

## LESSON NOTES.

## SECOND-QUARTER.

## STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

A. D. 54.] LESSON I. [April 6  
PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.  
Acts 18. 23-28, and 19. 1-7. Commit to  
memory—vs. 24, 26.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them.—Acts 19. 6.

## CENTRAL TRUTH.

The privilege of Christians to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord.

TIME.—Paul began his third missionary journey A. D. 54, probably early in the year. The events of this lesson extend through the winter and spring of A. D. 54.

PLACE.—Asia Minor, Galatia, Phrygia, and Ephesus.

PEOPLE.—Aged 52. Eighteen years after his conversion.

RELATIONS.—Claudius Caesar, emperor of Rome, died Oct. 13, A. D. 54, and Nero, a young man of seventeen, began his infamous career as emperor. Felix was governor of Judea. Josephus, the historian, sixteen years old, was in Jerusalem.

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY extended over a period of nearly four years, from the autumn of A. D. 54 to the summer of A. D. 58. Paul visited the churches of Asia Minor, went to Ephesus, where he stayed nearly three years, thence to the churches of Macedonia and Greece. During this time he wrote four of his Epistles, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans.

INSTRUCTION.—We now return to the course of the history where we left it in Lesson X. of the 1st Quarter. From Corinth Paul set sail for Jerusalem, to attend the feast of Pentecost, which this year was May 31; and on his way stopped a short time at Ephesus. From Jerusalem he went to Antioch of Syria, the starting-point of his missionary journeys. He returned home, probably to rest, to recruit his health, to get help and comfort from the long-established churches, and to report the work of the Lord among the heathen.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—23. Spent some time there.—At Antioch, in Syria, strengthening the disciples.—(1) By instruction; (2) by reports of the progress of the Gospel; (3) by his presence and example; (4) by training in methods of Gospel work; (5) by his own experience and faith. 24. Apollos.—(1) NATIVE OF ALEXANDRIA, a chief city of Egypt, a centre of literature and art; (2) HIS CHARACTER, *An eloquent man—*Here "eloquent" means learned, and able to speak with great power. *Mighty in the Scriptures*—The Old Testament. (3) HIS RELIGIOUS LIFE. 25. *Instructed in the way of the Lord*—He knew something of Jesus, and saw clearly that he was the Messiah foretold in the Scriptures. *Only the baptism of John*—The truths taught by John, of repentance and a Messiah to come (v. 4), which were confessed by those baptized by John. 27. *Arabic*—Modern Greece. 1. *Upper coasts*—Districts (v. 23). 2. *Have ye received the Holy Ghost*—The special influences promised under the Gospel. They were living a lower-legal life, and had not felt the power of the Spirit. 6. *Holy Ghost came*—As on the day of Pentecost, with higher, freer experiences. *Propheesied*—Spoke under the influence of the Spirit, —not "foretold events."

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The third missionary journey.—How disciples may be strengthened.—Apollos.—Knowing only the baptism of John.—The new life under the Spirit.—What is the difference between it, and that under the baptism of John.—The effects of the baptism of the Spirit.

## QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Where was Paul in our last lesson in the Acts? (Lesson X, 1st Quarter.) Why did he leave Corinth? For what place did he sail? (ch. 18. 18, 21.) Who went with him? Where did they stop on the way? What was Paul's object in going to Jerusalem? Where did he complete his *Second Missionary Journey*? (v. 22, Acts 13. 1-4.) How long had he been away? (Lesson V., 1st Quarter.)

## SUBJECT: GROWTH IN GRACE.

I. IN THE CHURCHES.—PAUL STRENGTHENING THE DISCIPLES (v. 23).—From what place did Paul set out on his *Third Missionary Journey*? What time? How old was Paul? How long was he gone on this tour? What places did he visit first? Name some of the churches in this region. What was

Paul's object in this journey? In what ways could Paul strengthen the disciples? How may young Christians be strengthened? What is their special need of being strengthened?

II. APOLLOS.—INDIVIDUAL GROWTH (vs. 24-28).—What took place at Ephesus while Paul was visiting the churches? Who was Apollos? Describe his character? How can we become "mighty in the Scriptures"? How much did he know about the Gospel? (See ch. 19. 4.) How did he use what he did know? Was this the way to learn more? (Matt. 25. 29.) Is any one excused from doing good because they are imperfect in their knowledge of the Gospel? Who helped Apollos? Where did he then go? What did he do there? Do the Old Testament Scriptures help us to understand Christ and His work? Why ought all those who have been helped, to help others?

III. A COMPANY OF CHRISTIANS COMING INTO NEW LIGHT (vs. 1-7).—What city had Paul now reached? How long did he stay there? (Acts 20. 31.) What company of Christians did he find there? How many were they? What did they know about Christ? Of what great blessing were they ignorant? Could they be converted by the Spirit, and yet not know of him? In whose name were they now baptized? What followed? Are there any Christians like these now? Are there greater spiritual blessings in store for us? How may we receive them? May Christians now receive the Holy Spirit? How is this gift manifested? (Gal. 5. 22, 23; Rom. 8. 6; 1 John 3. 24; Acts 2. 46, 47.)

## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. All young converts need to be strengthened by older Christians?
2. One may be a true Christian and yet be ignorant of many things in the Gospel.
3. But he will not remain ignorant, but take pains to learn.
4. He will learn (1) by using faithfully what he does know; (2) by the aid of older Christians.
5. Ever keep in mind that there is a higher life and knowledge to be attained.
6. The true Christian life is by the Spirit of God dwelling in us.

