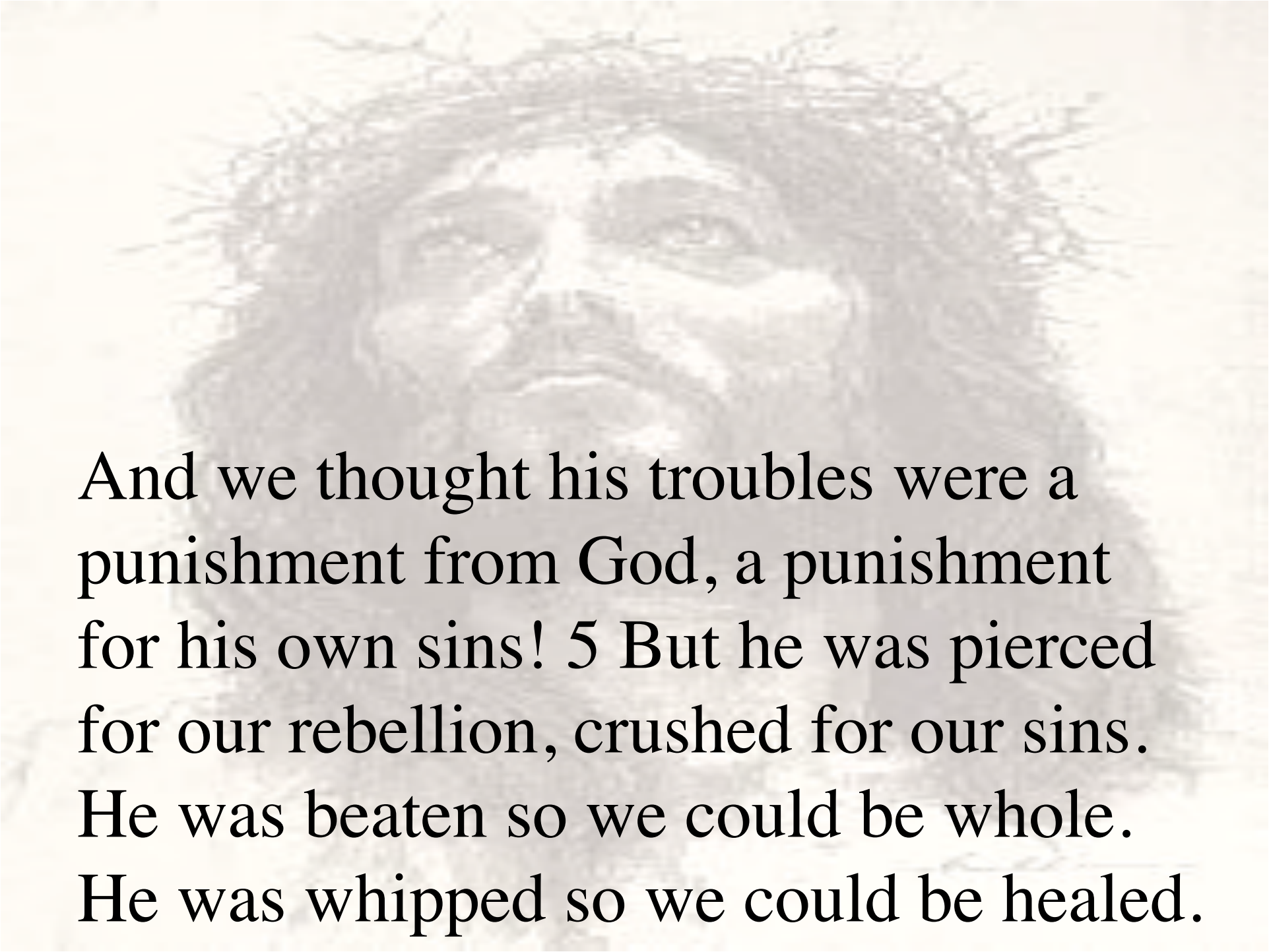
“Don’t let foreigners who commit themselves to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will never let me be part of his people.’ And don’t let the eunuchs say, ‘I’m a dried-up tree with no children and no future.’ 4 For this is what the Lord says: I will bless those eunuchs who keep my Sabbath days holy and who choose to do what pleases me and commit their lives to me.                      Isaiah 56:3,4

