

Lesson VII.

THE SECOND PERSECUTION

February 16, 1902

Acts 5 : 32-42. Study Acts 5 : 25-42—Memory Verses, 40-42.

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



33 When they heard *that*, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pha'risee, named Gama'liel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space ;

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Is'rael, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

36 For before these days rose up Theu'das, boasting himself to be somebody ; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves : who was slain ; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

37 After this man rose up Ju'das of Gal'ilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him : he also perished ; and all, *even* as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone : for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought :

39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed : and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Je'sus, and let them go.

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Je'sus Christ.

THE LESSON RETOLD

Now, the High Priest and the rulers of the Jews had forbidden Peter and John, with threats and warnings, to teach in the name of Jesus. When they saw that the apostles paid no attention to their words, they were filled with anger and gave orders that they should be put in prison.

But that night the Lord sent His angel and opened the prison doors, and said to the apostles, "Go back to the Temple and preach to the people all the words of My message."

When the chief priests heard that their prisoners had escaped, and were speaking boldly in the Temple, they were full of rage, but they were afraid to do any harm to these men for fear of the people. So when they had sent for them quietly, they began to attack them, saying, "Did we not give you

strict orders to stop teaching in the name of this man? Why have you not obeyed us?" But Peter answered, "We must obey God rather than man. He whom you so despised and put to death on the cross is now alive and seated at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour, and we are His messengers."

When the rulers heard this, they were so displeased that they would have killed the brave apostles, had not a man called Gamaliel, whom every one knew to be a wise teacher and guide, stood up and begun to reason with the Jews, saying, "Men of Is'rael, my advice to you is to be careful what you do with these men. Their teaching will all come to nothing if it be only the work of man. But if it is God's work we cannot put it down. It is of no use to fight against God."