

sembly's remit on the distribution of probationers was approved of simpliciter. Mr. Martin was appointed convener of the committee on Sabbath Observance in place of Mr. Cameron, who left the bounds of the Presbytery. The following minute was adopted respecting the resignation of Mr. Paterson, late of Bayfield: "The Presbytery, in accepting the resignation of Mr. Paterson, hereby place on record their regret at parting with him; their esteem for him as a faithful preacher of the Gospel, and their hope that he may be long spared for further usefulness in the Church." On the report of the committee appointed to prepare a deliverance anent Mr. Cameron's translation, the following minute was adopted: "The Presbytery, in consenting to the translation of Mr. Cameron from the congregations of Kippen and Hill's Green to that of Summerstown, desire to testify to his success as a preacher and pastor; their appreciation of those qualities in him which have endeared him to the flock which he is now leaving, and to his brethren in the Presbytery; their regret at parting with him, and their earnest wish is that he may be long spared to be useful in the Master's vineyard." The Presbytery adjourned to hold its next regular meeting in Clinton, on the second Tuesday of March, at ten a.m.—A. MCLEAN, Pres. clerk.

**PRESBYTERY OF GUELPH.**—This Presbytery met in conference on the State of Religion. After devotional exercises the committee on resolutions submitted an interim report on the questions that had engaged the attention of the Presbytery since it began to sit as a conference, which were adopted. In the absence of Mr. Burns a paper prepared by him was read by Mr. Cameron on "Sabbath schools as a means of promoting piety among the young, how to secure that end." There was then read a tabulated statement compiled from the answer that has been sent to questions issued, these questions embracing such as follows.—No. of teachers and other officers. No. on the roll. Average attendance. No. in Bible classes, etc. On motion of Mr. Mullan, seconded by Mr. Archibald Campbell, the thanks of the conference were given to Mr. Torrance for the statement he had prepared. Mr. Angus McKay, introduced the next subject, namely, "The work of superintendents and teachers, how to perform it most successfully." Some interesting discussions followed in which several took part. The Committee on Resolutions completed their report by submitting two resolutions on Sabbath schools. These conferences must have been found interesting by all present, and it is believed will be productive of lasting benefit. Members of Presbytery and Delegates have reason to cherish a grateful recollection of the kindly reception accorded to them, and the hospitable manner in which they were entertained by the Christian friends in Acton. A vote of thanks to this effect was carried heartily and unanimously. Mr. Cameron replied, expressing the satisfaction afforded the people in receiving delegates. The following is a copy of the resolutions adopted at the conference. State of Religion.—1. That this conference would bear its strong and united testimony as to the value and obligation of the religious instruction of children in the family, and would urge that ministers in their pastoral visitations, and ruling elders, in their respective districts, take all proper means to secure its general performance. 2. That this Conference would recognize that family worship is of universal obligation, by Divine authority and appointment—that it has been practised by Godly families under every dispensation of Divine grace—that it should embrace praise, reading the Word, and prayer, but are of opinion that the service should not be so prolonged as to produce weariness. 3. That the prayer-meeting is a most important means of grace, and well calculated to exercise and develop the gifts and graces of believers, but the mode of conducting it must be left to the Christian judgment and wisdom of those in charge. That in the judgment of this conference the evils resulting from intemperance cannot be overstated; that they regard with pleasure the efforts that have been put forth to diminish these, and the measure of success with which they have been attended, and would recommend the use of all Scriptural means for the entire suppression of this form of wickedness. Sabbath Schools.—1. That this conference is deeply impressed with the fact that Sabbath schools are an important and valuable means of promoting piety among the young, and, in order to secure that end, teachers—not to say parents—should be very earnest at the Throne of Grace, praying for the rich outpouring of the Holy Ghost, in connection with the instruction

communicated—that the work should be carried on in the confidence that God will not allow His Word to return to Him—and that personal dealing should be resorted to, and special prayer employed. 2. That superintendents and teachers, in order to perform their work most successfully, should be truly pious themselves, and be making daily progress in Divine grace—be punctual and regular in their attendance—careful in their preparation, and show that their hearts are in their work, and that they are thoroughly interested in the spiritual and eternal well-being of those entrusted to them.

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## SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

### INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

#### LESSON 8.

Feb. 24, 1884. } **THESSALONIANS AND BEREANS.** } Acts 17  
1-14

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."—Acts 17:11.

