## Sabbath School.

### BIBLE LESSONS.

FROM PELOUBETS SELECT NOTES.

Second Quarter.

Lesson III.—April 19. Acts 28: 1-15.

### PAUL GOING TO ROME.

GOLDEN TEXT.—He thanked God, and took courage.—Acts 28: 15.

I. THE WRECKED SAILORS ON SHORE. 1. *The island was called Melita.*—That this island was the modern Malta, cannot well be doubted.

2. *And the barbarous people* (or, "barbarians," as in ver. 4). So the Greeks and Romans called other nations than themselves, especially when speaking another language. It means here nothing more than "natives." *Shewed us no little kindness.*—"No common kindness" would be a more correct translation (unusual, unexpected kindness). *They kindled a fire.*—An objection has been made that there is now a great absence of wood in the island. But it is only in very modern times that the population of Malta has grown so enormously as to lead to the destruction of the natural wood of the island. *And received us every one.*—Not only the officers and passengers, but the sailors, and even the prisoners.

II. PAUL BITTEN BY A VIPER. 3. *And when Paul had gathered.*—Whatever was to be done that required work, Paul was on hand to do it. He was thus illustrating the practical side of Christianity. *There came a viper.*—Probably the common viper of Europe. Certainly this serpent must have been deadly, or the people would not have expected to see him die. *Out of the heat.*—The viper was probably in a torpid state, and was suddenly restored to activity by the heat. Vipers are accustomed to dart at their enemies, sometimes several feet at a bound. *And fastened on his hand.*—The writer once saw a viper "fasten on" the wrist of a friend in Epping Forest. The whole arm rapidly swelled to an enormous size, and though life was saved, the sufferer was in imminent peril for some days, and an invalid for months.

4. *When the barbarians saw.*—The sharp-eyed natives knew that the poisoned fangs, by which only it could hang, were bedded in the hand. *They said among themselves.*—This suspicious conversation among themselves is an animated element in the description. We can well imagine the scene. *No doubt this man is a murderer.*—They would readily perceive that St. Paul was one of the prisoners under the charge of the military officer, and it was natural to suspect that his crime had been no light one. *Yet vengeance*, or "Justice." The idea of avenging justice overtaking crime is common to all religions. *Suffereth not to live.*—These barbarians reasoned from great original principles, written on the hearts of all men by nature, that there is a God of justice, and that the guilty will be punished.

5. *And felt no harm.*—The bite had produced no effect. Thus our Saviour's promise to his disciples was in this instance fulfilled: "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

6. *They changed their minds.*—An illustration of the fickleness of popular feeling, the converse of that in 14: 11-13, 19. *And said that he was a god.*—This was natural, for a miracle had been wrought, and that required divine power. He was not God, but God was in him.

III. MIRACULOUS HEALINGS BY PAUL. 7. *Of the chief man of the island.*—It probably designated the prefect or governor of the island. *And lodged* (Rev. Ver., entertained) *us three days.*—This was until arrangements could be made for a more permanent dwelling-place.

8. *The father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux.*—Literally, with fevers and dysentery. We have the testimony of physicians resident in that island, that this disorder is by no means uncommon there at the present day. *To whom Paul entered in.*—The report of his miraculous escape from the bite of the viper would direct the attention of Publius to Paul as a remarkable man. *And prayed.*—To obtain the blessing from God, with the wisdom needed, and to show the people that all his power came from the same God whose Gospel he preached. *And healed him.*—St. Luke was a physician, but his skill was less effectual than the agency of St. Paul, who went into the sick man's chamber, prayed by his bedside, laid his hands on him, and healed him.

9. *Others also which had diseases.*—The original is more extensive, all the rest. This was a golden opportunity for making known the Gospel to hearts predisposed to receive it.

10. *Who also honoured us with many honours.*—Courtesies. They were entertained with a generous hospitality, and distinguished by marks of special regard and kindness. *They laded us with such things as were necessary.*—The bounty must have been large if we consider the number of those for whom it was given. But Publius would set the example and others would not be slow to follow it.

IV. THE JOURNEY TOWARD ROME RESUMED. 11. *And after three months.*—Lewin puts their arrival on Nov. 1, and their departure on Feb. 8, the day when, according to Pliny, navigation here opens. *We departed in a ship of Alexandria.*—Another vessel employed in the same trade probably as that in which (28: 6) they had embarked at Myra. *Which had wintered in the isle.*—Having got so far on the voyage out before the stormy weather came on. As the harbor was then where it now is, the ship had wintered in what is now Valetta. *Castor and Pollux.*—Rev. Ver., The Twin Brothers. They were represented either by two stars or as two young men on horseback.

