



(Fourth Quarter.)

LESSON II.—October 10.

Paul a Prisoner at Jerusalem.

Acts xxii., 17-30. Read Acts xxi., 18 to xxiii., 9. Commit verses 22-42.

GOLDEN TEXT.

'If any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed.'—I. Peter iv., 16.

Home Readings.

- M. Acts xxi., 18-26.—Paul Conforming to Jewish Ceremonies.
- T. I. Cor. ix., 16-27.—'That I Might Gain the Jews.'
- W. Acts xxi., 27-40.—Paul Seized in the Temple.
- Th. Acts xxii., 1-30.—Paul a Prisoner at Jerusalem.
- F. Acts xxiii., 1-10.—Paul Before the Council.
- S. I. Pet. iv., 1-19.—'Ye are Partakers of Christ's Sufferings.'
- S. Phil. iii., 1-21.—'Being made Conformable Unto His Death.'

Lesson Story.

Paul finally reached Jerusalem and was cordially received by the apostle James and others who were glad to hear of the great success of his preaching among the heathen. They were anxious that he should conciliate at this time the more bigoted of the Jews who were indignant at his offering the gospel freely to the heathen and receiving them as Christians without making them Jews first. 'To them Paul seemed to be undermining the very foundations of the Kingdom of God.' To demonstrate, therefore, to the public Paul's own loyalty to Jewish practices the elders of the church proposed that he should join four others in a purely Jewish rite connected with the fulfilment of a certain vow. Paul consented. This brought him into one of the parts of the temple where Gentiles were not allowed to go and the hostile Jews soon raised a rumor that he had taken his friend Trophimus there. An angry crowd dragged him from the very temple, began to beat him and would soon have killed him, but the Roman governor with a band of soldiers interfered. The clamorous accusations of the multitude gave no clue to the situation so the governor simply commanded that the soldiers should take Paul into the castle. It seems that they had literally to carry him up the outer stair, so great was the violence of the crowd. But before entering the castle Paul begged permission to speak to the people. The captain in charge was surprised that Paul addressed him in Greek, the common language of cultured people at that time, and the mob became silent when Paul commenced his speech in their own sacred language, the Hebrew. He began a powerful speech by reminding them that he was a Jew, strictly brought up, and in his early days so zealous for the Jewish law that he had persecuted Christians with great bitterness, their own high priest and other authorities could bear witness to that. Then very simply and fully he told the circumstances of his conversion, and also how at a subsequent date he received the Lord's personal command to him to preach not to the Jews but to the heathen. At this point the crowd broke into a terrible uproar again. One who could put such a slight on the holy nation as to leave them and go to the heathen was, to their minds, not fit to live. To say that he had received a heavenly command to do so, was doubtless a shocking delusion or blasphemy in their opinion. The captain in charge of the sol-

diers, being a heathen himself, was probably very much at a loss to know what all this meant, and ordered the soldiers to scourge Paul so that he might confess his crime.

'Examining' by torture was much practised both then and at a later date. Paul asked the soldiers if it was lawful to scourge a Roman citizen, and the captain came up in some alarm and spoke to Paul in a friendly way and arranged to give him a formal trial.

Lesson Hymn.

Send Thou, O Lord, to every place
Swift messengers before Thy face,
The heralds of Thy wondrous grace,
Where Thou Thyself wilt come.

Send men whose eyes have seen the King,
Men in whose ears His sweet words ring.
Send such Thy lost ones home to bring,
Send them where Thou wilt come.

Raise up, O Lord, the Holy Ghost,
From this broad land a mighty host,
Their war cry, 'We will seek the lost
Where Thou, O Christ, wilt come.'

Lesson Hints.