**TIME.**—Following the last lesson.—A.D. 52.

**PLACES.**—Thessalonica and Berea, both in Macedonia.

**Notes and Comments.**—Ver. 1. "Amphipolis: a city on the Strymon, about thirty-three miles from Philippi. "Appollonia" (belonging to Appollo) a city in Macedonia, thirty miles from Amphipolis, and about thirty-six from Thessalonica; this latter an important place, a large commercial city now called Salonika with a population of 70,000. Being a place of trade it had, as usual, attracted the Jews, so we find there "was a synagogue."

Vers. 2, 3. Into this synagogue went Paul, as his "manner," or as Rev. "custom was," he always sought to join in worship on the Sabbath, also to offer the Gospel first to the Jews; each was his custom. "Three Sabbath days reasoned—opening and alleging," etc.: showing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, and that His death and resurrection was a part of the great plan of God for the salvation of the world. It would appear that the argument was continuous and that there was discussion, which was allowed in the synagogue service. See Matt. 12:10; Luke 4:21; John 6:50, 60; read in connection Paul's own account of his "entrance to the Thessalonians, and the character of his labours amongst them. (1 Thess. 2.)

Ver. 4. We have now the result of his three Sabbath's labours "some" of the Jews believed, and these "consorted." joined themselves, became Christians as we should say, and openly declared it by alliance with Paul and Silas; the Greek verb literally means "they became a heritage," hence a church is called a "heritage," 1 Pet. 5:3. "Devout Greeks: proselytes, with these the success was great, a multitude." The Thessalonian Church was largely Gentile. "Chief women" a noble example, in all ages women have been more religious than men.

Ver. 5. But the Devil is on hand with his tools, these were some unbelieving Jews, who "moved with envy, Rev. "jealousy," at the rapidly growing influence of the new faith, gathered the rabble, the scum of the city, men who in every city, ancient or modern, are ready for a riot; they "assaulted the house of Jason," with whom Paul and Silas were staying, "to bring them out," to be tried before the popular assembly, or, as was more likely, to give them mob law, violence and death. Jason has been supposed to be identical with Paul's kinsman: Rom. 16:21, but it is uncertain, the name was not uncommon, and that epistle was written from Corinth.

Vers. 6, 7. Paul and Silas had probably been warned that danger was nigh, and so had left the house of Jason: the mob in their rage and disappointment "dragged Jason and others" before the politarchs, the use of this term as different from the praetors of Philippi, marks the accuracy of Luke; the latter was a Roman colony and its magistrates resembled those of Rome, the former was a "free city" governed by its own rulers, hence the difference. There is an arch in the present city (Salonika), supposed to have been standing in the time of Luke, with the names of seven rulers who bore this title. "Turned the world upside down: true and false, true in the sense as often remarked, that the world is wrong side up and wants turning; false in the civil and political sense in which they would have it understood. Christianity builds up and consolidates all that is good in the world. "Another King:—so the Jews to Pilate: "Saying that He Himself is Christ a King," Luke 23:1—quite true, but like the former charge not in the sense they intended.

Vers. 8, 9. "Trouble the people:" the peaceably disposed portion of the city, doubtless, as in all such cases, the great majority; "and the rulers:" the charge was a grave one, and if any truth in it, and not judged by them, might endanger their relations with Rome, imperil their privileges. "Taken security of Jason and the rest," Rev. "other:" Jason and the brethren became surety for Paul and Silas, probably that no more trouble should arise through their preaching. "Let them go:" in this contrasting favourably with the magistrates at Philippi.

Ver. 10. In accordance with their pledge, or still fearing lawless danger, the brethren sent away Paul and Silas

by night. "Berea:" a city of Macedonia at the foot of Mount Bermus, now known as Kara-Vernia, a corruption of its ancient name Pharsa, it is never mentioned by Paul in his epistles, strangely enough. "Into the synagogue:" to face a new danger.

Vers. 11, 12. "These" the Jews. "More noble than those in Thessalonica," "noble:" a word of wide meaning, not here noble by birth, but they were candid, unprejudiced seekers after truth, ready to receive it. There is no inherited nobility like that; they did two things: (1) "received the word," did not turn away from it as did the Jews in many other places; then (2) "searched the Scriptures daily," to which Paul had appealed; like the noble men they were, they did not let prejudice blind their eyes: this was what Paul desired, he would have them examine their Scriptures, assured that this must lead to their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, and it did, for "many of them believed," and not only Jews but honourable women Greeks, and of men, as in verse 4.

