

LESSON X—March 7th, 1897.

The Ethiopian Convert. Acts 8: 26-40.

(Commit to memory verses 29-31).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Acts 8: 35.

PROVE THAT—We should search the Scriptures. John 5: 39.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Question 91. *How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?* A. The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 32, 76, 79, 86.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The Ethiopian convert. Acts 8: 26-33. *Tuesday.* The Ethiopian convert. Acts 8: 34-40. *Wednesday.* The Ethiopian's reading. Isa. 53. *Thursday.* The command. Matt. 28: 16-20. *Friday.* Preaching Jesus. 1 Cor. 1: 18-25. *Saturday.* Christ in the scriptures. Luke 24: 13-27. *Sabbath.* The new life. Rom. 6: 1-11. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

INTRODUCTORY. While Peter and John were still at Samaria, Philip was sent on another mission. Our lesson gives the story of the conversion and baptism of the first negro christian.

LESSON PLAN. I. A Bible Reader. vs. 26-30. II. A Bible Teacher. vs. 31-35. III. A Baptized Believer. vs. 36-40.

26. Toward the South—R. V. margin "at noon." He was to be on the spot at the hour named. **Gaza**—One of the five cities of the Philistines in ancient days (Gen. 10: 19). He was to take the "desert road." **27. Ethiopia**—That part of Africa which includes Abyssinia, Nubia, and "the far Soudan," where British troops are now reconquering the country for civilization. **Eunuch**—The name given to an officer in charge of the harem, a sort of "Lord High Chamberlain." **Candace**—The title of the Ethiopian Queen, like "Pharaoh," or "Caesar." **To worship**—He had come 1300 miles. He was not a Jew, but was a believer in the true God. (Compare Acts 17: 4; Luke 7: 5). **28. Was reading**—Probably reading aloud as was customary with the Jews. He had heard about Jesus of Nazareth and his apostles, and was searching the Scriptures to see whether they testified of Him as the Messiah (John 5: 39). **Esaias**—The Greek form of *Isaiah*. **29. Join thyself**—No doubt this royal treasurer was accompanied by a large escort, and it would be quite proper for a single traveller to join them for protection. In this way Philip got near enough to hear what was read. **30. Understandest thou**—Philip's words were a pleasant greeting with an implied offer of help to understand. They sound like "Do you heed what you read." Perhaps the Eunuch took him for a scribe or rabbi. **31. How can I**—The passage was a very difficult one for the Jews to understand. They would not believe that the Christ should suffer and die. **Besought Philip** (R. V.)—It was a very earnest request. He was anxious to understand his Bible better. **32.** (Isa. 53: 7, 8). The Holy Spirit had guided the eunuch to read

this passage, and had prepared his heart to listen to Philip. You will always get most good from your class when you read over the lesson beforehand and ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart to your teacher's words (Acts 16: 14). **33. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away**—Justice was denied him. Even Pilate declared him innocent, and his executioner called him "a righteous man" (Matt. 27: 24; Luke 23: 47). **Who shall declare his generation**—Find words to describe the wickedness of the people of his time for his life is taken from the earth, *i. e.* they hurried him to a violent death. **34. Of himself**—So the Jews said, but Philip shewed him that they referred to Jesus of Nazareth who was the true Messiah of Israel. **35. Preached unto him Jesus**—"this is the theme of all true preaching. He proved from the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy that Jesus was the Redeemer of Israel and of all mankind (Luke 24: 27; Acts 18: 28). **36.** Philip must have told him that baptism was the appointed "Seal of engrafting into Christ," as circumcision had been of old (Matt. 28: 19; Mark 16: 16). **37.** This verse is omitted in the Revised Version. It is probably quite true although not written by the author of the Book of the Acts. There must have been some such confession of faith on the part of the Eunuch. **38.** Both went to the water, but it is not implied the Eunuch was immersed. They may have waded in a short distance for convenience of dipping up the water in the hand. **39. Caught away**—Supernaturally removed him. **40. Azotus**—Ashdod 18 or 20 miles from Gaza. **Caesarea**—Here we find him 20 years later (Acts 21: 8).

LESSONS. 1. Christ seeks the *one* sheep. 2. The Bible is a good book to read while travelling. 3. Ask, if you do not understand it. 4. Everywhere it testifies of Jesus. 5. Love, trust and obey Him into whose name you have been baptized.