

to do the best he can, while in imagination we push on before him down by the road to Hebron, and watch for a lonely traveler out in the sands.

Suddenly our eyes are arrested with the unusual spectacle of a foreign grandee with his retinue toiling on in the sunshine: "And behold a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet." So he must have had a long journey from the far interior of Africa clear across the desert up to Jerusalem. It offers a most suggestive comment upon our laggardness in duty, when we find one like this African noble putting forth such supreme efforts in order to render his worshipful obedience unto God. He traverses an entire continent in his seeking after peace. How selfish and silly are our complaints in view of such fidelity as that!

A question may arise here as to the nature of this man's office and position at home. In the kingdom of God "not many wise or great or mighty are called;" and when one of that rank of men is in sight, it is worth while to look up his record somewhat.

Usually great monarchs transferred their business cares in large measure to some such person, making him a Grand Vizier, or a treasurer—that is, their confidential minister, having a patronage and power almost supreme in authority. Now, nothing is historically known about this man's mistress. She is nowhere else mentioned in the Scriptures. Some ancient chroniclers assert that an august queen bearing this name reigned about that time in an African capital, and that a dynasty of sovereigns was called after her. It is evident that this eunuch had a lofty position, great wealth, and some education. He was a man of standing and influence.

More to our surprise, however, is the fact which transpires here, that he was a Jew. At any rate, he understood

something of the Hebrew faith. He may have been a proselyte to their religion. He certainly was a devout, an inquiring, and, most likely, a conscientious man. So here comes out one of those remarkable instances recorded in Scripture, which show that *the Holy Spirit chooses the best people sometimes in unlikeliest places*. Christ had saints among Caesar's household, and Christians in the very family of Herod. So we need not be afraid to attempt converts anywhere.

The reason why this Ethiopian Jew, if such we must consider him, had been traveling up to Jerusalem at this particular season, is found in the fact that this was the time for the annual observance of the Passover feast. And when we recall the unusual history which had been transpiring on this special occasion, we cannot help thinking how much must have happened to arrest both the mind and the heart of such a stranger in Jerusalem. He may have been in those vast crowds at Pentecost. He may have heard Simon Peter's sermon. He may have witnessed the stoning of Stephen. Indeed, he may even have wondered and wept when Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. For there were throngs of thoughtful people who came together to that solemn sight, and who, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts in silent sorrow as they returned from Calvary.

And now we catch another lesson: *religious convictions are in value simply inestimable, and ought to be cherished as we would cherish our life itself*. One may go through a most extraordinary season of so-called revival, and yet may remain unregenerate. A man may be held beneath the pressure of most helpful privilege, and not find any improvement; he may suffer in spirit, and still not be saved. If the mind be dark, or the will be hard, mere emotion goes for nothing. This eunuch came across the known world in fatiguing travel just to find peace in the worship of the true God. What he needed beyond everything else was a knowledge of the