

S. S. LESSONS.

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

LESSON IX. MAY 28, 1876.

LYING UNTO GOD. ACTS 5: 1-11.

(A. D. 33.)

1. But. Now the historian turns to the dark side of the picture in the history of the early church.

2. Kept back apart. Here it means that they secretly kept back a part, while professedly devoting all to God. His wife being privy to it. His wife knowing it and evidently concurring in it.

3. Peter again acts as the representative and spokesman of the twelve.

4. Did it not, while it remained unsold, remain to you as your own property? and when sold was it not *i. e.* the money received for it, in your own power.

5. The wretched man was overwhelmed, and without uttering a word fell to the ground dead.

6. When the first agitation had a little subsided, the men of the congregation who were present advanced to prepare the body for interment.

4. Three Hours. As some little time had elapsed in the first instance, as then the body had to be prepared for burial and taken beyond the city, and as the grave had to be digged when the spot was reached, it was three hours after the death of Ananias before the young men returned.

8. For so much. Indicates probably the gesture of the apostle, who pointed to the money which still lay before him. That is, for the sum which Ananias had presented.

9. Agreed together. Conspired, or laid a plan. From this it seems that Sapphira was as guilty as her husband. To tempt. To try, to endeavor to impose on, or to deceive; that is, to act as if the Spirit of the Lord could not detect the crime.

10. Peter's prophetic announcement to Sapphira is instantaneously fulfilled. As the money had been laid down at the apostle's feet, so now the deceivers fell down dead upon the same spot.

11. And great fear. Such severity in the beginning of Christianity was highly proper, in order to prevent any occasion for like punishments for the time to come.

LESSON X. JUNE 4, 1876.

THE APOSTLES IN PRISON ACTS 5: 12-26.

(A. D. 33.)

12. These were miracles which conferred advantages and blessings; and were thus contradistinguished from the recent miraculous judgment of God which has just been described.

13. And of the rest. Of those who were unconverted none durst hypocritically join himself to them for the purpose of receiving their alms.

14. And believers, etc. Literally, "believing persons." Though the unbelievers—"those without," "the rest"—dared not obtrude themselves falsely and join their assemblies, true believers were the more largely added. In this way it was shown how much the people held the Christians in respect.

15, 16. Then miracles of healing were performed without stint. The fame of this spreading abroad,—and nothing spreads like this,—the sick were brought from the neighboring towns to Jerusalem to be healed by the apostles.

16. Vexed. Troubled. afflicted, or tormented. Unclean spirits. Possessed with devils; called unclean because they prompted to sin and impurity of life.

17. The high priest rose up, *i. e.* proceeded to employ active measures. Annas is no doubt the individual meant, although his son-in-law, Caiaphas, was at that time actually the high-priest.

18. Upon the apostles, viz. Peter (verse 29), and others of them, but probably not the entire twelve. They were lodged in the public prison so as to be kept more securely.

19. But the angel of the Lord. This does not denote any particular angel, but simply an angel, one of the pure spirits that are sent to this world on errands of mercy.

20. The angel does not say, "Go seek concealment," but "Go and stand forth." He does not say, "Speak to your own company," but "Speak in the temple to the people. These are the men through whom God accomplishes his great designs.

21. The council. The supreme council or court of the nation, the Sanhedrim. The Greek shows that those who were with him took part in the call of the council, and the term denotes a formal convening.

23. The prison. This is the term used in verse 21, meaning the building itself. They found the jail shut up (an emphatic term) "with all safety" (perfect security), no trace being broken open, all the doors and bolts just as they ought to be, thoroughly secure.

24. The high priest. Literally, "the priest." That is, by eminence, in chief, meaning, of course, the high-priest, as already referred to.

25, 26. How unsuccessful re the projects of the wisest statesman when God frowns upon them.