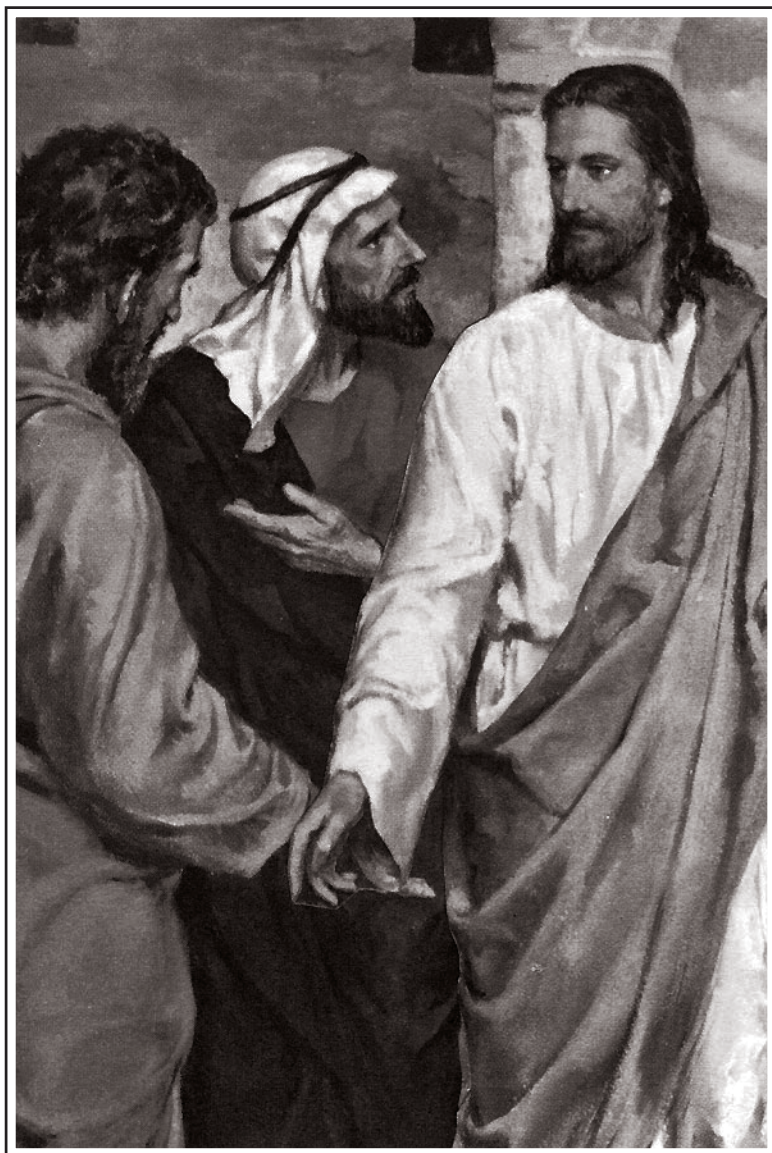
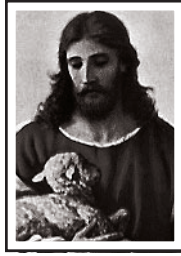


The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb



Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! John 1:47

Chapter Five



The Apostles Philip and Nathanael

Philip was from Bethsaida, the same city as his friend Andrew. They were both disciples of John the Baptist who preached to Israel of the coming deliverer. Like Andrew, Philip was ready in his heart to receive Jesus as his Master. Andrew and his brother Simon Peter sought to find Jesus, but in the case of Philip, Jesus found him. Philip knew at once that this must be the long prayed for Messiah, and he realized the blessed privilege it would be to become Jesus' disciple. *John 1:43-44*

Filled with excitement, Philip looked for his friend Nathanael (Nathanael is sometimes called Bartholomew). Philip and Nathanael were of one mind and heart in wanting to serve God. In fact, before Philip came to him, Nathanael was praying in the hidden cover of the branches of a fig tree, seeking God's wisdom and guidance. Nathanael was also a disciple of John the Baptist, and Philip knew his friend of great faith would rejoice when he heard, *"We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."* But Nathanael was a very wise and cautious man and felt Philip had accepted Jesus too quickly without examining the facts. Nathanael said, *"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"* Nathanael knew the Scriptures and questioned to himself, *"No prophecies, so far as we know, make any reference to the city of Nazareth. And that city isn't of great reputation. So, how could anything holy and good come from there?"* But Philip insisted, *"Come and see for yourself."*

The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb

It was good for Nathanael to have this questioning attitude, because it showed that he would not easily be misled by a pretender. When Jesus saw Nathanael, he knew Nathanael's heart was not hypocritical and he said, "*Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!*" What a wonderful thing to say! But, Nathanael was still not convinced that this was the Messiah. He thought, "*We have never met before, so how do you know my deepest character? You could be just flattering me to win me over.*" Jesus was gentle and loving in his response and said, "*Before that Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.*" Nathanael's heart thrilled, "*Only one with the spirit and power of God could know that! I prayed in secret, hidden in the branches of the fig tree!*" Nathanael then said aloud, "*Rabbi [Master], thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel!*" As soon as Nathanael confessed his faith in Jesus as King, Jesus said that Nathanael and all who see with the eyes of faith would behold greater miracles than this. *John 1:45-51, Reprints 2572, 4117 and 3483*



The Apostles Philip and Nathanael

One such miracle witnessed by Philip and Nathanael was the feeding of the multitudes by just a few loaves and fishes. There, Jesus directed a question right to Philip, "*Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?*" Jesus knew Philip to be more of a business mind and was hoping to show him that he should exercise faith in the Lord for his provisions and not depend on earthly means alone. Philip answered Jesus by saying that it would take two hundred pennysworth of bread (about a year's wage) to feed the multitudes. The Apostle Andrew then pointed out the basket of loaves and fishes, but quickly added that it was not nearly enough. Both could have said, "*Lord, you can perform a miracle like you did at the wedding in Cana!*" But they did not, so Jesus used this as an excellent opportunity to show that all our needs will be provided by His Father's riches in glory and through God's Son. *Phil. 4:19, John 6:5-12 and Reprint 3503*

Philip was noted in John 12:20-23 when Jesus informed his disciples of his coming death and reward of glory. Other than these few incidents, we cannot be certain of the activities of the Apostles Philip and Nathanael beyond what is written in the Scriptures. The last accounts of their lives are given in connection with the resurrection of Jesus and the receiving of the holy Spirit at Pentecost.* Bible historians state that Philip went on to preach in Asia Minor and was there put to death for preaching against a pagan religion. Nathanael was also said to have preached in Asia Minor and also in India and the northwest parts of Africa. Like Philip, he may have died as a result of preaching the truth in Armenia which was then a country overrun with idolatry.

Even though there is not much written in the Scriptures on these two Apostles, both were faithful in their commissions to preach the truth of the Gospel. Their lives as *Apostles of the Lamb* were firm foundations for the Church!

*There is another Philip mentioned in the Bible who was also a faithful disciple of Jesus. Acts, chapters 6 and 21 speaks of Philip the deacon and evangelist who preached to the Ethiopian and throughout Samaria. Although Philip the Evangelist was not an apostle, he was a good example, as was the Apostle Philip, in his service to the Lord, the truth and the brethren.