

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLE

## PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.\*

By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A.

An angel of the Lord spake unto Philip (Rev. Ver.) v. 26. In Greenland, when a stranger knocks at a door, he asks, "Is God in this house?" If they answer, "Yes"; he enters. If they answer, "No" he passes on. So with the angels of God who come to us. They say, "Are you willing to hear? Do you desire to know the good news of God, His will, His wish for you?" If we answer truthfully, "Yes", they make us glad with what they say. But if we care for none of these things, they are silent and sad, as they recede from us, to seek and find willing ears. God's angels often come to us disguised in sorrow and sickness, poverty and death, but if we wait, they will lift their frowning mask, and we shall behold the seraph's face beneath.

Go the way... which is desert, v. 26. The desert gives more than we imagine. It has a work to do in making beautiful and fruitful the inhabited parts of the world. Science tells us that our wonderful sunsets are due to the dust of the deserts. The winds that sweep these great wastes, carry the fine particles of dust to the upper airs, and the slanting rays of the sinking sun striking through these clouds of fine dust, glorify our evening skies. The same dust produces that condition of the atmosphere that gives a rainfall, and it is the opinion of many scientists, that, if there were no deserts, the existence of a large part of all kinds of life on the earth would be endangered. Barren of joy and usefulness are the days that sometimes come to us. But these days of weariness and seeming waste are meant and fitted to make us strong and patient, and to prepare us for bringing sympathy and help to other desert-dwellers.

A man of Ethiopia, v. 27. The Nagas were the most degraded of all the mountaineers in Assam, a district in northeast British India. They were naked, often utterly so. They were as filthy as they were nude, incrustated with dirt. Old men had never had their faces washed. The Nagas, it is said, were as far below the ordinary savage, as the savage is below the white man. They were the most cruel of all the fierce and heartless Mongolian tribes. Rev. Dr. E. W. Clark, though forbidden by the civil authorities to do so, went to live for a year in a Naga village, while he learned their language. At the end of that time, he was joined by his wife. They built a large Naga house, and lived in it for twenty-five years. During that time, the whole tribe were lifted by the power of the cross out of the depths of degradation, hundreds were converted, and are followers of Christ. Seventy-six were baptized in a single year. A Normal School and ten village schools assist the church in carrying on the work of enlightenment and grace.

Preached in all the cities, v. 40. A man of wealth wished to beautify his estate. Before he set men to work, however, he asked, and secured, permission to destroy the noxious weeds of the whole district surrounding his place; and then, to put shade trees along the roadsides, and on the bare hill slopes. He said it would be no pleasure for him to see his own fields and driveways well kept,

if the landscape was unsightly and neglected. So it came, that his estate was the centre of a cultivated and beautiful countryside. It is God's design to make the whole earth lovely through the knowledge of Christ; and so the commission is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel."

## PRAYER.

Almighty God how can we praise Thee when Thy mercy is our theme? Our song cannot rise to the height of that great appeal. Thy mercy endureth for ever. How can we with the voice of a moment praise the gifts of an eternity? Whatever Thou doest is done as from the unbeginning time. Thou doest nothing at the moment to be measured by the moment, to end within the moment. Thou dost always work from the centre of eternity; so every touch of Thine is an infinite contact, every word of Thine holds every other word Thou didst ever speak. Let Thy book be unto us its own witness. Then shall the end be a more thankful and grateful acceptance of Thy benefaction. Amen.

## RELATION TO CHRIST.

The friend of the Master is not devoted to him simply as to a beautiful memory. He sustains the most intimate relation to a living person. He, the living Jesus, is now thinking of his friends, guiding them, opening ways for them, revealing his will to them, giving them assurances of his love. Many a time in the pages of the gospel, in prayer, in the fulfillment of some taxing duty for his sake, we seem to catch intimations of his presence; and one of these days there will be a swift transition from the stony streets of our earthly cities to the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem; from the dwellings of the wood and stone in which we live, to the Father's house; from seeing him through a glass darkly, to beholding him face to face.

## HOW LONG AND HOW MANY.

How long do you think it took to write the Bible? Fifteen hundred years. From Moses, who wrote Genesis, to John, who wrote Revelation, it was that long, long time.

How many people helped to write it? More than thirty. There were Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, and Peter. There were Moses, and Ezra, and David, and Daniel, and Samuel. Some were shepherds, some farmers, some fishermen, some tent-makers, some kings, some judges, some princes; some were learned, some were unlearned; and yet all agree in what they write.

How could that be? Because God did all the thinking in the Bible. The thoughts in the Bible are all God's thoughts.

These thirty men only did the writing. They wrote just what God told them. How many different sections or books are there in the Bible? Sixty-six, all bound together, comprised in one beautiful whole. It is a blessed volume. Prize it above every volume in the wide, wide world. Receive it as the man of your counsel and the guide of your life. Your life can never be a failure if you follow its instructions; it shall be a lamp to your feet and a light to your path.

## LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London.

Candace—For some time before and after the beginning of the Christian era, Ethiopia was ruled by queens who bore the official name of Candace, which was not a personal name, but a distinctive title, like Pharaoh or Ptolemy in Egypt. A one-eyed queen of that name attacked Egypt in B.C. 24, overpowered the Roman cohorts at the First Cataract, and devastated the Thebaid, but was defeated by the legate, Petronius, and pursued to her northern capital Napata, which was destroyed. On the pyramid at Assour, a female warrior with the insignia of royalty on her head drags forward a number of captives as offerings to the gods.

Treasure—Meroe was long the centre of commercial intercourse between the heart of Africa and the continent of Asia, and consequently became very rich. Its wealth was the theme of the poets of both Palestine and Greece, and much of this wealth would reach the sovereign. The amount of treasure stored in the form of gems and bullion in the royal vaults of the East almost passes belief. I once passed through part of the Sultan's treasury in Constantinople, and was amazed at the huge uncut emeralds, and priceless rubies and topazes. One throne, captured centuries ago from Persia and studded with precious gems, is valued at the enormous sum of ten millions of dollars.

## A LOOK WITHIN.

What is your life? We can answer at once that it is all we have. The life of the body, the life of the mind, and the life of the soul merge in the existence of the human person. All our good and all our evil are here. Nothing can much avail that does not enrich and improve personal being; nothing can work us much harm that leaves high existence unscathed, untouched. Health, wealth, position, fame, influence, intellectual power, rich relations with the high minds of the race are good only as they raise personal existence to higher excellence, only as they impart to it a finer grace and nobility. If they leave the quality of personal being low, unimproved, they lie outside the sphere of our utmost concern; they are vanity in the presence of the worm that gnaws and the fire that is unquenched. Our prosperity, our splendor and power are vain; we are still in our sin. If misery is the essence of our personal being, what does it avail to possess the whole world? Here is the closet where the skeleton dwells, if skeleton there be. It is not in the body—that is well; it is not in the means of existence, for these are abundant; it is not in position, because that is honorable; nor in repute, for that is fair; nor in intellectual power, for that is respectable and, in many cases, eminent. All these rooms in our dwelling are open; the sweet air and the gracious sunshine fill and flow through them. There is another door yet unlocked, another apartment into which we have not yet looked. What is the character of your personal being? Are you just and kind, or unjust and cruel? Open the door into that inmost recess of your being and look upon the veritable character of your soul.—From "The Sure and Living Faith."

Character is a bundle of habits. Habits originate in the mind and are registered on the body.—Geo. D. Tripp.

\*S.S. Lesson, March 7, 1909. Acts 8: 26-38. Golden Text—Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.—John 5: 39.