



LESSON III.—July 18.

Paul at Thessalonica and Berea.

Acts xvii., 1-12. Commit vs. 10-12.
Read I. Thessalonians, 1 and 2.
GOLDEN TEXT.

'They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily.'—Acts xvii., 11.

Home Readings.

- M. Acts xvii., 1-12.—Paul at Thessalonica and Berea.
- T. I. Thess., i., 1-10.—Paul to the Thessalonian Church.
- W. I. Thess., ii., 1-20.—'Ye are our Glory and Joy.'
- Th. II. Thess., ii., 13-3: 18. — 'God hath Chosen You.'
- F. Luke xxiv., 25-32: 44-48.—Christ Reasoning from the Scriptures.
- S. John v., 24-47.—Moses Wrote of Christ.
- S. Psalm xix., 1-14.—'The Testimony of the Lord is Sure.'

Lesson Story.

When Paul and Silas and Timothy left Philippi they passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica. Here Paul went into the Synagogue on three Sabbath days, and preached to them of Jesus Christ, the risen Son of God. Some of the Jews believed and a great number of the Greeks and devout women believed also.

But the Jews who did not believe were filled with wrath and envy that so many should listen to Paul. Gathering a mob, they went to the house of Jason, a relative of Paul (Rom. xvi., 21) where the missionaries were staying, and raised an uproar. They could not find Paul and his companions so they took Jason and dragged him before the rulers, saying, 'These that have turned the world upside down, have come hither also.' They represented the missionaries as conspirators against the government, who said that there was another king whom they should obey instead of Caesar. They could not understand that the kingdom of Jesus is a spiritual kingdom, not temporal. The rulers were much put out by these accusations against the missionaries, which they knew to be untrue, yet, for fear of being themselves accused of disloyalty to Caesar, they dared not disregard the demands of the mob. They took security, or bail, from Jason and others that the missionaries should not stay and teach in Thessalonica, and Paul and Silas were again sent on their way, rejoicing in the love which made them glad to endure hardships.

Coming to Berea they taught in the synagogue there and were received with great readiness of mind. These Jews were noble-minded enough to listen to Paul, and to search the Scriptures to find if these things were true. Very many of the Berean Jews believed, and a great number of the Grecian women of high social standing, and quite a few men.

Lesson Hymn.

Beneath the cross of Jesus,
I fain would take my stand—
The shadow of a mighty Rock
Within a weary land.
A Home within the wilderness,
A Rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noon-tide heat,
And the burden of the day.

I take, oh, Cross, thy shadow,
For my abiding-place;
I ask no other sunshine than
The sunshine of his face.
Content to let the world go by,
To know no gain nor loss,—
My sinful self, my only shame,
My glory all the Cross.

Lesson Hints.

'Amphipolis' — A town about thirty miles west of Philippi. It would not have been safe for the missionaries to stop here, so they left it to be evangelized by the Philip-pians.

'Apollonia.' — A small town about thirty-seven miles from Thessalonica, this town also could be easily reached by the church which they hoped to found in Thessalonica. The latter city being an ancient commercial

centre, still exists in Turkey under the name of Salonica.

'Paul, as his surname was.' — The gospel was preached 'to the Jew first,' and afterward to the Gentiles. The synagogue was the place where he could always find the devout Jews.

'Reasoned with them.'—Showing and proving to them from the Scriptures that Jesus, who had been crucified, for their sins, and had risen again, was indeed the long-promised Messiah, the Christ whom the prophets had foretold.

'Consorted.' — Literally, cast in their lot with them. To become a Christian meant almost certain persecution.

'Security of Jason.'—That Paul and Silas should not preach, probably for this reason Paul never returned to Thessalonica.

'Berea.'—Sixty miles south-west of Thessalonica.

Search Questions.

Give three passages from the Old Testament that Paul may have used to prove 'That Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead.'

Very Honorable Mention.

Eva Woodward, Violet Haley Godwin, Annie Sharpe, Mrs. P. Harper, Emma Moore, Cora May Sider, Jean S. Chimie, Ella Anderson, Louis G. Hamilton, Etta M. Rogers, Jennie Ross, Grace D. Allan, Maude Peach, J. E. Gray.

Honorable Mention.

Maggie W. Loggie, Roy Fash, Amanda Montgomery, Emma Killam, Margaret Brown, Charley Forsyth, Alice Kneen, Helen Bentham, Mary Lydia Crisp.

Primary Lesson.

The Golden Text tells us about some people who were noble. What made them noble, did they live in fine houses and ride in carriages and look very grand? Some persons would think that was noble. But the people here were not like that, doubtless some of them were very poor and humble, but they had noble minds. How do we know? Because when Paul preached to them, they listened to him, they did not say, 'Oh, we never heard that before and we don't believe anything new,' as some persons would. Neither did they just believe it all because Paul said it was true, as some other persons would. They listened quietly to all he had to say and then they went home and searched their Scriptures to see if the things were true.

