



LESSON XI.—MARCH 16, 1902.

The Ethiopian Converted.

Acts viii., 26-40. Memory verses 36-37. Read Isaiah liii.

Golden Text.

'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'—Romans x., 10.

Daily Readings.

Monday, March 10.—Acts viii., 26-40.
 Tuesday, March 11.—Isa. liii.
 Wednesday, March 12.—Psa. lxxviii., 28-35.
 Thursday, March 13.—Psa. cxix., 9-24.
 Friday, March 14.—1 Pet. i., 1-12.
 Saturday, March 15.—Matt. iii., 7-17.
 Sunday, March 16.—Rom. vi., 1-11.

Lesson Text.

(29) Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. (30) And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? (31) And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. (32) The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: (33) In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. (34) And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? (35) Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. (36) And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? (37) And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (38) And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. (39) And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

Suggestions.

After the converts at Samaria had received the Holy Spirit, Peter and John went back to Jerusalem preaching the Gospel to many of the Samaritan villages on the way. Then the word of the Lord came to Philip telling him to go down to the desert place southwest of Jerusalem where the road ran down to Gaza. Philip may have wondered why God should send him away from this great revival in this large and needy city which was such a good centre for evangelistic work, but he obeyed God unquestioningly. The people in Samaria had now a good chance to hear the Gospel from those of their own number who had been saved and filled with the Holy Spirit, and these needed the strength which comes from helping others.

Philip arose and went, he did not wait for God to speak twice to him, neither did he try to escape in another direction as Jonah did, but in simple unquestioning obedience he set out at once upon his journey. When he got to the southern road, he saw a chariot coming along, and in it sat a man reading aloud to himself. The man was an officer of state under Queen Candace of Meroë, Africa, and he had been up to worship at Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit told Philip to run and get close to the chariot. Philip did not pause to argue about the propriety of attaching himself to this nobleman, he simply obeyed. And as he got near the chariot he heard the man reading aloud from

the book of Isaiah, so he called and asked him whether he understood what he was reading. The rich man did not answer proudly that that was none of Philip's business, instead he meekly begged him to get up into the chariot and explain it to him if he could. Meekness is a sign of greatness of mind, and the man who is willing to take instruction from the humblest follower of Christ is on the way to a greater store of knowledge than he who seeks to find it all out for himself for God reveals different truths to different souls.

It was the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah that the Ethiopian was reading, no doubt when at Jerusalem he had heard rumors of the claims of Jesus, of his crucifixion and resurrection, and of the wonderful miracles which were now being wrought in his name, and of the thousands who believed in him as the Messiah. He was led by no sudden impulse, but being a thoughtful man, he decided to study for himself all that the Holy Scriptures had to say on the subject. This description of the humiliation of the Coming One puzzled him greatly. So he asked Philip what the prophet meant and Philip joyfully took that very passage, and from it preached Jesus to the open-hearted African. Before long the sincere mind was convinced of the truth of the Gospel, and with joy confessed his faith, and as they came to a stream the eunuch asked Philip to baptize him there, and he was baptized and confessed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of all his retinue. Then the African went on his way rejoicing in the Lord, and when he reached home he no doubt, proclaimed the Gospel to his own people for the soul that is truly filled with the love of God cannot help testifying to his grace and power.

God sent a little bit of foreign missionary work into Philip's life, he allowed him to help the African noblemen out into the light of the Gospel, and that man must have won many of his people whom Philip himself would never have been able to reach. So, to some of us who are not called to the faraway lands, God sends little opportunities of foreign missionary work; perhaps it is the teaching of a Chinaman, and by patient endeavoring and prayer, seeking to lead him to the Saviour, if you can get him to give himself to God he may do more for his people than you ever could. It may be that your opportunity is to write cheering letters to some lonely missionary out in the foreign field. It may be that your opportunity is to form a little circle for prayer and study of missions, for without prayer all missionary effort is useless. Perhaps God will give you the opportunity to win some soul to him for service in the foreign field. Perhaps he may let you give the money to send some one else. Do not miss the opportunity whatever it is. Ask God to open your eyes to it, and be very obedient when he speaks.

Questions.

What did God tell Philip to do?
 How did Philip obey?
 What did he find in the desert?
 What was this man reading?
 Of whom was it a description?
 What did Philip do?
 What did the African do when he believed?

C. E. Topic.

Sun., March 16.—Topic.—A noble purpose.
 —Dan. i., 8-20. (Temperance meeting.)

Junior C. E. Topic.**MISSIONARIES AND THE WORLD.**

Mon., March 10.—They bring peace.—Ps. xxxvii., 11.
 Tues., March 11.—They destroy idolatry.—Isa. xlii., 17.
 Wed., March 12.—They draw to Christ.—Zech. ii., 11.
 Thu., March 13.—They bring light.—Isa. ix., 2.
 Fri., March 14.—They cause fear of God.—Ps. xxxiii., 8.
 Sat., March 15.—They bring strength.—2 Cor. xvi., 9.
 Sun., March 16.—Topic.—How missionaries help the world.—Acts viii., 26-38.

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**Faithful to Our Pledge.**

Recitation for Four Boys.

First Boy.

We know not, we see not the future,
 Nor guess what the years shall impart,
 But we'll try to be faithful temperance boys,
 Working on with a fearless heart.
 We'll work for the cause of the right,
 Wherever our path may be,
 All fast in the temperance fight,
 All looking for victory.

Second Boy.

Some, some may be out on the ocean,
 A-sailing the billows so wide,
 Jack Tars, hearts of oak, jolly sailors,
 Afloat on the blue, blue tide;
 But we'll work for the cause of right,
 With a zeal that is ever new,
 Till the crew shall arise in might
 On the side of the glad and true.

Third Boy.

And some may be village blacksmiths,
 Klink-klank, when the anvil rings,
 And some may be merry ploughboys,
 At work when the skylark sings,
 But we'll work for the cause of right,
 And we'll walk in the temperance way,
 Till at last shall dawn on our sight
 The gladsome triumph day!

Fourth Boy.

Or some of our band of helpers
 May stand on law's battlefield,
 And, fighting 'neath our banner,
 Refuse to shrink or yield;
 For we'll work for the cause of right,
 And surrender we will not know,
 And the Temperance flag, so bright,
 Will be shining where'er we go.

All Four Boys.

Yes, yes, wherever it be we labor
 And whatever our life work be,
 We mean to be steadfast abstainers,
 The band of the blest and free.
 And we'll work for the cause of right,
 Till drink never more hath sway;
 Now, now with temperance boys unite,
 Take the pledge and be true alway.

—'League Journal.'

Tobacco in the Colleges.

Some study as to the effects of tobacco on students in college is being made in various places. Out of the highest scholarship men in Yale, only five percent use tobacco. Of those who get no appointments sixty percent use it. The inference Dr. Seaver, director of the physical laboratory of Yale, draws, is that it is those with a lower grade of intellect in general who use tobacco. The higher and more normally developed students do not have a craving for it. Perfectly healthy people, it is believed, have neither a craving for tobacco nor alcohol. Our best athletes are good illustrations. The probable truth is that those who use the weed to a certain extent paralyze their aspirations to high attainments and are content without striving for that which is the noblest and best.

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