

31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. His salvation will bring a blessing to his dear ones also, for God will take them into covenant privileges (John 3: 16, 36; 6: 47).

32. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. They explained more fully the way of salvation.

33. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. He did not wait for morning, but at once removed them from their loathsome dungeon into his own apartments and treated them with honor. It is not likely that there were conveniences for immersion at hand, and it is evident that they did not leave the enclosure (vs. 36: 40), baptism must therefore have been performed by sprinkling or pouring. As in the case of Lydia, the whole household was baptized; if children were amongst them they also received the rite.

34. And when he had brought them into his house he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house (R. V. and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God). That home is a happy one that receives Jesus as a guest.

ORIENTALISMS.

Spirit of divination. S. Augustine calls this woman a ventriloquist, and it may have been that her pretended divination was some such power. The world at this time, as ever, was eager for divinations, and many things were used as omens and prognosticators.

Many fortune tellers lived comfortably on their dupes. Cicero remarked that he did not see how two augurs could meet without laughing. People insane, or idiotic, have often been regarded as in some measure inspired. Among the modern Egyptians an idiot, or fool, is vulgarly regarded as a being whose mind is in heaven, while his grosser part mingles among ordinary mortals. Women have always been much employed in divination, or oracle speaking. At Adelphi the mouth-piece was a woman, and among the Assyrians the oracles seem to have been generally believed by women. Some beautiful oracles have been preserved, which, in their expression remind one of Old Testament thoughts, and which were delivered by women, as the name of the author is generally mentioned. "More women, more witchcrafts," is a pithy saying of one of the Jewish Fathers.

Laid many stripes. Imprisonment as a punishment would have been considered far too costly. The common punishment for lesser offences always was, and is in the East, beating; for graver crimes, death in various ways, with varying tortures. At present even, the bastinadoe is used very frequently to make a thief confess, which, if the offence is not very grave, he does in the words, "The devil seduced me and I took it." The Roman law had not the merciful provision of the Jewish, limiting the number of stripes.

In the stocks. These were of two kinds: one, the pillory, in which the hands and head, as well as the feet were fastened; the other, the legs alone; the latter could also be used as an instrument of torture, and by it the leg torn asunder, or crushed. A use very similar to the "Boot," which so many Confessors of our own church had to submit to.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

What led to the arrest of Paul and Silas? (1 Tim. 6: 10). What was the matter with the girl? Did demons bear similar testimony to Christ? (Mark 1: 23-26; 3: 11; Luke 4: 34, 35). Why was Paul annoyed?

22. How often did Paul suffer this form of punishment? (2 Cor. 6: 5; 11: 25). Does he refer again to this occasion? (2 Thess. 2: 2).

23. What merciful provision in the Jewish law restricted the punishment of whipping? (Deut. 25: 3; 2 Cor. 11: 24). What other scourging does this call to mind? (Matt. 27: 26).

24. What Old Testament prophet was similarly treated? (Jer. 20: 2; 29: 26).

25. Instances of Joy under persecution? (Acts 5: 41; 2 Cor. 12: 10). Why were they