I will give them—within the walls of my house—a memorial and a name far greater than sons and daughters could give. For the name I give them is an everlasting one. It will never disappear!    Isaiah 56:5



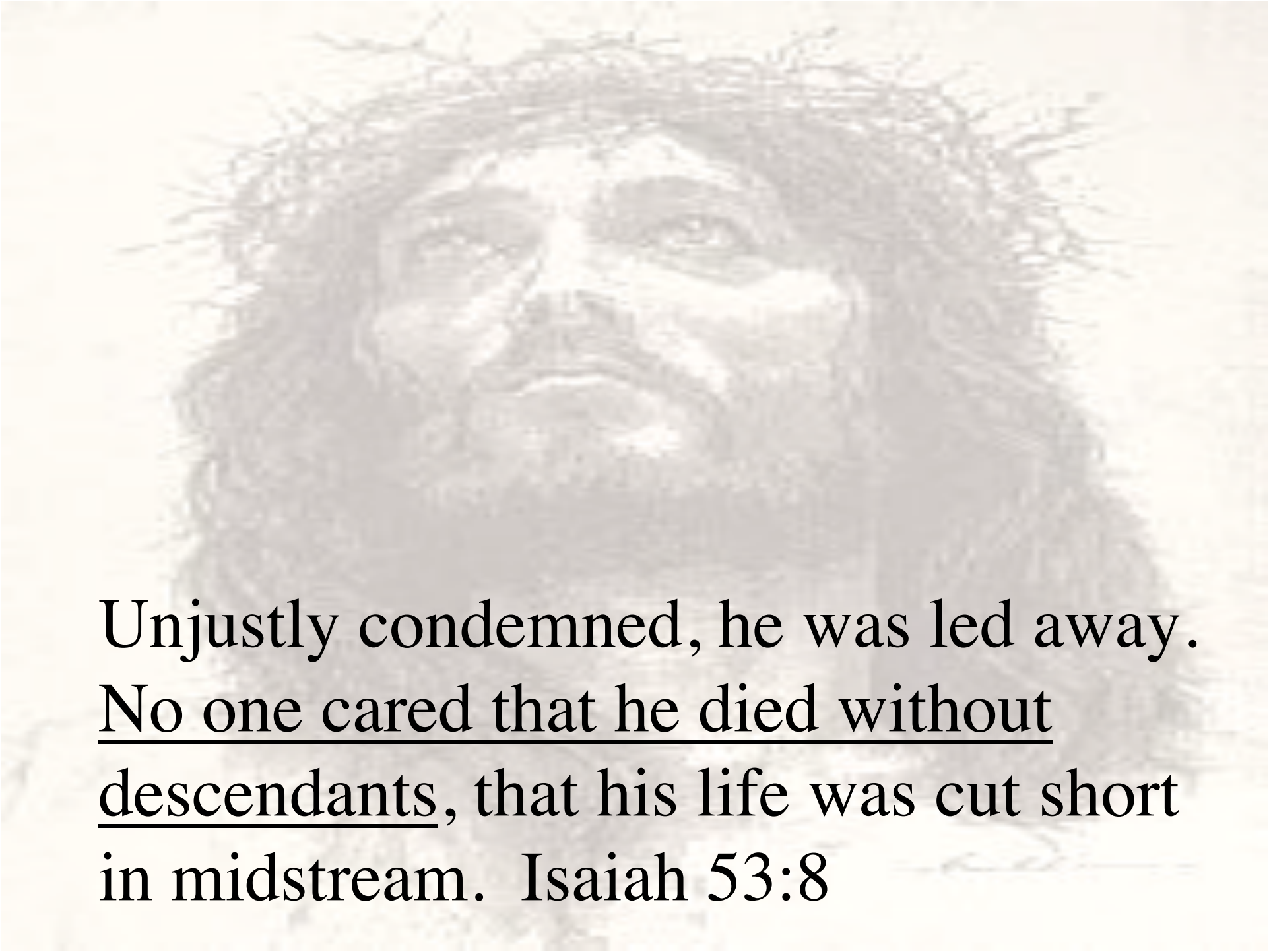


He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. 4 Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down.



And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! 5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.





Unjustly condemned, he was led away.  
No one cared that he died without  
descendants, that his life was cut short  
in midstream. Isaiah 53:8

So beginning with this same  
Scripture, *Philip told him the  
Good News about Jesus.*

Acts 8:35

