

V. 5. **Salamis**—A city at the east end of Cyprus. "Here alone, among all the Greek cities visited by St. Paul, we read expressly of 'Synagogues,' i. e. the plural; hence we conclude there were many Jews in Cyprus."—(Smith's Dictionary.) John—'whose surname was Mark.' (Acts 12:25.) See Acts 12:13; 13:13; 15:37-39; 1 Cor. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11; Philomen 24; &c. **Minister**—or assistant—either in preaching or in attending to the incidentals, or he may also have been engaged in baptizing.

V. 6. **Paphos**—a town at the other, or west end of the island, connected by road with Salamis. It was famous for the worship of the sensual goddess, Venus, who was fabled to have here risen from the sea. In Paul's time it was the Roman capital of Cyprus and the residence of the proconsul, or deputy. **Sorcerer**—fortune-teller. "One of a numerous class of impostors, who, at that time of general unbelief, were encouraged even by cultivated Romans."—(Brown.)

V. 7. **Sergius Paulus**—A *Prudent Man*—i. e., intelligent, truth-seeking, anxious for information from all sources within his reach.

V. 8. **Elymas**—means the wise. He may have received this honorable title from others as a compliment to his skill, or perhaps assumed it in a boastful spirit.—(Hackett.)

V. 9. **Saul**—Paul.—The latter the Roman name, the former the Hebrew. "Some think he was called Paul because small of stature." (2 Cor. 10:10.)

V. 13. **Perga**—The chief city of Pamphylia on the river Cestrus, about seven miles from the sea. Famous for the worship of Diana.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. The Church at Antioch was blessed with many gifted members,—*prophets and teachers*. It was, too, a praying, working Church.

2. **Manaen**—Herod. "How widely at last the two plagues of youth were separated from each other! Herod Antipas murdered John and mocked the Saviour, (Luk. xxi, 11), while his comrade became a chosen vessel of the Lord." (Barth.)

3. The Holy Ghost said. Here we have the personality of the Spirit clearly taught.

4. **Separate Me Barnabas and Saul**. "While they were enjoying privileges, they heard the command to carry these privileges to others. Behold the natural history of Missions! They possessed the gospel, therefore they must spread it abroad."—(Arnot.)

5. The foreign mission field needs always the ablest men.—(Arnot.)

6. The Church at Antioch had this honour put upon it, that it was the first to engage *formally* in the work of Foreign Missions. We find that (1) the work began with fasting and prayer; (2) the Lord expressly declared it to be His work; (3) the men who were to engage in the work were called to it by the Holy Spirit, through the Church outwardly designated them.

7. **Fasting**. "The early Christians fasted whenever they felt it would be profitable aid to devotion."—(See Matt. vi, 16-18.)

8. The Synagogue afforded a pulpit and an audience to the first preachers of Christianity. The congregations were made up not only of Jews and Proselytes, but often of Gentiles in considerable numbers.

9. **Elymas the Sorcerer**. Compare Paul's experience with that of Peter's in Acts vii, 9-11, 18-23. He who blinded others is himself blinded.

10. "The authors of soul-destriving heresies were never spared by the Apostles. See Acts viii, 20; Rom. iii, 8; 1 Cor. iv, 21; 2 Cor. xii, 1; Gal. v, 10-12; Phil. iii, 19; Col. ii, 23; 1 Tim. vi, 3-5; Titus 1, 10-14; 2 Peter ii, 1-22; 1 John ii, 22, 23; 1 John 9-11. Nor did Christ Himself spare them."—See Matt. xiii, 1-39.

We learn from this whole lesson that—

1. God selects His own messengers.
2. He gives them their success.
3. He punishes their opposers.

JULY 8.—Paul at Antioch.—Acts xiii.,

26-41, A. D. 48.

HOME READINGS.

Monday. Paul's Sermon at Antioch, Acts xiii, 16-41.
Tuesday. Peter's Sermon on Pentecost, Acts ii, 14-36.
Wednesday. Peter's Sermon in the Temple, Acts iii, 11-26.
Thursday. Stephen's Sermon before Council, Acts vi, 23-33.
Friday. Peter's Sermon at Caesarea, Acts x, 24-48.
Saturday. Paul's Sermon at Athens, Acts xvii, 18-34.
Sunday. Christ's Sermon at Nazareth, Luke iv, 16-32.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And we declare unto you glad tidings. Acts xiii, 23.

INTRODUCTION.

In our last lesson we left Paul and Barnabas just arrived at Perga, in Pamphylia. John Mark, their assistant, had forsaken them and returned to his home in Jerusalem, either, as Matthew Henry puts it, because he did not like the work, or he wanted to go and see his mother. The stay of the apostles at Perga does not seem to have been long, and they made their way across the wild and inhospitable mountains to Antioch in Pisidia. It is probable Paul refers to this dangerous journey in 2 Cor. xi, 26, when he speaks of "perils of robbers" and "perils of rivers," &c. "The marauding habits of the people on these mountains were notorious in all ancient history. The country swarmed with banditti of the most desperate character. The physical character of the region exposed him also to the other class of dangers. The streams here are numerous and violent beyond those of any other tract in Asia Minor. Torrents burst out at the base of huge cliffs or dash down wildly through narrow ravines." (See Combe & Howson's St. Paul.)