Sometimes little folks do not think the bible is very interesting, but that is because they have not understood it. Think of it as the word of God, a letter from our Father in heaven to each of us. And pray that the dear Holy Spirit will teach us how to understand it, as our Lord Jesus promised that he would. Ask your mother to read it with you and to explain the hard words, and soon you will love it very much.

SUGGESTED HYMNS.

'By Cool Siloam,' 'Oh for a heart to praise my God,' 'Praise Him! Praise Him!' 'I've Found the Pearl of Greatest Price,' 'What a Friend we have in Jesus.'

Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

The death and resurrection of Christ were the central truths of Paul's preaching. All other doctrines cluster round and hang upon these great facts. Verses 1-3.

The gospel proclaimed forms a great dividing line, on one side of which we find the believers, and on the other side the rejecters. Verses 4, 5.

Satan would mingle politics and religion in order to confuse the Christian in his relation to both. The bible never sanctions a union of church and state. Verses 6-9.

The body needs preservation as well as the soul. Verse 10.

The Bereans obeyed the exhortation Christ had given the Jews years before. Verses 11, 12. Compare John v., 39.

Tiverton, Ont.

Family Worship.

At a recent Convention in Glasgow, the Rev. Mr. Haslam observed: 'There was a young man in Scotland who had been rather wild. He went out to India, and shortly afterwards was converted. After his conversion he was taken ill, and partially recovering, was sent home invalided. One of the first things he observed on reaching the home of his childhood, was that though his father and mother were fine, good living old people, neither of them had really come to

the Saviour. He had always thought that as they went to Church regularly they were Christians, but now his new God-given light showed him different. On the first Sunday evening after his return to Scotland, when his mother was about to retire to her own room for the night, full of joy at the safe return of her boy, he exclaimed, 'What, mother, going to bed, and we have not had family worship?' 'Oh, yes, of course,' said his father. 'Get down the bible. Where is it?' After a great search, it was found, and dusted (it needed dusting badly); then they sat round. 'Now, Robin, you will read,' remarked the father, as he handed over the bible. But Robin would not read. 'No, father,' he said, 'you are the head of the house; it is you that must read the chapter.' The father nervously did as he was told, then looking up imploringly at his son, said, 'Now, Robin, you will pray.' 'No father, you are the head of the house; you must pray.' 'But, Robin, I would rather that you would pray.' 'No, father, you must.' 'But, Robin, the fact is, I do not know how to pray.' 'Well, father, just get down on your knees and tell the Lord that you do not know how to pray.' Then the three knelt, while the old man thanked the Lord for bringing Robin safe home; then he thanked the Lord for saving Robin's life in India; then, with tears coursing down his cheeks he prayed, 'Lord, be merciful to me;' and both he and his wife broke down and cried aloud for mercy, and God heard and saved them, and there was Robin jumping about the room, shouting 'Hallelujah,' and praising God for saving his father and mother.'

An Awful Prayer.

A fearful incident occurred some time ago in New York. Successful revival meetings had been conducted at a certain church by an evangelist, in which, among the persons who had found the Lord, were all the members of an influential family save one. For this last one who remained outside the fold much prayer was offered. The saved members of her family specially asked the evangelist to interest himself on the young lady's behalf. He did so, and prayed for her salvation. When the meetings were drawing to a close, this young lady was observed to wear an air of great mental strain. Instead of going forward to the enquiry-room as the leader of the meeting anticipated she would do, on seeing her rise from her seat, she walked towards the corridor leading to the entrance of the church. He followed her, hoping, probably, to yet induce her to turn to Christ. He, to his surprise, saw her fall upon her knees on the floor of the corridor. He listened to the words of the prayer she uttered. Horror seized him as he listened. The young woman was saying words to this effect: 'God, take away the striving of thy spirit. I cannot bear it, and I will not give up my pleasures. I love the ball-room and the pleasures of society, and I don't want to be saved.' Then she got up and went away. The evangelist turned back, grieved to the heart to witness such deliberate rejection of the gospel. About a fortnight after he was asked to visit the home of a young lady who was thought to be dying. He was ushered into a splendid abode, and as he glanced at the face of the dying woman, resting uneasily on the pillow, he saw, to his surprise, that it was none other than the very young lady who had prayed the prayer that had so shocked him a fortnight before. Her friends were in great distress over her. The visitor sought to lead the young woman's mind off from herself to the thought of what Christ had done in her behalf, but in vain. He quoted, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,' and such like texts, but she refused to believe the promises were for her, and then, as she was able, she told him the story he already knew, of her rejection and prayer for the removal of God's Spirit from her, and she refused to believe that even then the Lord Jesus would receive her. All the preacher's efforts to this end were in vain; she would not believe, so he had to leave her to die in despair. In this case it would seem that all was done that could be done to a free creature, short of coercing the will, but that soul used her high prerogative of free choice — designed, no doubt, to be the pivot upon which she should turn towards a future of glory, honor and immortality — to decide against all the efforts of God and man on her behalf — and perished. — 'War Cry.'