

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

A. D. 52.] LESSON X. [March 9.

PAUL AT CORINTH.

Acts 18: 1-17. Commit to mem. vs. 2-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.—Acts 18: 10.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The Gospel makes progress, — through daily labour, by burden for souls, amid discouragements, with God's help, by patient continuance in well doing.

TIME.—Paul came to Corinth early in A. D. 52, and remained till summer of A. D. 53, a year and a half.

PLACE.—Corinth, the political capital of Greece, 45 miles south-west of Athens, at the isthmus that divides Greece.

CORINTH.—(1) The city. A great commercial city, with two harbours, magnificent temples and public buildings, many statues. The residence of the Roman governor. (2) Its business was commerce and manufactures. It was famous for architecture (Corinthian columns), for bronze, and terra cotta ware, and paintings. (3) Its people were full of luxury and vice. It was a city of lust, drunkenness, vice and worldliness. (4) Its Christianity. Paul remained a year and a half, founded a great church, wrote two Epistles from there (1 and 2 Thess.), and two to them (1 and 2 Cor.)

INTRODUCTION.—Paul, having remained a month or less at Athens, left the city suddenly, probably on account of persecution, soon after his address on Mars' hill four last lesson, and went to Corinth, the capital.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—1. After these things.—Related in our last lesson. 2. Claudius.—Emperor of Rome. Jews to depart.—They were banished on account of a revolt in Judea. 3. Titusnakra.—All Jewish boys were required to learn a trade. 4. Greeks.—i. e. Proselytes; Greeks who had adopted the Jewish religion. 5. Pressed in the spirit, or "by the Word"—Oppressed with anxiety for the salvation of the Corinthians, or urged on by God's Spirit, or burdened with the Word of God to speak it with new zeal and fervour. His helpers had come, and brought also help from Philippi (2 Cor. 11: 8, 9), so that Paul could give himself more to the Gospel and less to tent-making. 6. Shook his raiment.—To remove even the dust of their synagogue from him, a symbolical act, as a testimony against them. (See Matt. 10: 14.) 7. Gallio.—Brother of Seneca, a fair, kind man. Deputy, Pro-consul, or governor under the Senate at Rome. Achaia.—A province of Greece, equivalent to modern Greece.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—Corinth. — Aquila and Priscilla.—Paul working at his trade.—Pressed in the spirit.—Shook his raiment.—The vision.—Gallio.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—In what city was Paul, in our last lesson? Why did he leave there? To what place did he go? How far was it? Describe the city of Corinth. What was it noted for? The character of the inhabitants?

I. PAUL PREACHING TO THE JEWS AT CORINTH (vs. 1-6).—(1) By daily labour. What family did Paul meet with at Corinth? Why had they left Rome? What kind of a woman was Priscilla? (Rom. 16: 3, 4; Acts 18: 26; 1 Cor. 16: 19.) In what way were they joined with Paul? Why did Paul work at his trade? (1 Cor. 9: 11-15.) Is daily labour a hindrance or help to religion? How may business help us to preach the Gospel? (2) On the Sabbath. Where did Paul first preach? Who now came to help him? What were Paul's feelings at this time? Meaning of "pressed in spirit"? How does the phrase read in the Revised Version? (3) Amid opposition. What was the result of this new earnestness? Who was to blame for the failure of the Jews to be saved? Is this true of all sinners? Can we say that we are clean from the blood of all men? Why did Paul shake his garments? (Matt. 10: 14.)

II. PAUL PREACHING TO THE GENTILES AT CORINTH (vs. 7-17).—(1) In Jewry's house. In what place did Paul now preach? To

whom? With what result? (2) For a long time.—How was Paul encouraged? What special need had he of encouragement? (1 Cor. 2: 3; comp. 2 Cor. 1: 8-11.) What other good men have had like periods of despondency? (1 Kings 19: 1-4; Luke 7: 19, 20.) How long did Paul remain at Corinth? What two Epistles did he write from this city? What two did he write to Corinth? (3) Amid opposition. What was the occasion of renewed opposition to Paul? Who was Gallio? What was the charge against Paul? Was it true? Are most of the charge unbelievers against the Gospel as false as this? How was the result of the trial? How were the persecuting Jews punished? For what things did not Gallio care?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

- 1. In the worst places the Gospel often gains great triumphs.
2. The Gospel honours and sanctifies honest daily toil.
3. Our business is a means through which we can preach the Gospel.
4. Earnestness in the Gospel leads many to Christ.
5. It also awakens more intense opposition.
6. Sinners can blame only themselves for the loss of their souls.
7. Teachers should be so faithful that they can say that they are clean from the blood of souls.
8. The best and strongest men have their times of despondency.
9. Opposers are forever uttering falsehoods about the Gospel.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

6. Where did Paul go when he left Athens? Ans. To Corinth, the political capital of Greece. 7. What did he first do here? Ans. He worked at his trade of tent-making. 8. How long did he remain at Corinth? Ans. A year and six months. 9. What is said of his feelings here? Ans. He was pressed in spirit, and in fear and trembling. 10. How was he encouraged? Ans. By a vision and promises from God. 11. What was the result of his stay? Ans. Many were converted, and a large church was founded.

