

labours "some" of the Jews believed, and these "consorted;" joined themselves, became Christians as we should say, and openly declared it by alliance with Paul and Silas; the Greek verb literally means "they became a heritage," hence a church is called a "heritage," 1 Pet. 5:3. "Devout Greeks;" proselytes, with these the success was great, "a multitude." The Thessalonian Church was largely Gentile. "Chief women:" a noble example; in all ages women have been more religious than men.

Ver. 5. But the Devil is on hand with his tools, these were some unbelieving Jews, who "moved with envy," Rev. "jealousy," at the rapidly growing influence of the new faith, gathered the rabble, the scum of the city, men who in every city, ancient or modern, are ready for a riot; they "assaulted the house of Jason," with whom Paul and Silas were staying, "to bring them out," to be tried before the popular assembly, or, as was more likely, to give them mob law, violence and death. Jason has been supposed to be identical with Paul's kinsman: Rom. 16:21, but it is uncertain, the name was not uncommon, and that epistle was written from Corinth.

Vers. 6, 7. Paul and Silas had probably been warned that danger was nigh, and so had left the house of Jason; the mob in their rage and disappointment "dragged Jason and others" before the politarchs: the use of this term as different from the praetors of Philippi, marks the accuracy of Luke; the latter was a Roman colony and its magistrates resembled those of Rome: the former was a "free city" governed by its own rulers, hence the difference. There is an arch in the present city (Salonica), supposed to have been standing in the time of Luke, with the names of seven rulers who bore this title. "Turned the world upside down:" true and false, true in the sense as often remarked, that the world is wrong side up and wants turning; false in the civil and political sense in which they would have it understood. Christianity builds up and consolidates all that is good in the world. "Another King:"—so the Jews to Pilate: "Saying that He Himself is Christ a King," Luke 23:1—quite true, but like the former charge not in the sense they intended.

Vers. 8, 9. "Trouble the people:" the peaceably disposed portion of the city, doubtless, as in all such cases, the great majority; "and the rulers:" the charge was a grave one, and if any truth in it, and not judged by them, might endanger their relations with Rome, imperil their privileges. "Taken security of Jason and the rest," Rev. "other:" Jason and the brethren became surety for Paul and Silas, probably that no more trouble should arise through their preaching. "Let them go:" in this contrasting favourably with the magistrates at Philippi.

Ver. 10. In accordance with their pledge, or still fearing lawless danger, the brethren sent away Paul and Silas by night. "Berea:" a city of Macedonia at the foot of Mount Bermius, now known as Kara-Verria, a corruption of its ancient name Pharsae, it is never mentioned by Paul in his epistles, strangely enough. "Into the synagogue:" to face a new danger.

Vers. 11, 12. "These:" the Jews. "More noble than those in Thessalonica," "noble:" a word of wide meaning, not here noble by birth, but they were candid, unprejudiced seekers after truth, ready to receive it. There is no inherited nobility like that; they did two things: (1) "received the word," did not turn away from it as did the Jews in many other places; then (2) "searched the Scriptures daily," to which Paul had appealed; like the noble men they were, they did not let prejudice blind their eyes: this was what Paul desired, he would have them examine their Scriptures, assured that this must lead to their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah; and it did, for "many of them believed," and not only Jews but honourable women Greeks, and of men, as in verse 4.

Ver. 13. See the activity of enmity, the "Jews of Thessalonica" hearing of the preaching of the Word and its success at Berea, hasten "thither also, and stirred up the people," Rev. "stirring up and troubling the multitudes." they could not confute so would silence by mob violence.

Ver. 14. So the brethren immediately "sent away Paul" "to go as it were to the sea," but the Rev. says "to go as far as to the sea," which is probably the correct reading, especially considering Paul's after course, being found at Athens without any intermediate place being named. He could have gone thither by land but it was a much longer journey than by sea. "Silas and Timothy" abode there, as in verse 16 Paul is waiting for them at Athens.

#### HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Prefatory.—The central thought of this lesson in a Bible School should be the action of the Berean Jews in searching the Scriptures, whatever other points are interesting and there are several very attractive, let this be prominent.

Topical Analysis.—(1) The Gospel in Thessalonica. (vs. 1-19). (2) The Gospel in Berea. (vs. 10-14). In the first topic note the preaching of Paul. It is grand to see these men, having just left Philippi where they had been "shamefully entreated" for preaching Christ, beginning their sojourn and work in Thessalonica with the same theme. This was Paul's custom, and a blessed custom it is, to carry the news of Christ and His salvation wherever we go; too many Christians seem anxious to leave their religion behind them when they leave home; teach from this: a Christian at home, a Christian everywhere, carry Christ on lip and in life wherever you may go. Note the matter of his preaching, it is the death and resurrection of Jesus, the two great vital facts of the Gospel, and the truths to which the Jewish mind had specially to be brought. A Messiah, exalted, conquering; a King, victorious over all their enemies was the dream of Judaism, but a humble, suffering, dying Messiah, it was hard for them to receive; but it was this Jesus Paul preached, and that he was indeed the Christ, the anointed of God, the long expected Messiah. Further look at his authority, the Scriptures; he would bring forth the old types and the prophecies and show how they all pointed to Jesus, he opened to them the Word which so long had been a sealed book. Show the results: he won converts, these were from Jews, Gentiles, proselytes and heathen, men and women; they were numerous, "a great multitude;" influential, "chief women:" wives, likely, of the leading men of the city; united, "they consorted" with Paul and Silas, they had found a new bond of union, a new centre of affection, Him whom these men preached. But there was opposition as there always will be to the preaching of the Word, its root was envy; from the very midst of the Jews, from their synagogues the preachers had drawn some to Jesus; so they would stop the work if possible; to effect this there was an evil alliance, the mob, the drags of the city were stirred up the city was set in an uproar, the house of Jason attacked and he and certain of the brethren, in the absence of those whom they sought, dragged before the rulers, where falsehood finishes the work; treason and sedition were the charges. So it has ever been, the enemies of religion would prove that its friends are criminals and to be dealt with as such, whereas, all the blessings that have come to men, civil and social, have come through the revelation of God in Christ Jesus.

On the second topic, we may show that the course of events is very similar in Berea to Thessalonica, only that here he found those in the synagogue who were disposed to receive the truth, to search for it, and not with prejudiced minds to reject because it was new to them, differing from what they had been accustomed to. Here were thoughtful men neither receiving nor rejecting without consideration, men too who went to the fountain of truth, the Scriptures,