Ver. 13. See the activity of enmity, the "Jews of Thessalonica" hearing of the preaching of the Word and its success at Berea, hasten "thither also, and stirred up the people." Rev. "stirring up and troubling the multitudes," they could not confute so would silence by mob violence.

Ver. 14. So the brethren immediately "sent away Paul" "to go as it were to the sea," but the Rev. says "to go as far as to the sea, which is probably the correct reading, especially considering Paul's after course, being found at Athens without any intermediate place being named. He could have gone thither by land but it was a much longer journey than by sea. "Silas and Timothy" abode there, as in verse 16 Paul is waiting for them at Athens.

#### HINTS TO TEACHERS.

**Prefatory.**—The central thought of this lesson in a Bible School should be the action of the Berean Jews in searching the Scriptures, whatever other points are interesting and there are several very attractive, let this be prominent.

**Topical Analysis.**—(1) The Gospel in Thessalonica. (vs. 1-19). (2) The Gospel in Berea. (vs. 10-14). In the first topic note the preaching of Paul. It is grand to see these men, having just left Philippi where they had been "shamefully entreated" for preaching Christ, beginning their sojourn and work in Thessalonica with the same theme. This was Paul's custom, and a blessed custom it is, to carry the news of Christ and His salvation wherever we go; too many Christians seem anxious to leave their religion behind them when they leave home, teach from this. A Christian at home, a Christian everywhere, carry Christ on lip and in life wherever you may go. Note the matter of his preaching, it is the death and resurrection of Jesus, the two great vital facts of the Gospel, and the truths to which the Jewish mind had specially to be brought. A Messiah, exalted, conquering; a King, victorious over all their enemies was the dream of Judaism, but a humble, suffering, dying Messiah, it was hard for them to receive; but it was this Jesus Paul preached, and that he was indeed the Christ, the anointed of God, the long expected Messiah. Further look at his authority, the Scriptures; he would bring forth the old types and the prophecies and show how they all pointed to Jesus, he opened to them the Word which so long had been a sealed book. Show the results, he won converts, these were from Jews, Gentiles, proselytes and heathen, men and women; they were numerous, "a great multitude;" influential, "chief women." wives, likely, of the leading men of the city, united, "they consorted" with Paul and Silas, they had found a new bond of union, a new centre of affection, Him whom these men preached. But there was opposition as there always will be to the preaching of the Word, its root was envy, from the very midst of the Jews, from their synagogues the preachers had drawn some to Jesus; so they would stop the work if possible; to effect this there was an evil alliance, the mob, the dregs of the city were stirred up the city was set in an uproar, the house of Jason attacked and he and certain of the brethren, in the absence of those whom they sought, dragged before the rulers, where falsehood finishes the work; treason and sedition were the charges. So it has ever been, the enemies of religion would prove that its friends are criminals and to be dealt with as such, whereas, all the blessings that have come to men, civil and social, have come through the revelation of God in Christ Jesus.

On the second topic, we may show that the course of events is very similar in Berea to Thessalonica, only that here he found those in the synagogue who were disposed to receive the truth, to search for it, and not with prejudiced minds to reject because it was new to them, differing from what they had been accustomed to. Here were thoughtful men neither receiving nor rejecting without consideration, men too who went to the fountain of truth, the Scriptures, believing those to be the Word of God they wisely looked there for the test of this new preaching, and this they did daily; noble men these, and worthy to have their names embodied in the vocabulary of the Church to all time, as the common name of all Scripture lovers and readers; no wonder that with such a company the converts were numerous, so numerous that when Paul was compelled to leave through the opposition of the Jews from Thessalonica, Silas and Timothy remained for a season to help to gather in the abundant harvest.

**Incidental Truths and Teachings.**—If God's servants go from opposition to opposition and from suffering to suffering, they also go from victory to victory.

Jesus, His cross and resurrection Paul's great theme.

The children of darkness are afraid of the light.

The sinful peace of the world wants disturbing.

Jesus is a King and makes kings of His people, but spiritual and heavenly.

The Bible and the Bible alone, the religion of thoughtful men.

**Main Lessons.**—Jesus Christ and Him crucified the great theme of gospel preaching.—Acts 26: 22-23; 1 Cor. 1: 23; 2: 2; 15: 5; Gal. 3: 1; 6: 14.

The Scriptures should be searched by all seekers after truth.—Isa. 8: 20; 34: 16; John 5: 39; 20: 31; 1 Cor. 2: 13.