

gers. (a) When his earnest warning and advice were disregarded, and the opinion of the captain, centurion, and owner of the ship prevailed, he was not soured. He firmly adhered to the truth he had told them, and repeated it with an emphasis derived from their environment, v. 21. (b) He cheered the distracted and distressed, v. 22. This is our mission, to cheer, to comfort, to lift up the disconsolate and helpless. (c) He delivered the message of God to them, v. 22-26. He touched in a most practical manner their pressing necessities, alluded to their long fast, probably enforced through terror and inability, amid a raging tempest, to prepare food. He urged them to eat, and assured them of ultimate safety, vs. 33, 34. (d) He taught them to acknowledge God in all things. In presence of the two hundred and seventy-six sailors, soldiers, prisoners and passengers, he gave thanks and broke the bread and began to eat, v. 35. This he did, not as administering the communion, as some have suggested. His primary design was to induce the rest to eat. We read accordingly that "then were they all of good cheer, and took meat." (e) He was instrumental in saving the lives of all the prisoners, vs. 42, 43. The centurion, "willing to save Paul," kept the soldiers from killing them. As a Roman military officer, he was bound to be faithful to his trust. But we may readily suppose that he was also influenced in his decision by the potent teaching and Christian spirit and example of the apostle during the short time that they had journeyed together. And we should not fail to observe the rich benefits others enjoy by contact with the man of God. These prisoners owed their lives to him. Christians are the light of the world.

3. *The hand of God was in all the events of Paul's voyage and shipwreck.* (a) After the apostle narrowly escaped "being pulled in pieces" before the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, "the night following the Lord stood by him" and assured him that he would reach Rome in safety, ch. 23: 10, 11. Accordingly he delivered him from the forty murderers who conspired to put him to death, ch. 23: 12-24. (b) During the perilous voyage divine interposition was equally manifest;

but Paul and the rest must do their utmost to save themselves. The sailors must abide in the ship (v. 31), they must lighten the ship for the third time, they must loose the rudder, hoist the foresail and thrust the ship to the shore. Swimmers must cast themselves first into the sea, and the rest must betake themselves to boards and broken pieces of the ship, v. 44. God's purpose was to save them from the angry sea, but they must themselves also act.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By The Editor

More than once we have seen Paul in situations of great danger. The mob in Jerusalem was ready to kill him. A plot was laid against his life by bitter and determined foes. His courage and prudence never failed him. Now we are to see how he conducted himself in a shipwreck. The teacher will find it easy to interest the class in the details of the voyage and of the storm. Take the class on, point by point, till the morning that is to decide the fate of the vessel and those on board is at hand. Threes scenes follow:

SCENE I. Paul, the prominent figure. He stands out as the leader and counsellor of the whole company. What wise advice he gives! Hard work lies before them as soon as day shall break, and for this they must strengthen themselves with food. The apostle urges them to eat, and sets them an example. How much one cool, brave man can do to guide a crowd in a time of danger! But they need to have their hearts cheered, as well as their bodies nourished. What a blessed promise Paul has for their encouragement, v. 34.

SCENE II. Paul in the background; the sailors at work. Day has dawned. They see a beach on which they may run the ship. The anchors are cut off, the steering oars are loosed for use, the foresail is set, and they make for the shore. But before the shore is reached, the ship sticks fast in the mud and begins to go to pieces.

SCENE III. The centurion comes to the front. He has watched this strange prisoner during the voyage; doubtless has had conversation with him, and has come to feel, proud Roman officer as he is, a profound