A. D. 52.] LESSON XI. [March 16.

THE COMING OF THE LORD.

1-Thess. 4: 13-18, 6: 5-18. Commit to mem. vs. 14-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.—1 Thess. 4: 14.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

We should work and watch for the coming of the Lord in His Kingdom.

TIME.—This Epistle was written in A. D. 52, not long after Paul's arrival in Corinth. (See last lesson.)

PLACE.—It was written at Corinth in the church in Thessalonica, Macedonia.

PLACE IN BIBLE HISTORY.—The time of writing (Acts 18: 5). The church at Thessalonica (Acts 17: 1-13.)

CIRCUMSTANCES.—Only a few months before this, Paul had founded the church at Thessalonica, and preached there three or four months. He was driven away by persecution, but so great was his interest in them that he sent Timothy back to preach to them. On his arrival at Corinth Timothy returned to Paul, bringing a report of this church. This led to the writing of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—13. Them which are asleep.—Those who died believing in Christ. The Christian's death is like sleep; (1) It is rest from trouble and care; (2) There is continued existence; (3) There is to be an awakening; it does not imply unconscious existence in the other world. 14. If we believe that Jesus died, etc.—Jesus' resurrection from real death is a proof that the soul exists beyond the grave, and that God is able to raise us up again. 15. Shall not prevent.—Come before, anticipate. 16. Dead in Christ, rise first—i. e., Before the

living are changed. (1 Cor. 15: 51-53.) 2. Cometh as a thief.—Unexpectedly, suddenly. 3. Sudden destruction.—On the wicked who were unprepared. 4. Ye not in darkness.—Ignorance, forgetfulness, the blindness of sin. 5. Ye... children of light.—Of knowledge, truth, virtue. 6. Let us not sleep.—Be unconscious of the great realities, dreaming of riches and success, while, like Jonah, exposed to the storm of sin. 8. Breastplate.—Defending the vitals. Of faith and love.—A right belief, and a right heart. 9. Helmet.—The hope of salvation.—The hope of being saved defends us from the temptation to sin which would destroy that salvation.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The Epistles to the Thessalonians.—The Thessalonian Church.—The coming of the Lord.—The resurrection of the dead.—The change of the living. The comfort in this truth.—Children of darkness.—Children of light.—The breastplate.—The helmet.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Where was Thessalonica? Who founded the church there? How long before this Epistle was written? Where was Paul when he wrote it?

SUBJECT.—THE COMING OF THE LORD.

I. THE COMING OF THE LORD (vs. 13-18). On what subject would the apostle give them comfort? Who are meant by "them which are asleep"? In what respect is the Christian's death like a sleep? Why have those who reject Christ "no hope"? What is the Christian's hope for the dead? How does Jesus' death and resurrection show that we may be raised from the dead? (1 Cor. 15: 12-21.) What had been revealed to Paul? Meaning of "present" in v. 15? What will be the manner of the coming of the Lord? (v. 16. Matt. 16: 27; 24: 27-35; 2 Thess. 2: 1-8; 1 Cor. 15: 22-25; Matt. 25: 31-46; Acts 1: 11; 2 Tim. 4: 1.) When was this coming to be? (Matt. 16: 27, 28; Matt. 24: 32-36, 42; 1 Pet. 4: 7; Mark 13: 32.) What would become then of the Christian dead? What change would take place in the living? (1 Cor. 15: 51-53.) What would be the condition of the world after Christ has come? (1 Cor. 15: 24, 25, 28; Dan. 7: 14; Phil. 2: 9-11; Rev., chg. 21: 22.) Why did the early Christians so earnestly desire the coming of the Lord? How would Paul's word comfort them?

II. HOW WE SHOULD LIVE IN VIEW OF THIS COMING (vs. 1-12).—In what way would the day of the Lord come? What did Christ say about this? (Matt. 24: 42-51.) On whom would destruction come? What is meant by "darkness" here? Who are children of the light? Why are they so called? Why are sins and crimes called deeds of darkness? How should children of the light live? What is meant by "sleep," by "sober," here? What two pieces of armour should we put on? How are faith and love like a breastplate? How does "the hope of salvation" defend us against sin?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

- 1. Jesus' resurrection is a type and proof of ours.
2. We should look and pray for the coming of the Lord.
3. It is full of comfort, for (1) it means the triumph of good; (2) it is the assurance of a future life; (3) it is the time of our reward; (4) we shall meet again the dead who have gone before.
4. We should watch and be sober.
5. True Christians live in the light of the truth, of the revelation of God, of goodness and love, of the promises.
6. Faith and love, right doctrine, and a right heart, defend us from the assaults of temptation.
7. The hope of salvation is a defence, because (1) the hope is of redemption from sin; (2) it shows the blessed rewards of right living; (3) it shows that all eternity depends on our right living here.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

12. What two Epistles did Paul write at Corinth? Ans. Those to the Thessalonians. 13. Who founded the church at Thessalonica? Ans. The apostle Paul a few months before he wrote to them. 14. For what were they looking? Ans. The coming of the Lord. 15. How did Paul comfort them? (Repeat the Golden Text.) 16. How should they act in view of the Lord's coming? Ans. They should watch and be sober.

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