



LESSON II.—July 11.

## Paul and the Philippian Jailer.

Acts xvi., 22-34. Commit vs. 28-31.

### GOLDEN TEXT.

'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.'—Acts xvi., 31.

### Home Readings.

- M. Acts xvi., 16-40.—Paul and the Philippian Jailer.  
 T. II. Cor., vi., 1-18.—'In Stripes, in Imprisonments.'  
 W. Phil. iii., 1-21.—'For Whom I have Suffered.'  
 Th. Acts xx., 17-35.—'None of these things move me.'  
 F. II. Cor. iv., 1-18.—'Persecuted, but—not Forsaken.'  
 S. Acts ii., 37-47.—The Greatest of all Questions.  
 S. John ii., 1-21.—The One Plain Answer.

### Lesson Story.

Paul and Silas were in prison, how had they come there? They had been staying at the house of Lydia and going every day to the riverside for prayer and preaching, but as they walked along they were followed by a girl possessed with an evil spirit. This poor creature cried after Paul and Silas, saying, 'These men are servants of the most high God, which shew us the way of salvation.' When this had gone on for some time, Paul, one day, turned and rebuked the evil spirit, commanding it to come out of her, which it did at once, and the girl was restored to a sane mind.

There are always some wicked persons to get angry when any good is done, the rum-seller would be very sorry indeed if all his old customers were converted, for then his trade would be gone. So in this case there were those who had made much money out of the utterances of the poor demoniac slave girl, and now they could no longer draw this revenue. Greatly enraged, therefore, they caught Paul and Silas, and dragging them into the court before the magistrates accused them of trying to force Jewish customs upon the Romans—an utterly false charge, but the truth would not have been regarded. Then the angry crowd clamored and the magistrates commanded that they should be beaten with rods. After much beating and rough handling they were put into prison and the jailer charged to keep them safely as dangerous characters. They were thrust into the dark, filthy 'inner prison' and their feet fixed in the stocks.

At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of joy and praise, the other prisoners were intently listening to these unaccustomed sounds. Suddenly, as if in answer to their prayers, a great earthquake shook the very foundations of the prison. Doors flew open. Shackles fell off. Bands and bars burst asunder, and the prisoners found themselves free. The noise woke the jailer, who, seeing the prison doors open, supposed every one to have fled. Drawing his sword he was about to fall on it, but Paul cried out to him, 'Do thyself no harm, for no one had escaped.' The jailer probably recognizing in Paul and Silas the teachers of a new Gospel, came trembling before them asking, 'What must I do to be saved?' Then they preached to him and all his household the gospel of God's love, and bade them believe on the Lord Jesus Christ that they might all be saved. They were all baptized with joyfulness, and taking the missionaries to his own house, the converted jailer did everything in his power to make them comfortable.

Early the next morning the magistrates

sent word that the missionaries were to be allowed to go free. But Paul said, they have beaten us openly and uncondemned, which was against the law, we being Roman citizens, they must come themselves now to take us out of prison. Then the magistrates came in fear and trembling, begging them to quietly leave the city. On their way out they went to the house of Lydia and there met with and comforted the little band of converts.

### Lesson Hymn.

Sinners Jesus will receive;  
 Sound this word of grace to all  
 Who the heavenly pathway leave,  
 All who linger, all who fall!

Come and he will give you rest.  
 Trust him for his word is plain;  
 He will take the sinfulness:  
 Christ receiveth sinful men.

Christ receiveth sinful men,  
 Even me with all my sin;  
 Purged from every spot and stain,  
 Heaven with him I enter in.

### Lesson Hints.

The earthquake brought liberty of body to the prisoners, but liberty of soul to the jailer and his household, through faith. The servants of God were not frightened by the earthquake, they were safe for life or death. 'Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God'—Literally, 'praying they sang hymns.' The hymns of prayer meant something to them, they were not singing just for the music, as we are so apt to do now-a-days. The prisoners heard them, and doubtless some were led to believe on the God the missionaries trusted and praised. Only God can keep us peaceful and joyous in the midst of suffering.

The keeper . . . would have killed himself—if the prisoners escaped he was liable to the same punishment they would have received, he thought better to kill himself than be tortured. 'Fell down before Paul and Silas'—connecting in his own mind the great earthquake with the religion of these two men. 'What must I do to be saved?'—He had no fear of the law, but he was suddenly convicted of sin before God. How could he be saved from his sins and their awful consequences? 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ'—It is all in this sentence, believe, trust the Lord, acknowledging him to be God. Jesus—the very name signifies a Saviour, (Matt. 21.), Christ, the promised Messiah. 'They spake unto him the word.' They were tired and bruised and faint, yet here was an opportunity to speak of their Saviour. They seized the opportunity and had the joy of seeing the whole household brought to Christ.

