

half-subdued by the Romans. (2 Cor. 11 : 26) Went into the synagogue : Paul always made use of the synagogue, as long as he was allowed.

Ver. 15.—After the reading of the law and the prophets : there were regular "lessons" for each day. After that, there was freedom of speech for every one who had a useful word to say. This "prophecy" (as John Knox called it) is a valuable means of grace for any Church that practices it ; but to obtain the best results, it needs a very wise man as chairman or conductor. The elders saw they were strangers, and courteously invited them to speak.

Ver. 16.—Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand : over and over again Paul is described as beckoning with his hand. Orientals gesticulate more than we. Give audience : hear what I have to say. He had good news for them ; and he wanted to win their favour.

[Read carefully the intervening verses, and see how Paul briefly brings down the history of Israel to the time of David—did he model himself after Stephen here?—and then speaks of Jesus as David's great Heir. How He was the promised Saviour ; was slain, was buried, and rose from the dead, and then a warning against rejecting Him.]

Ver. 43.—Jews and religious proselytes : Paul had addressed them (ver. 16) as two classes. There was a number in every city who worshipped with the Jews. Ovid speaks of them at Rome, and intimates that they were mostly women. So does Josephus, respecting Damascus. Speaking to them : the apostles spoke farther to them, outside the synagogue. To continue in the grace of God : God was present, forgiving them, and giving them a hope for eternity : follow Him !

III. SECOND SABBATH IN ANTIOCH.—Ver. 44.—The next Sabbath day (*Revision*, "the next Sabbath") : the synagogues assembled Saturday, Monday and Thursday. We may be sure that Paul and Barnabas would be at the synagogue next time there was worship there ! and so we are not shut up to the conclusion that they waited a whole week. We may therefore take "next Sabbath" here, as equivalent to "next worship-day." Almost the whole city : the news had spread ; the public were excited. The multitudes could not be accommodated in the synagogue, but must have been addressed outside.

Ver. 45.—Jews . . . filled with envy : they could not think that Gentiles should have the same privileges as Jews. They might become "Jews," followers of "the law ;" but should not be offered salvation on any other terms. Spake against those things : they denied all Paul's facts and deductions. And when they had no arguments, they had sneers, and bitter and reproachful words.

Ver. 46.—Waxed bold : defended their words, and went on with a further message. Necessary : it was Christ's order, that the Gospel should be first preached to the Jews. (Luke 24 : 27.) We turn to the Gentiles : Paul understood the advantage of having understood the advantage of having synagogue privileges ; but his Gospel was for all ; and if one class would not receive it, he would turn to another.

Ver. 47.—Commanded us : specially to Paul (Acts 9 : 15), generally to all God's servants—was the command and promise in favour of the Gentiles as well as Jews. The quotation here, is specially spoken to the Messiah. (Isaiah 49 : 6.)

Ver. 48.—Glad and glorified the Word : the Greeks welcomed a Gospel that could bring them pardon of sin ; and praised God and honoured Him. Were ordained to eternal life : were set, disposed, induced, persuaded, toward eternal life—through the preaching of the Word, and reception of the truth. God's public decree, which no unrevealed counsel ever contradicts, is that "whosoever

believeth shall be saved." "The Greek word does not imply more than that they fell in with the divine order which the Jews rejected."—*Phumpre*. "As many as were determined not to have eternal life put it from them ; and as many as were induced to have it, received it in the truth of the Gospel."—*Kirk*.

Ver. 49.—Was published : so many zealous converts would furnish many helpers in the work. All the villages round would be visited, and the public mind stirred.

Ver. 50.—Devout : the Jews stirred up, among others, the devout (religious) women, who were worshippers with the Jews. They used their influence against what the Jews would call a pestilent and blasphemous heresy. Honourable women : it is difficult for us to understand the sunken state of mora's in that day, and in those lands. An acknowledged WIFE, standing on a social equality with her husband, was almost a rare thing, among the higher classes. These were "the honourable women" so often mentioned in the New Testament. It does not apply to rank ; though no doubt some were of the nobles. Raised persecution : these, with the chief men, procured the expulsion of Paul and Barnabas, as disturbers of the public peace.

Ver. 51.—Shook off the dust of their feet.—See Luke 10 : 8-11, which perfectly explains this. And came to Iconium : sixty miles south-east.

Ver. 52.—Filled with joy : no wonder—they had passed from death unto life ! With the Holy Ghost : seems to imply the more special and miraculous gifts bestowed by the Spirit.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

1. What better work could Mark have on hand, than helping Paul and Barnabas? What other better work have you on hand, who excuse yourselves from Christian work?
2. Paul found in the synagogue-worship much that he could join in. It is wise always to make the best of circumstances,
3. An earnest man will generally find earnest listeners. (Ver. 43.)
4. Truth is eternal, and time is short ; and men must preach to those who will hear. (Ver. 46.)
5. Let me not put aside my proffered ordination, and judge myself unworthy of everlasting life !

[By an oversight the Questions for last month were omitted ; they are given below with this month's.]

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

10. A king, a king's wife, a king's daughter and a king's granddaughter have all the same name. Give it.
11. Quote a passage to show that God's work may be done in a way that will bring down his anger and condemnation.
12. Our Saviour gave a caution to a man in three words, which, if universally heeded, would banish sin from the world. What was it?

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

13. In the first and last books of the Bible are warnings against bad company, based on the same reasons. Give them.
14. What name was given alike to a grandson of Abraham and a Jewish measure.
15. Give an instance from the Old and from the New Testament where covetousness brought swift death ; one from the Old Testament where it brought loss of all worldly goods and a narrow escape from destruction ; one where it brought a curse and in the end a violent death ; and one from the New Testament where it turned away from Christ and His salvation.