

by Barnabas and Saul, became strong and flourishing. *It is not at such a stage that pride and divisions come in!* But they were saved from all that, by their zeal taking a *Missionary direction*. And they were strong in having several highly inspired disciples among them. Simeon (or Simon): called Niger, *i.e.*, black, or dark, to distinguish him from others of the name. Lucius: not Lucas or Luke; the name is different. He seems to have been a kinsman of Saul's.—See Rom. 16: 21. Manaen: a man of high standing in society: foster-brother of Herod Antipas—he who killed the Baptist.

Ver. 2.—Ministered . . . . and fasted: service, prayer, fasting—and now they were prepared and ready for aggressive word! Perhaps special days of seeking God's will, as to future duty. Separate me Barnabas and Saul: set them apart for this work; loosen them from other service. Whereunto I have called them: the Spirit's call is supreme. The Antioch Church hesitated not to send off their *best men*.

Ver. 3.—Laid their hands on them: the essence of ordination is the presence of the Holy Ghost. It was right to lay their hands on them, to designate them for their work, give them the Church's blessing, and formally appoint them their Missionaries. Yet Moody never had hands laid on him; nor John Knox.

Ver. 4.—Sent forth by the Holy Ghost: A missionary will feel the benefit of having the Church of Jesus Christ behind him: yet it is the Holy Ghost he obeys. Seleucia: Sixteen miles, direct distance. The seaport for Antioch. To Cyprus: about 100 miles south west. Probably Barnabas wished to labour in his own country for a time.

Ver. 5.—At Salamis: a Greek city, in eastern part of the Island, a little north of the present decayed city, Famagusta. Preached . . . . in the synagogues: that the Jews had Synagogues everywhere—had thus leavened the public mind with the thought that there was only One, Invisible, Eternal God—and furnished a point of beginning for the Gospel—was a special and favourable Providence the first Christians thankfully took advantage of. John: Mark was with them as a helper.

II. AN ENEMY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—Ver. 6.—Through the Island unto Paphos: Paphos was at the western extremity; 100 miles from Salamis. Residence of the Roman proconsul. A certain sorcerer . . . . Bar-Jesus: son of Jesus or Joshua. A magician. He seemed to be the Governor's official fortune-teller and adviser.

Ver. 7.—Sergius Paulus, a prudent man (*Revision*, "a man of understanding"): Perhaps he was getting tired of incantations, and felt he would like something to rest his faith on; and so sent for Barnabas and Saul. God not only prepares men to *preach*, but he also prepares souls to *hear*.

Ver. 8.—But Elymas . . . . withstood them: so in every land now: corrupt priests worst foes of the truth. Seeking to turn away the deputy: Paulus was seeking to understand the truth. Elymas (a title of his own probably,—“The Wise One”) tried to oppose the Apostles.

Ver. 9.—Saul (who is also called Paul): here was the first great triumph of the Gospel in high places. I have no doubt whatever that the name Paulus (we, in English, shorten it to Paul) was conferred on the apostle by the deputy at Cyprus. He could give him no higher or more suitable mark of distinguishing regard. See an example, a few days after, of the name (sycophantly assumed)—*Titus Flavius* Josephus. Saul would not think it wise to *reject* so well meant a complement—a name so agreeable to his Roman citizenship—and which would not, like his Hebrew name, *Shaul* sound derisively in the ears of the polished Greeks.

Ver. 10.—Thou child of the Devil (*Revision*, “Son”): Paul had himself been a follower of Satan, in persecuting Jesus; but he had not been an “enemy of all righte-

ousness”—a hater of everything noble and pure. This was a bad man and an imposter—not a mistaken zealot.

Ver. 11.—Thou shalt be blind: see God's goodness. Did not strike him dead; but gave him time to repent. For a season: his blindness was to be for a time. A walking testimony of God's power—and *mercy*.

Ver. 12.—The deputy . . . . believed: henceforth, as long as he would be in the Island, the Gospel would be free. Like Cornelius, and others, he might do much for Christ.

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

1. Two boys out of one house: Herod, the adulterer and murderer; Lanaen, the influential worker in a Missionary Church!

2. The Holy Ghost often calls men, and churches, now!

3. How many do *not wish* to hear the Spirit's call!

4. Mark was not perhaps a great preacher; but he could wait on the apostles, and thus help them to do their work.

5. Christian mildness toward those who do wrong: firm reproof of those who *plan* wrong, and pervert others.

June 3, }  
1883. }

#### AT ANTIOCH.

{ Acts 13: 13-16,  
and 43-52.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.”—Acts 13: 19.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—“Corrupt churches can resist the truth.”

NOTES.—Paphos (see preceding Lesson). Perga: a chief town of Pamphylia, on the river Cestrus. Anciently a temple of Diana stood on a hill out side of the town. Here John Mark left the Missionaries and returned to Jerusalem. Pamphylia: a crescent-shaped province of Asia Minor, the inner curve bordering on an open bay. It is about eighty miles in length and twenty miles in its widest part. Many Jews were there. Antioch, founded or rebuilt by Seleucus Nicator on a ridge of the Taurus near the northern border of Pisidia. It is called Antioch in Pisidia to distinguish it from the Syrian city of the same name built by the same man. Pisidia: a Roman Province bordering on the north of Pamphylia, having for its chief city Antioch, which is so far north that it is sometimes called a Phrygian town. The country is wild and ridged, and doubtless here Paul encountered some of the “perils of the rivers” and “perils of robbers.” Gentiles: all countrymen not Jews. Iconium: about fifty miles from Antioch in Pisidia, on the great thoroughfare extending from the Aegean on the west through the Syrian gates on the east; capital of Lycaonia. It has now 30,000 population and is called Konieh. Imposing ruins remain.

CONNECTION.—The story continues. How long they remained in Paphos in Cyprus we know not. Judging from similar missionary visits now to new fields, we should suppose they would not stay less than a month. We do not, in our minds, allow enough time in each place! and that is one of the main troubles we have in the chronology of “Acts.”

I. FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY CONTINUED.—Ver. 13.—Paul and his company: notice how Paul now takes the lead. He sought no pre-eminence; but God put it upon him. Came to Perga: in Pamphylia, north from Cyprus; a port, seven miles up the river Cestrus. John departing from them: Mark went back to Jerusalem. We judge from 15: 38, that Mark should not have left the apostles at this time.

II. FIRST SABBATH IN ANTIOCH.—Ver. 14.—Departed from Perga: did not apparently stay there to begin any work. Came to Antioch in Pisidia: a distinct city from the great capital of Syria. It was eighty or a hundred miles north of Perga; and the way led through mountains, and among robbers, and tribes only half-civilized, and