

S. S. LESSONS.

Notes on International Sabbath School Lessons, by Rev. F. N. and M. A. Peloubet.

LESSON VIII. NOVEMBER 19, 1876.

DORCAS RESTORED TO LIFE. ACTS 9: 31-43.

[A. D. 40.]

31. The churches had rest. The history of the Acts of the Apostles now leaves Saul for a time, and Peter again becomes conspicuous. We are told, first, that "then had the churches rest." That the churches had rest implies that the Jews had ceased to persecute. One would like to know how this result was produced, seeing that assuredly the offence of the cross had not ceased, and the doctrine of a crucified Messiah had not become less obnoxious to the Jews than it had been before.

32. The circuit of Peter among these churches of Judea, etc., as here given in brief, leading to the account of his vision in regard to the Gentiles being admitted to the kingdom of Christ.

33. His name may indicate that Æneas was a Greek, or Hellenistic Jew. He was probably a believer, as faith was usually required of those who received the benefits of the gospel.

34. Spread for thyself, *i. e.* thy bed; not in future, but immediately. Others have performed that office for him hitherto.

35. Saron. The name does not denote a particular place (the modern village of Saron) it refers to the well-known fertile region of that name (Sharon: Cant. 2: 1; Is. 33: 9), which also abounded in flowers.

36. Joppa ("beautiful" or "the watch-tower of joy") was one of the most ancient and important seaport towns of Palestine, situated on the Mediterranean coast nearly midway between Gaza and the promontory of Carmel.

37. Sick and died. The Lord had surely been present at her bedside, both while she lay sick and when she died, even as he had not failed to be present in her closet and in her chamber when she worked in his service.

38. Lydda was nigh to Joppa. Lydda was only about six miles distant from Joppa, and there were disciples at Joppa as well as "saints" (professed disciples) at Lydda.

39. Peter at once responded to the application to him and proceeded to Joppa with the messenger. On his arrival he was taken to the upper chamber in which lay the body of the departed, and here all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing him the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.

40. But having put all forth,—caused them to retire; not with violence. (See Mark 5: 40, John 10: 4.) The object may have been to secure himself from observation and interruption while he prayed with fervor and agony.

41. He gave, etc. Literally, and giving her the hand, he raised her up.

42. All Joppa. The writer does not say of Joppa as of Lydda that all turned to the Lord, for Joppa was a large city; but that all heard of it and many believed.

43. Many days. Literally, sufficient days, just as many as were needed for the consummation.

LESSON IX. NOVEMBER 26, 1876.

PETER'S VISION. ACTS 10: 1-20.

[A. D. 41.]

1. Cæsarea, a noted city of Palestine on the coast of the Mediterranean, on the great road from Tyre to Egypt, about half-way between Joppa and Dora, is frequently alluded to in the Acts of the apostles.

2. A devout man, etc. These terms denote Gentiles, who, though not proselytes, had abandoned heathenism and by living among Jews, had become worshippers of the true God.

3. Saw in a vision. Not a dream, which would be otherwise expressed (as in Matt. 2: 13, 19, 22), but a supernatural communication addressed not merely to the mind, but to the senses.

4. And when he looked on him. Greek, "Having fixed his eyes attentively on him." He was afraid. At the suddenness and unexpected character of the vision.

5, 6. Whose house. The site of Simon's house was pointed out to us by the sea-side in Joppa. There we found skins and oil still dealt in, and we saw abundant reasons for such a trade being located near the sea and in the suburbs of the city, as it was required by the law.

7. Cornelius promptly obeys the Divine direction. He was not thrown into perplexity, but was met in the way of his prayers, and doubtless saw this to be the answer from above.

9. On the morrow. Joppa was about thirty miles south of Cæsarea, and thus the journey would occupy more than one day.

10. And he became very hungry. From the connection, where it is said that they were making ready, that is, preparing a meal, it would seem that this was the customary hour of dining.

11. A certain vessel, receptacle, more definitely, a great sheet. Bound by four corners, or ends, and (thus) let down upon the earth.

14. To this voice replied, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."