

Our Mission Union,

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Original or selected articles intended for insertion in the paper, should be addressed to ALF. SANDHAM, Editor, at same place.

The Toronto Mission Union.



We are pleased to report that the Lord is owning the labours of the brethren in connection with this mission. Gospel Meetings are held every night, and at many of these a deep interest has been manifested. It would materially further the work, were it possibly to secure the amount necessary to place a competent Bible Woman and visitor in the field. The Committee has a promise of \$100 toward this desirable object. The sum needed would be about \$400. Surely this will be forthcoming from those who have the stewardship of the 'silver and gold' which are "HIS." It is His work, and we lay its claims before our readers.

OUR COLUMN FOR PREACHERS AND TEACHERS.

NUGGETS OF GOLD FROM THE S. S. LESSONS.

By REV. JOHN McEWEN, Secretary S.S. Association of Canada.

[Feb. 1.] Paul at Jerusalem. [Acts 21: 15-26.]

PARAPHRASE OF THE LESSON.

Having spent some days at Caesarea with the family of Philip, they took up their baggage and went up to Jerusalem, accompanied by disciples from Caesarea, among whom was Mnason of Cyprus, who, like Barnabas, was an early disciple, with whom they were to lodge. They were gladly received by the brethren at Jerusalem. They had a private interview with James and the elders of the Church, in whose hearing Paul rehearsed all that God had done among the Gentiles by his ministry, and they gave glory to God.

The drawback to this cheering report was that multitudes of Jews who had believed the Gospel were zealous for the Law; and they are offended by having heard that you have taught the Jews scattered among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, they will

hear of your presence in the city, and will have a public meeting. Suffer us to give advice; we have four men who have the vow of the Nazarite upon them (see Numbers 6: 21); you take them, attend with them to the preliminary and closing rites of purification, and pay the whole expense, for they are very poor. Paul acted on the counsel—doubtless on grounds of expediency—not as a necessary means of salvation, but as a means of worshipping God, and conciliating his Jewish brethren already in the Church. 1 Cor. 9: 19.

This Lesson, brings us into the city of Jerusalem. Cities are the centres of the best and the worst elements of the times, Jerusalem is associated with the deepest influences for good and evil in human history. Read 1 Chron. 17: 1-15; Psalm 122: 1; Matt. 27: 19-54; Acts 1: 8; 2: 15.

THE STATE OF JERUSALEM AT THIS TIME.

1.—The historic Second Temple, as adorned by Herod, still stood with its ritual and relays of priests.

2.—The traditional Pharisaism still held the mind in bondage to the saving importance of the Old Testament ordinances, but it was a dead issue—a lost cause—by the death of Christ.

3. Myriads of Jews had embraced the Gospel, but under the false conclusion that the Gospel was just perfected Judaism—trying the hopeless experiment of putting new wine into old bottles, squaring new life to old methods of conduct and customs. Hence their BIGOTRY, or blind zeal for the practices and parties of the past. Hence their PREJUDICE, or clinging as for life to their opinions, apart from their reason, or merits, or vitality. Hence their INTENSE HATRED of Paul as an apostate from the nation and its fathers—the Temple and its Divine ritual.

This is an important Lesson for adults. To such a state of society Paul had come—to the city of the Great King, whose leaders have crucified the Heir. He must testify of the Lord's Christ, and His salvation shewn unto the Gentiles.

[Feb. 8.] Paul Assailed. [Acts 21: 27-40.]

There are three pictures in this Lesson:—THE RIOT, THE RESCUE, THE LEADING HERO. The most helpful form of dealing with it is by pairs of contrasts between the persecuting and Christian spirit.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE PERSECUTING SPIRIT.

1.—It is Always Intolerant, v. 28.—Purblind, and cannot see afar off; deaf and will not hear anything that even sounds differently from their own syllables; cannot endure parties or persons who are progressive about it.

2.—It is Perveting, v. 29.—Not careful about all the facts, speaks with great assurance of a part as if it were the rounded whole. Paul is in the streets with an Ephesian, Paul is in the Temple with four poor men under a vow; the persecuting spirit jumps to the conclusion that the Gentile Trophimus was there too, and defiled their Temple. Truth and falsehood are jumbled together!

3.—It is Cruel, v. 39.—Bent on killing an innocent, unoffending, feeble man, and the priests—filled with the same spirit—eagerly close the great gates of the Temple, lest the man should escape to the Altar, and his blood defile the sacred place,

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT.

1.—It is Law Abiding, v. 26.—These miscreants from Asia violated all the laws of intelligence, fairness, reasonableness, manhood, and worship. Paul sought to obey the law of the Temple—conciliation—deference to the judgment of his brethren.

2.—It is Calm and Clear, v. 39.—When others are excited and confused, the Christian has a peace which passeth all understanding, steadied and strong by faith in God, whose providences all work together for good to those that love Him.

3.—It is Persistent in Patient Love for Enemies, v. 37.—Paul pleads for the privilege of speaking to a mob, undaunted even though mistaken for the Egyptian leader of a band of assassins—courageous when the mob is cowardly.