

Lesson XI.

PAUL AT ROME

June 14, 1903

Acts 28 : 16-24, 30, 31. Study vs. 16-31—Memory Verses, 30, 31.

Golden Text—I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.—Rom. 1 : 16.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard : but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together : and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar ; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you : because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judæa concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came

shewed or spake any harm of thee. 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest : for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging ; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

THE LESSON RETOLD

When Paul reached Rome, he was given in charge of the captain of the guard, with whom Julius left a special message that he was to be treated kindly.

On this account the apostle was not put in prison, but was chained by the wrist to a Roman soldier, who kept watch over him night and day. Otherwise he was allowed to have his own house, and to live and work as he pleased.

Three days after his arrival at Rome, Paul sent an invitation to the chief men of the Jews, of whom there were a large number living in the city, to come and see him.

"I have sent for you," said the apostle, "that you may know why I am a prisoner in this great heathen city.

"You may have heard how the Jews took

me prisoner in Jerusalem, handing me over to the Roman rulers for punishment, though I had taught nothing against their worship or customs ; and how the rulers, finding nothing against me, kept me in prison to please the people. I then thought it wise to appeal for justice to the king, and that is why I am here. But I have no quarrel against the Jews ; they are my own people. It is because I would bring to them and to you the message of salvation in Jesus Christ that I am now bound with this chain."

Now the Roman Jews had heard nothing of Paul's imprisonment, for they had no telegraph in those days to send news ahead ; but as soon as he spoke of Christ they said, "We would be glad to hear exactly what you think of Him ? As for the sect or com-