12. *And landing at Syracuse.*—The famous city was situated on the east coast of the island of Sicily, about 80 miles, or a day's sail, from Malta. It was made up of five cities, and hence probably its plural termination. According to Strabo, its wall was twenty-two miles in circumference, and it rivalled Carthage in wealth. Perhaps Paul here preached the Gospel, as tradition makes him the founder of the Sicilian church.

13. *From thence we fetched a compass.*—The fact was that the wind being probably from the west, they were compelled to tack so as to stand out from the shore to catch the breeze instead of coasting, and so come to Rhegium by a circuitous sweep. *And came to Rhegium.*—The modern Reggio, situated at the southern point of Italy, on the straits of Messina. It was about 80 miles from Syracuse. *After one day the south wind blew.*—The wind changed to the south, which was directly in their favor. *And we came.*—By means of the south wind they sailed without danger between the famous rocks of Scylla and the whirlpool of Charybdis. *Puteoli*, now Pozzuoli, was the chief port of Italy at that time.

14. *Where we found brethren.*—That is, there was a Christian church established at Puteoli. *So we went toward Rome.*—A distance of 140 miles. 33 miles from Puteoli they reached the Appian Way, on which they travelled the remaining distance.

15. *When the brethren heard of us. They came to meet us.*—The practice of going some miles from the city to meet one whom men delighted to honor was a common one. *As far as Appii Forum.*—Appii Forum, the market of Appius, was an obscure town on the Appian Way, about 40 miles from Rome. *The Three Taverns.*—Ten miles nearer Rome, at the point where the road from Antium fell into the Appian Way. Here the second delegation met Paul. We may doubtless learn the names of some of these from the greetings of Paul in Rom. 16. *He thanked God, and took courage.*—The words imply a previous tendency to anxiety and fear. For all that he received even from men, Paul's heart turned to God as the great Giver of all, as well as to the human hearts through which the gifts came.

PRACTICAL.

1. Ver. 1. When any calamity has been suffered, the first thing to be remembered is, how much has been escaped (Ps. 118: 18; Isa. 27: 8).

2. Ver. 2. To the poorest and most obscure come opportunities of doing good.

3. God rewarded these people for their unselfish kindness by sending them healing of their bodies and salvation for their souls.

4. Ver. 3. The commonest service that would help his fellow-men is not beneath even an apostle.

5. Ver. 4. Paul, in the very act of doing good, suffered evil. But it was unable to harm him.

6. As Paul shook off the viper, so should we repel every sin with its deadly tooth.

7. Slanderers, like the viper, attack every man that disturbs their quiet.

8. Ver. 4. There is no subject, in dealing with which the natural man commits more mistakes, than in the judgment he forms of the saints of God.

9. Vers. 7-9. When Paul was in bonds as a prisoner, God vindicated him by doing wonderful works through him. The best reply to detractors is found in the fruits of the Gospel and its workers.

10. Ver. 10. True gratitude will ever manifest itself in kind deeds.

### Young Atheists.

A suggestive scene took place lately in a railroad car that was crossing the Rocky Mountains. A quiet business man who, with some of the passengers had been silently watching the vast range of snow-clad peaks seen by him for the first time, said to his companion,

"No man, it seems to me, could look at that scene without feeling himself brought nearer to his Creator."

A dapper lad of eighteen, who had been chiefly occupied in caressing his mustache, pertly interrupted, "If you are sure there is a Creator."

"You are an atheist," said the stranger, turning to the lad.

"I'm an agnostic," raising his voice. "I am investigating the subject. I take nothing for granted. I am waiting to be convinced. I see the mountain, I smell the rose, I hear the wind; therefore I believe that mountains, rose and wind exist. But I cannot see, smell or hear God. Therefore,—"

A grizzled old cattle-raiser opposite glanced over his spectacles at the boy:

"Did you ever try to smell with your eyes? he said quietly."

"No."

"Or to hear with your tongue, or taste with your ear?"

"Certainly not."

"Then why do you try to apprehend God with faculties which are only meant for material things?"

"With what should I apprehend him?" said the youth with a conceited giggle.

"With your intellect and soul; but—I beg your pardon," here he paused; some men hav'n't breadth and depth enough of intellect and soul to do this. That is probably the reason you are an agnostic."

The laugh in the car effectually stopped the display of any more atheism that day.

