

Jesus' Encounter with Phillip and Nathanael

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9/13/2009

John 1:43-51 ... 43 The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these." 51 And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." (NASB95)

43) Philip, one of the Twelve, is found in fifth place in the apostolic lists, after the two pairs of brothers: Peter-Andrew, James-John (Matt. 10:2-3; Mark 3:16-18; Luke 6:13-14; Acts 1:13).

"Follow me" (cf. Matt. 4:18-20; 9:9; etc.).

44) Bethsaida was a town on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, the home of Philip, Andrew and Peter (cf. also John 12:21), which Jesus repeatedly visited (Luke 9:10-11; Mark 6:45-46). Here He healed the blind man (Mark 8:22-26). He also denounced the city for its unbelief (Luke 10:13; Matt. 11:21).

46) Nazareth was held in low esteem, because of its rural and remote location, and proximity to Galilee of the Gentiles (Isa. 9:1-2; Matt. 4:12-16; John 7:41, 52).

47) Nathanael was an honorable man who did not take advantage of others through craft, treachery, or underhanded methods. Deceit was characteristic of the Jews leaders (Matt. 26:3-5; Mark 14:1-2), false teachers (Acts 13:6-10; 2 Cor. 11:12-15), and sinners in general (Rom. 1:28-32; 3:9-18). However, it is wholly lacking in Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:21-23), and his faithful followers (1 Pet. 2:1-2; 3:10-12).

Though separated by time and location, Jesus' knowledge of Nathanael's action was a demonstration of divine omniscience (Psalm 139:7-12; Prov. 15:3; Jer. 23:23-24).

50-51). As Jacob's dream signified God's presence and providential protection (Gen. 28:10-22), Nathanael also would observe convincing evidence of Immanuel.