

LESSON I—July 4th, 1897.

First Converts in Europe. Acts 16: 6-15.

(Commit to memory verses 13-15. Read chapter 16: 36 to 16: 5).

GOLDEN TEXT: "The entrance of thy words giveth light." Ps. 119: 130.

PROVE THAT—God's Spirit directs his servants. Acts 16: 10.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 82. *Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?* A. No mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 177, 172, 163, 165.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* First converts in Europe. Acts 16: 6-15. *Tuesday.* The journey referred to. 2 Cor. 2: 12-17. *Wednesday.* Letter to Philippi. Phil. 1: 1-11. *Thursday.* Fellow laborers. Phil. 4: 1-9. *Friday.* Desire for worship. Ps. 84. *Saturday.* Jesus at the well. John 4: 5-15. *Sabbath.* A heart opened. Luke 19: 1-10. (*The T. B. R. A. Selections*).

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. Our last lesson in the Acts brought us to the close of an important epoch in the history of the church. Its first general council had been held and rules were framed for the guidance of gentile converts. A new era was beginning to dawn, one of development and growth. All that christian Europe has been to the world is a result of Paul's obedience to the heavenly vision at Troas. Read carefully chapter 15: 35-16: 15, and trace on the map this Second Journey as far as Troas. Time A. D. 52.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Divine Guidance. vs. 6-8. II. The Macedonian Call. vs. 9-12. III. The Opened Heart. vs. 13-15.

6. Phrygia—In the apostle's time this was a general term for central Asia Minor. **Galatia**—To the churches founded at this time the *Epistle to the Galatians* was written (18: 23). **Asia**—A Roman province embracing Mysia, Lydia and Caria. Almost every road he crossed led to Ephesus, its capital, and Paul wanted very much to go there, but in some way, we do not know how, the Holy Spirit intimated that the time for this had not yet come. As a faithful "messenger," he would go only where he was sent. **7. Bithynia**—They "assayed," or proposed and tried to turn back along the coast of the Black Sea, then a very rich and populous region. **The Spirit of Jesus R. V.**—the Holy Spirit who is sent forth by Jesus (Matt. 28: 19, 20). **8. Passing by Mysia**—It was necessary to pass through Mysia in order to reach Troas, but they did not stop to preach in it. **Troas**—About 4 miles from the site of the ancient Troy—(2 Cor. 2: 12; 2 Tim. 4: 13). **9. A vision**—But not a dream, an apparition. Paul recognized the nationality by the speech, or dress. **10. We**—Luke, the writer, now joins the company with Paul. God's way of leading us may perplex us, but if we will only wait patiently he will guide us whither he wishes us to go. **Sought to go forth (R. V.)**—They were eager to advance to the conquest of Europe for Christ. **Assuredly gathering**—"Putting this and that together," they concluded, beyond a doubt, that this was what God wanted them

to do. **11. Samothracia**—An island in the Aegean sea. **12. Philippi**—Named after the father of Alexander the Great, who founded it. **A colony**—A Roman colony was considered part of Rome itself and its citizens enjoyed all the rights of those living in the city on the banks of the Tiber. **13. Where we supposed there was a place of prayer, (R. V.)**—There was no synagogue, but the apostles judged that if there were any Jews in the town they would, on the Sabbath day, seek a quiet spot by the river for worship. **Sat down**—The usual attitude of Jewish teachers (Acts 13: 14; Luke 4: 20; Matt. 5: 1). **14. Thyatira**—In Lydia. It was celebrated for its purple dyes as far back as the time of Homer. **Which worshipped God.** Lydia was not a Jewess but a proselyte, a convert from heathenism. **Whose heart**—The Holy Spirit alone can change the heart (Prov. 16: 1; Jer. 31: 3, 35; Ezek. 11: 19; 1 Cor. 3: 6, 7). The sinful heart is closed to Christ. **15. Baptized, and her household**—Whether Lydia had any children, we do not know, but it was the custom of the apostles to baptize the whole family of a convert (verse 33: 11: 14; 18: 8; 1 Cor. 1: 16; 2 Tim 4: 19). Lydia stood sponsor for all for whose religious welfare she was responsible. If—means "since," "since ye have judged me faithful by baptizing me." **Constrained**—She would not take "no" for an answer. (Luke 24: 29).

LESSONS. 1. God's will and not our own inclinations should guide us. 2. The need of the heathen calls to us to help them. 3. We should attend divine worship on the Sabbath day. 4. The Lord will open all hearts that are willing to be opened. 5. If we are true to our baptism, God will be true to his covenant promises.