But this is a question that cannot be laughed or joked away. The immature lads are not few in our colleges who find a Greek grammar too much for their brains to master; yet who loudly proclaim themselves agnostics or materialists, and challenge the Creator of the universe to stand on trial for their verdict. Ridiculous as they are, there is with many of them a sincere, eager hope under their pretty conceit and boasting.

Every thinking man in his youth must face for himself that terrible problem of life: "What is God?" and "What is he to me?" Sometimes the wild dissipation, the mad outbreak, which wrings a mother's heart, is but the desperate attempt to thrust this question out of sight. As the young man decides that question, his future life takes shape. Let us hope that no matter how vain or irrational such a questioner may be in his very questioning, the mind may be elevated and enlightened by its approach to that invisible Good behind the earth, and behind life and death and evil, whom we call God.

It is for us to help him come nearer.

### God's Sympathy with the Toilers.

Oh, yes, God has a sympathy with everybody that is in any kind of toil! He knows how heavy is the hod of bricks that the workman carries up the wall; He hears the pickaxe of the miner down in the coal shaft; He knows how strong the tempest strikes the sailor at the masthead; He sees the factory girl among the spindles, and knows how her arms ache; He sees the sewing woman in the fourth story, and knows how few pence she gets for making a garment; and louder than all the din and roar of the city comes the voice of a sympathetic God; "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee." Then there are a great many who have a weight of persecution and abuse upon them. Sometimes society gets a grudge against a man. All his motives are misinterpreted. With more virtues than some of the honored and applauded, he runs only against raillery and sharp criticism. When a man begins to go down, he has not only the force of natural gravitation, but a hundred hands to help him in the precipitation. Men are persecuted for their virtues and their successes. Germanicus said he had just as many bitter antagonists as he had adornments. The character is sometimes luxurious that the weak eyes of Envy and Jealousy, cannot bear to look at it. It was their integrity that put Joseph in the pit, and Daniel in the den, and Shadrack in the fire, and sent John the Evangelist to desolate Patmos, and Calvin to the castle of persecution, and John Huss to the stake, and Korah after Moses, and Saul after David, and Herod after Christ. Be sure if you have anything to do for church or state and you attempt it with all your soul, lightning will strike you. The world has had a cross between two thieves for the one who comes to save it. High and holy enterprise has always been followed by abuse. The most sublime tragedy of self-sacrifice has come to burlesque. The graceful gait of virtue is also followed by the scoffer with grimace and travesty. The sweetest strain of poetry ever written has come to ridiculous parody, and as long as there are virtue and righteousness in the world there will be something for iniquity to grin at. All along the line of ages, and in all lands the cry has been, "Not this man, but Barabas. Now, Barabas was a robber." And what makes the persecutions of life worse, is that they come from people whom you have helped, from those to whom you loaned money or have started in business, or whom you rescued in some great crisis. I think it has been the history of all our lives—the most acrimonious assault has come from those whom we have benefitted, whom we have helped, and that makes it all the harder to bear.—*De Witt Talmage.*

### Gems.

—A colleague of Prof. Paulus, the German Rationalist, spoke of him as "a man who thinks he believes and believes he thinks."

—A boat in the water is all right, but water in the boat sinks. So the Christian is all right in the world, but when the world gets into him he goes down.

—It is disowning my belief, wronging my soul, and giving the lie to God, to think, but for a moment, that his mercy in Christ is not above all my sins.—*Rev. T. Adams.*

—Man of the world! Bad as we who are called Christians are—and none can know that badness as we do ourselves—your world would be worse if we were not in it.—*Dr. John Hall.*

—I very often think with sweetness and longings and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ to be led by him through the wilderness of this world.—*Jonathan Edwards.*

—The grand business of Christianity is not to fit us to die, but to live—to live rightly, first in this world in private and in public, and then afterwards in any other world where God may please to place us."—*E. White.*

—There are three classes of people in the world. The first learn from their own experience—these are the wise; the second learn from the experience of others—these are the happy; the third neither learn from their own experience nor the experience of others—these are fools.

—Robert Hall, walking, in company with a friend, past a somewhat pretentious ecclesiastical structure, was asked what building it was: "A Socinian chapel," was the characteristic reply delivered in the characteristic manner; "a pompous introduction to nothing!"

—When a secretary of missions was in Calcutta, he put, among other questions, this one to a class of young girls, —"What is the difference between Hindooism and Christianity?" After a few moments' silence, one arose and replied thus:—"Hindooism is, Work to live; Christianity is Live to work."

