



## Greater Things Than This

Philip dashed through the vineyard, his feet sending up little puffs of dust as he ran, as he searched – there! Under the fig tree! He ran up, skidded to a stop. “Nathanael! We’ve found the one Moses wrote about in the Law! About whom the prophets also wrote! Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph!”

Nathanael looked up at his friend. “Nazareth?”

Yeah. Nathanael was not impressed. He knew the Scriptures. He knew them well. Nazareth wasn’t mentioned once. Bethlehem? Now that was another matter, but Nazareth? “Ha! Can anything good come from there?”

“Come! Come and see!” Philip answered. He grabbed Nathanael’s hand and pulled him to his feet, dragged him through the vineyard toward the Jordan River.

And Nathanael followed. Philip thought he’d found Messiah, but Nathanael knew the Scriptures better. He knew what Messiah was. Nathanael was a true Israelite. He knew the Scriptures were just one story that told the people they needed someone to save them. One story of the LORD promising to send someone to rescue them from their sins. Promising to send Messiah.

Oh, there was nothing false in Nathanael.

He knew he needed all those sacrifices in the temple. He knew that he wasn’t good enough. That he needed someone to rescue him. He desperately looked forward to Messiah and trusted that God would send him.

But Philip? If he was convinced that someone from Nazareth was Messiah, he was clearly wrong. Whoever Philip found? No. He couldn’t really be Messiah.

Philip dragged him to the side of the Jordan River where a dusty man sat. And as they approached, the man stood and smiled and greeted Nathanael, “Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false.”

“How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

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

And the pieces fell into place.

Philip claimed this was Messiah. Jesus had obviously just read his heart, thinking about how Nathanael was a true Israelite, in whom there was nothing false. And now – he even said where he’d been sitting before? The only way this made sense – is if he was Messiah.

Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel!”

And Jesus said, “You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You shall see greater things than that.” He then added, “I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

And Nathanael was shocked. He had just witnessed a miracle, and now Messiah told him that he would see even greater things! He would see Messiah bridge heaven and earth.

And that would be the greatest thing of all.

---

Brothers and sisters,

There are many amazing things in the Bible. That fact that Jesus chooses us, sinners that we are. The fact that he has provided so many miracles to attest that he is God.

But the most amazing thing is Jesus bridging heaven and earth. The most amazing thing is the cross.

This season, as Jesus reveals himself, keep in mind that all of that serves to point to the cross.

And this story is true.

John 1:43-51

<http://www.breadforbeggars.com>



**BREAD FOR BEGGARS**