Paul had the best of reasons for wishing to preach the gospel in Jerusalem. He probably wished to do good where he had done harm, to build up the Church he had scattered, to testify the love and grace of Christ to those who had known him as a persecutor. Often we can do most good by showing to our former acquaintances what Jesus has done for us. Jesus told a demoniac he had cured, 'Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.' But there is not one rule for all. The same wise Jesus said to Paul, 'I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles.' The Jews howled with indignation when Paul declared that the Lord had sent him to the heathen. Some Christian churches seem to feel, too, that they are the only fit audience for the gospel. They need it badly enough, perhaps, so did the Jews, but that is not sufficient reason for denying it to the heathen. 'I will send thee,' this is a personal commission; let us each seek to know the Lord's will for our own life. 'Far hence'—a special errand. Honored is the man whom the Lord sends far. 'To the Gentiles'—to the heathen, or in a wider view, to the nations. No longer was the knowledge of God to be confined to one nation, and the few thoughtful souls that sought that nation's wisdom. Christ came 'a light to lighten the nations,' and he entrusted chiefly to this one man, Paul, the great work of giving the gospel an independent standing ground in foreign countries. It was for this that his own countrymen hated him, and doubtless he felt their opposition keenly, but there were greater things to cheer him, think what a great work one man did for Christ. Will Christ trust us with any part of his work? 'A Roman'—the privileges of freemen were allotted to those who had acquired the Roman citizenship, though others might be bound and scourged at the discretion of the military authorities. If our citizenship is in heaven how freely we may walk through the perils of this world, caring not for its attractions and entanglements.

Search Questions.

Tell what you know of four different Roman soldiers mentioned in the New Testament.

Primary Lesson.

A crowd of angry men wanted to beat Paul and kill him, but the governor said, 'No, he must only be put in prison till they could explain what he had done that was wrong.' And one man called out one thing and another man called out something else, and they made such a noise the governor wouldn't listen to any of them. But while the soldiers were taking Paul into a castle, he said, 'May I speak to the people?' and then he told them how Jesus had spoken to him on the way to Damascus. Do you remember about that? Then he told them

how Jesus had spoken to him another time. He was in Jerusalem praying once—before he went to preach to the heathen at all, and Jesus spoke to him in a vision and told him to go far away and tell the heathen how to be saved. What a beautiful thing, for Jesus to tell him just what to do! But when Paul told this to the angry crowd of men they got more angry, for they didn't want the heathen to be saved. They thought they would be saved themselves, but they were wicked and cruel and did not love Jesus.

SUGGESTED HYMNS.

'I know not what awaits me,' 'Far, far away in heathen darkness dwelling,' 'The light of the world is Jesus,' 'Go labor on.'

PRACTICAL POINTS.

BY. A. H. CAMERON.

(Acts xxii., 17-30.)

The Lord reveals his will to his children when they are in the path of duty. Verses 17, 18.

The past cannot be changed, but thanks be to God, the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.' Verses 19, 20.

'God hath his plan for every man,' though we may not preach like Peter, or write like Paul. Verse 21.

They who hate the Lord, hate his people, also. Verses 22-24. Compare I. John iii., 14.

The Roman officers worshipped Caesar rather than Jehovah, thereby rendering unto Caesar the things that are God's. Verses 25-29. Also Matt. xxii., 21, 22.

We may think it strange that Paul was committed to public trial for being a Christian, yet if we are God's people the world is trying us every day. Verse 30. Compare II. Tim. iii., 12.

Tiverton, Ont.

Christian Endeavor Topic.

Oct. 10.—Enduring hardships for Christ's sake.—Heb. xii., 1-13. (A missionary topic.)

Junior Prayer-Meeting Topic.

Oct. 10.—Things men have endured for Christ's sake. Heb. xii., 1-6. (A missionary topic.)

Temperance and Anti-Tobacco Pledges.

We hope, says an exchange, that every teacher will endeavor to get every scholar in his or her class to sign the pledge in the class book against intoxicating liquor, tobacco, bad words and bad books. Over 80,000 of the scholars in our schools are so pledged. Now let every name be secured and we shall have an army of a quarter of a million of pledged abstainers. These will soon be men and women and will exert a mighty influence at the polls and in the homes in overturning the cruel drink traffic which is destroying, every year, over 6,000 lives in Canada, and over 60,000 in the United States.

Hints to Teachers.

Bishop Vincent says that the wise superintendent requires his teachers to use the bible in the class.

Do not ask 'What does this passage mean to me?' until you have asked what it meant to the writer.

Have a teachers' meeting, and make it plain that teachers are not only requested to attend, but expected to.

After so much has been done to provide helps to bible study it is a little discouraging to find so many people engaged in the study of the helps as a substitute for the study of the bible.—'Christian Guardian.'