REVIEW-EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

1. When did Paul begin his third missionary journey? *Ans.* Early in A. D. 54.
2. From what place did he start? *Ans.* From Antioch in Syria.
3. How long was he gone? *Ans.* Nearly four years.
4. What did he first do? *Ans.* He visited the churches he had founded years before.
5. What did he find at Ephesus? *Ans.* A company of Christians who only knew John's baptism.
6. What did he do? *Ans.* He taught them and baptized them in the name of Jesus.

A. D. 54.] LESSON II. [April 13

## PAUL AT EPHESUS.

Acts 19: 8-22. Commit to mem. vs. 8-10.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.—Acts 19. 18.

## CENTRAL TRUTH.

The religion of Jesus is proved divine by the wonders it does, and the self-sacrificing spirit of its disciples.

TIME.—Paul came to Ephesus in the spring or early summer of A. D. 54. He remained there about three years, till May, A. D. 57.

PLACE.—Ephesus, the chief city of Asia Minor.

PEOPLE.—Aged 52, on his third missionary journey.

RELATIONS.—Claudius Caesar died Oct. 13, A. D. 54, and Nero became emperor of Rome at seventeen years of age. Felix, governor of Judea. Josephus, the historian, sixteen years old, at Jerusalem.

INSTRUCTION.—The events of this lesson follow immediately after the last. Paul enters upon his three years' work here.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—8. *Disputing*—Reasoning, arguing. 9. *Divided*—Some were hardened—Became insensible to the influences of the Gospel, set against the truth. *And believed not*—Or, as in the Revised Version, *were disobedient*. This was the cause, and also the result, of the hardening. *Spoke evil of that way*—i.e., Of the Gospel, the way of living, the way of truth. 10. *Two years*—He had been there three months before this, and remained some months after. (See Acts 20. 31.) The two years end with verse 20. *Asia*—The Roman

province, so called, the western part of Asia Minor. 13. *Vagabond*—Strolling. *Exorcists*—Those who practised magic, used charms, pretended to have power over evil spirits. *Call over them*—They used the name of Jesus as a charm. 19. *Their book*—i.e., The form of rolls, containing charms and the secret rules of magic. *Fifty thousand pieces of silver*—Each worth fifteen to seventeen cents, a Greek drachma, or Roman denarius or penny, the whole worth \$7,500 to \$8,500. 21. *After these things*—The two years have ended, and a period of some months begins here.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—Ephesus.—Exorcists and magic.—How people become hardened.—Length of Paul's stay at Ephesus.—Miracles by Paul; his character and object.—Possessed with evil spirits.—Confession of sin.—Need and value of self-sacrifice.

## QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—In what city was Paul? Give some account of the city. Of its inhabitants. How long did Paul remain here? (vs. 8, 10, and ch. 20. 31.) In what year did he come? How old was he? On which of his three great journeys? Who was emperor of Rome?

## SUBJECT:—THE RELIGION OF JESUS PREACHED AND PROVED.

I. THE RELIGION OF JESUS PREACHED (vs. 8-10).—In what place did Paul first preach at Ephesus? How long did he preach there? What was his method of preaching? Meaning of *disputing* here? What was the subject of his teaching? Should this be the subject of our teaching? What was one result of his work? (vs. 10, 20.) What was another result? (v. 9.) What is meant by being *hardened*? How do people become hardened now? How did these hardened ones speak of the Gospel? Is the same true to this day? Where did Paul go when he left the synagogue? How long did he remain there preaching? How widely was the Gospel made known?

II. PROVED BY MIRACLES OF MERV.—What kinds of miracles were wrought by Paul? Are many miracles by Paul recorded? (Note, the last one was at Philippi, 5 years before, Acts 16. 18.) Why were such miracles wrought here? Who tried to imitate Paul's miracles? What are exorcists? Give some examples of those who were possessed by evil spirits. (Mark 5. 1-10; 9:10-29.) Why could not the sons of Sceva cast them out? How was the superiority of Jesus Christ shown by this circumstance? What is a miracle? Are the miracles of the Gospel all for the help and good of men? Are they hence worthy of God? Is this true of the miracles represented to be done by any others? How do miracles prove the Gospel? What was the effect of Paul's miracles on the people?

III. PROVED BY THE SELF-SACRIFICING SPIRIT OF ITS DISCIPLES (vs. 18-22).—What was the effect on some of the Christians of Ephesus? What evil had they continued to do after their conversion? How could real Christians be thus guilty? What did they now do? What two things showed that their repentance was sincere? Why should they confess as well as forsake? How much did they sacrifice? Why did this effect follow? How does self-sacrifice fit us to serve God better? How does it prove to men the reality of our religion?

## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Religion is reasonable,—it will stand argument.
2. Argument to be effective must be persuasive, not cold and hard.
3. People become hardened by resisting and disobeying the truth.
4. The Gospel overcomes the world by greater wonders and better deeds than all false religions can show.
5. Even real Christians have imperfections.
6. But as soon as they realize the evil they put it away at any cost.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

7. How long did Paul preach at Ephesus? *Ans.* About three years.
8. In what way was the Gospel aided here? *Ans.* By special miracles God wrought by the hands of Paul.
9. What else added to its power? *Ans.* The disciples repented of their sins and confessed them.
10. How did the disciples prove their sincerity? *Ans.* By making a great sacrifice for Christ.
11. What was the result of these things? *Ans.* The word of God grew mightily and prevailed, and all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus.

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