

Lesson VII.

THE APOSTLES IMPRISONED

February 14, 1909

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—The apostles continue their preaching, and many miracles are wrought by them, with the result that multitudes were added to the church, ch. 5 : 12-16.

GOLDEN TEXT—Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for their's is the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5 : 10.

Memorize vs. 19, 20. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Acts 5 : 17-32. Study Acts 5 : 17-42.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and ² were filled with ³ indignation,

18 And laid ⁴ their hands on the apostles, and put them in ⁵ the common prison.

19 But ⁶ the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them ⁷ forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this ⁸ life.

21 And when they heard ⁹ that, they entered into the temple ¹⁰ early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the ¹¹ prison to have them brought.

22 But ¹² when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, ¹³ they returned, and told,

23 Saying, The ¹⁴ prison truly found we shut ¹⁵ with all safety, and the keepers standing ¹⁶ without before the doors : but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when ¹⁷ the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these ¹⁸ things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

Revised Version—1 But he; 2 they; 3 jealousy; 4 Omit their; 5 public ward; 6 an; 7 out, and said, Go ye and stand; 8 Life (large L); 9 this; 10 about daybreak; 11 prison-house; 12 the officers that came; 13 and; 14 prison-house we found shut; 15 in; 16 at the doors; 17 Omit the high priest and; 18 words, they were much perplexed concerning them; 19 And there came; 20 Omit saying; 21 the; 22 in the temple standing; 23 but; 24 be stoned; 25 We straitly charged you not to teach, 26 teaching, 27 But Peter; 28 Omit other; 29 must obey; 30 hanging him on; 31 did God exalt; 32 remission; 33 Omit his; 34 Omit also.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—The apostles imprisoned, Acts 5 : 17-28. T.—The apostles imprisoned, Acts 5 : 29-42. W.—Bold for the truth, Jer. 26 : 8-16. Th.—Fear not ! Matt. 10 : 16-22. F.—Ready to suffer ! 1 Pet. 3 : 8-18. S.—Suffering with Christ, 1 Pet. 4 : 12-19. S.—Reasons for joy, Matt. 5 : 1-16.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. THE IMPRISONMENT.

—17, 18. But (Rev. Ver.) the high priest; either Caiaphas, the high priest in name, or more probably Annas his father-in-law, and ex-high priest, who possessed the real power (see ch. 4 : 6). Rose up; took action. All they that were with him; agreeing with his opinions and purpose. Sect (party) of the Sadducees; one of the religious parties amongst the Jews: the other two were the Pharisees and Essenes. Filled with indignation. The Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection (see Mark 12 : 18), and hence were specially bitter against the apostles for preaching that Jesus had risen. Put them in public ward (Rev. Ver.); detained them in temporary imprisonment.



ANCIENT PRISON KEYS

II. THE DELIVERANCE.—19, 20. An angel of the Lord (Rev. Ver.); a witness against the Sadducees, who held that "there was neither angel nor spirit", Acts 23 : 8. Opened the prison doors;

25 ¹⁹ Then came one and told them, ²⁰ saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in ²¹ prison are ²² standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them ²³ without violence : for they feared the people, lest they should ²⁴ have been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council : and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, ²⁵ Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name ? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your ²⁶ doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 ²⁷ Then Peter and the ²⁸ other apostles answered and said, We ²⁹ ought to obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew ³⁰ and hanged on a tree.

31 Him ³¹ hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and ³² forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are ³³ his witnesses of these things ; and so is ³⁴ also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

a miracle which might have shown the Sadducees that they were fighting against God. Go... speak in the temple. There was to be no thought of attempting to escape, or of giving up their preaching. All the words of this life ; the eternal life bestowed by Jesus.

21-23. Early in the morning ; as early as possible after dawn. The high priest came ; into the council chamber. Called the council together ; the Sanhedrin. All the senate ; either another name for the Sanhedrin, or for a body of elders summoned to assist the Council on special occasions. Sent to the prison ; ignorant of the wonderful happenings in the night. Officers ; the temple police. They came back with the marvelous tale.

III. THE EXAMINATION.—24, 25. The captain of the temple ; the chief of the temple guards. Chief priests ; the heads of the twenty-four courses into which the priests were divided (1 Chron. 24 : 1-19 ; Luke 1 : 5). The men... standing in the temple... teaching ; in obedience to the angel's bidding, v. 20.

26-28. Brought them without violence. Nor would the apostles resist ; they would welcome the opportunity to preach their gospel to the Council. Feared the people ; the common people, who had been strongly and favorably impressed by the miracles wrought by the apostles and by the lives of the Christians (compare Luke 19 : 47, 48 : 22 : 1, 2)