### Search Questions.

Give from the Old Testament an account of a battle won by hymns of praise.

### Primary Lesson.

Once there was a little boy who was playing out in an orchard. He saw a nice big ladder leaning up against a tree and thought what fun it would be to climb up into the tree. So he began to climb up the ladder, and for a little way it was great fun. But after he had gone up many steps he began to be tired and thought perhaps he had better come down. When he looked down at the ground it seemed so very far away that he was frightened, being a very little boy, and began to cry. Some one heard him crying and came running to see what was the matter. It was his father. 'Why, Robbie, how did you get up there?' asked he. 'Oh, papa, I thought I would climb up and get some apples, and now I can't get down again,' he sobbed. Then his father came up the ladder and held out his arms for Robbie. But Robbie only held on to the ladder and screamed, 'Oh, no, no, I'm afraid to let go.' 'But, Robbie, just jump into papa's arms and he will carry you safely down.' 'No, I can't. I'm afraid?' 'You don't think papa would fall, do you?' 'No, but I'm afraid. I can't let go of the ladder.'

His father felt very badly and did not

know just what to do, but he said, 'Well, Robbie, if you won't let go of the ladder I'm afraid I shall have to go away, because it is no use for me to stand here if you won't trust yourself to me.'

Then Robbie was frightened at the thought of his father going away, and he just made a great effort and jumped into papa's arms and was carried safely down, as he would have been at first if he had not been so silly. His father had saved him from falling from the ladder. He was not saved just by believing that his father stood there and was able to save him, he was not saved until he believed in his father enough to trust himself to him. So we can not be saved just by believing there is such a person as the Lord Jesus who is able to save us from our sins, we are not saved until we believe in him enough to trust ourselves to him, to put ourselves into his arms that he may carry us safely through life. That is the only place we can be safe, 'in the arms of Jesus.'

### SUGGESTED HYMNS.

'Out of my bondage,' 'Safe in the arms of Jesus,' 'Leaning on the everlasting arms,' 'Yield not to temptation,' 'Jesus will help you,' 'What can wash away my sin?' 'Oh, what shall I do to be saved'

### Practical Points.

A. H. CAMERON.

Paul and Silas received no opposition till their religious acts clashed with the finances of the heathen. (verses 19-22.)

Many a Christian has had his body fettered while his soul enjoyed perfect liberty. (verses 23 and 24. Also II. Cor. iii., 17.)

The active Christian will turn the most dismal dungeon into a house of prayer and a palace of song. (verse 25.)

Notice two earthquakes. One shook the prison house; the other rent the jailer's heart. (verses 26-29.)

Simple faith in Christ always brings sweet satisfaction to the anxious enquirer. (verse 30, 31.)

Faith vitalized by works is the only faith that pleases God and gladdens the convert. (verses 32-35.)

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### Christian Endeavor Topic.

July 4.—Consecrated patriots—what will they do?—Deut. xxxii., 1-13.

### Junior Prayer-Meeting Topic.

June 27.—How can we become more patient?—Jas. v., 7-11.

### Children's Mistakes.

After all our efforts we often fail utterly. I once thought I was making it very plain when I told of Joseph sold as a slave, but I found no child had any idea connected with the word slave. In a lesson on the Lord's Supper, I might as well have talked Choc-taw, for the eleven out of the sixteen present that rainy Sunday had never seen the communion table, and every one of the eleven, as it happened, the child of a church member! Years ago I carefully explained that when Zacharias prayed he lighted some sweet smelling powder called incense, and prayed to God as the smoke rose. The next week, when I asked on the roll, 'What is this burning on the altar?' one child answered, 'Insects!' But another jumped to her feet and corrected him with, 'No, 'tain't insects, its insect powder!'

How little of the bible is taught to children even in Christian homes! What can a teacher do in half an hour when she must do all? Very little at the best, and that is the reason why I lay so much stress on committing the verses to memory. It isn't much that the most successful teacher can do for such little ones, but what is learned before seven has a way of sticking in the memory to the end of life. It is rather an old-fashioned way; little is said about it nowadays, but it is the only method with a promise of God behind it. So I hold on to the promise and plant my seed.—Mrs. E. McL. Rowland in 'Congregationalist.'