Antioch of Pisidia lay north from Perga, on the central tableland of Asia Minor, near the boundary of Phrygia. Under Augustus it rose to the rank of a colony, and when visited by Paul was an important city, inhabited by many Greeks, Romans and Jews, in addition to its native population.—(Hackett.) On the first Sabbath day after their arrival there Paul and Barnabas sought out the Jewish synagogue, entered in at the hour of worship and *sat down* in a manner that indicated that though strangers in the city, they were no strangers to the house of God. After the usual portions of Scripture from the Law and the Prophets had been read, the strangers were courteously invited to *exhort* the congregation. Then Paul, who was the chief speaker, (Ch. xii, 12) rose to his opportunity. The first part of his discourse bore on the goodness of God to Israel, especially in having promised to send a Saviour (vv. 16-25). Our lesson shows that Jesus is that Saviour, and that it is the duty of all to receive Him and be saved.

EXPLANATIONS.

(From the Baptist Question Book.)

V. 26.—**Stock of Abraham, and who-soever, Jews and God-fearing Gentiles**.—See v. 16; Rom. 1:5. "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. i, 16, to you—i. e., to you all; THE WORD OF THIS SALVATION IS SENT, the salvation which is preached by Jesus.

V. 27. Because they knew him not, or "not knowing Him, or failing to recognize Him, and not having known the voices of the prophets, yet by condemning Him they have fulfilled the voices of the prophets." See Ch. iii, 17; Luke xxiii, 34; 1 Cor. ii, 8. THEY HAVE FULFILLED THEM, see Luke xxiv, 20, 26, 27, 44.

V. 28. Found no cause of death in him, see Mark xiv, 13; John xiv, 6, 15.

V. 29. Fulfilled all, See John xiv, 28, 30, 36, 37.

V. 31. Having spoken of what *men* did to

Christ, Paul hastens to say what *God* did for Him; the cross does not detain Him as long as the resurrection. The resurrection is the fulfillment of prophecy and the seal of the Messiahship of Jesus. BUT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, compare ch. ii, 23, 24; iii, 14, 15, etc.; WHO ARE HIS WITNESSES, rather who are *men*, at this very moment, *living witnesses*.

V. 32. And we, in view of these proofs that Jesus is the Messiah, (see v. 23, 25, 27, 31); THE PROMISE WHICH WAS MADE UNTO THE FATHERS, see Gen. iii, 75; xii, 3; xiii, 18; Rom. iv, 13.

V. 33. Raised up Jesus again—i. e., from the grave. See 1 Cor. xv, 3, 4, 15; 1 Thes. i, 10. Paul's idea is that the resurrection was the great moment in Christ's history when He was inaugurated as the rightful Sovereign of men, according to the second Psalm.

V. 34. Sure mercies of David, Isa. lv, 3.

V. 35. Not suffer thine holy One to see corruption, clearly not fulfilled in David, but in Christ only.

V. 36. Was laid unto his fathers, lit. "added," "an expression that recognizes the existence of the soul in a future state. Genesis says that it is distinguished expressly both from death and burial in Gen. xxv, 8; xxv, 29; 2 Kings xxii, 20."—Hackett.

V. 34. Therefore—i. e., in consideration of this proof that Christ is the Messiah; THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, procured by him See x, 36; Luke xiv, 47.

V. 38. Justified from all things—i. e., all sins, whereas the law justifies from nothing. Notice, (1) Christ's forgiveness is not partial, but extends to all the sins of the transgressor; (2) all men need it, since no other way of pardon remains for those who are condemned by the law; (3) since faith in Christ is the only condition asked to it, this salvation is free to all.—Hackett.

V. 40. Spoken of, Heb. i, 5, a free creation. As with the fathers, Paul says it will be with the Jews of his day, if they continue in unbelief.

LESSON TOPICS.

- I. Jesus Crucified.
- II. Jesus Raised from the Dead.
- III. Jesus Forgives and Saves.

LESSON TEACHINGS.

1. The offer of Salvation is made freely.
2. Forgiveness of sins is only through Jesus.
3. God's Word may be read and yet not understood by those not in sympathy with it.
4. The duties of ministers to warn rejectors of the gospel.

JULY 15.—Turning to the Gentiles.—

ACTS xiii, 42-52.

HOME READINGS.

Monday. Turning to the Gentiles, Acts xiii, 42-52.
Tuesday. Gentiles in prophecy, Isa. xlii, 1-16.
Wednesday. Gentiles in promise, See xlii, 1-18.
Thursday. Gentiles in parable, Luke xiv, 12-34.
Friday. Gentiles in vision, Acts x, 1-36.
Saturday. Gentiles and the Church, Acts xv, 1-28.
Sunday. Gentiles and the Gospel, Rom. xi, 13-20.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And in His name shall the Gentiles trust. Matt. xii, 21

EXPLANATIONS.

(From the Baptist Question Book.)

V. 42. Were gone out, the best reading is "And when they went out they besought." The invitation was a general one.

V. 43. Religious proselytes, come-outers from heathenism into the Jewish Religion; IN THE GRACE OF GOD, a peculiarly Pauline expression, 1 Cor. xv, 10; 2 Cor. vi, 1; Gal. ii, 21. "The grace of God" is the gospel, the great undeserved favor sinners receive from God.