—He who has not yet become manly enough to have the courage to act independently in resisting evil companions and disregarding their jests and raillery has certainly not yet become man enough to cut loose from the sacred ties of home and the wholesome restraint of older and more judicious advisers.

—There is no word of action but may be taken with two hands—either with the right hand of charitable construction or the sinister interpretation of malice and suspicion. To construe an evil action well is but a pleasing and profitable deceit to myself; but to misconstrue a good thing is a treble wrong—to myself, the action, and the author.—*Bishop Hall.*

—Gounod, the composer, once said to a "bumptious" young musician, "At your age I used to say 'I'; at twenty-five I said 'I and Mozart', at forty, 'Mozart and I'; now I say 'Mozart.'" Real growth in knowledge is attended with corresponding growth in humility. The inexperienced Christian, says "I"; the more experienced Christian, "Christ and I"; but the well-taught soul says, with Paul, "Not I, but Christ in me."

—On one occasion a woman brought her six months' old infant to a meeting Mr. Moody was holding. About the time the preacher got well under way in his sermon, the child began to cry, and the mother looking around and dismayed by the frowns that met her eyes, rose from her seat and was about to leave the house; but Mr. Moody said: "Keep still, madam; do not leave, I can preach louder than your baby can cry." She hearkened to him and that night was saved. "Go thou and do likewise."

### Ventilation.

To ensure a happy home we need to have a healthy one, and while I trust I am not a crank on the subject of ventilation, I am a firm believer in the virtues of the fresh air. In the very cold winters, when the thermometer is constantly below freezing, and frequently reaches zero, or when the winds are keen and biting, there may be some excuse for keeping the cellars closed day after day. But with such a winter as we have had in most parts of the country, there has hardly been a day when the covers of cellar gratings might have been lifted for a few hours. And upstairs and down stairs, all through the house, windows ought to be opened more or less every day. We had a troop of brothers and sisters at home when I was a child, and on cold days we were turned out of one room into another, if necessary, so that each room of the house should have its share of fresh air. In the bedrooms let the doors of clothes closets and wardrobes be opened for a few hours each day so that the air can get at the contents. At night let at least one window in each room be opened. To prevent draught lift the lower sash four inches and place a board underneath the sash. By means of a small support let the board slope toward the interior of the room, at the top, thus very little air will enter under the sash, but more will enter between the two sashes. Many persons rise in the morning complaining that they do not feel refreshed by their sleep. This is often because they fail to secure ventilation during their slumber. Many a child is restless at night because it cannot get fresh air to breathe.

Dr. Austin Flint says that through fear sick people should catch cold, sick rooms are poorly ventilated and patients are oppressed by superabundance of garments and bed cloths. The air which patients are made to breathe, having been already breathed and rebreathed, is loaded with pulmonary exhalations. Cutaneous emanations are allowed to remain in contact with the body, as well as to pervade atmosphere. Free exposure of the body, is deemed hardous, and still more so bathing or sponging, the entire surface of the body being exposed. Patients not confined to the bed, especially those affected with pulmonary disease, are overloaded with clothing, which becomes saturated with perspiration, and is seldom changed for fear of the dreaded 'cold.'" "Let the restorative influence of cool, fresh, pure atmosphere be introduced, free from


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ALL the right, title and interest at Law or in Equity of Denis McNamara in and to all that certain lot, piece and parcel of land, described in a certain deed from Arthur H. Fegan and wife to William McNamara, deceased, bearing date the twentieth day of September, A.D. 1836, and registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds of the City and County of Saint John, in Book F, No. 4 of Records, pages 385, 386, as follows: All that certain piece or parcel of land heretofore conveyed by one John W. Scott and Rachael his wife, to George Scribner, by deed poll, bearing date the fourth day of April, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-six, and therein described as follows, to wit: "That well known piece and parcel of land in the parish of Simonds and County of Saint John in the province of New Brunswick (and being a part of a tract of land purchased by the said John W. Scott of Robert W. Crookshank, Esquire, and Jane his wife, in the month of November and year 1841), the said tract, piece or parcel of land now sold the said George F. Scribner is abutted and bounded as follows, to wit: Beginning at John Hooper's North-east corner, thence by the magnet of Eighteen Hundred and Forty-one year, North, seventy-eight degrees East, eight chains of four poles each and twenty-five links to a marked stake, thence by the magnet as aforesaid, South twelve degrees, East, sixty-five chains or to a marked stake at a new road laid out, leading to Loch Lomond, thence by the Northern side of the said road eight chains and twenty-five links, more or less, to the Eastern side line of the said John Hooper's lot to a marked stake, thence by the said John Hooper's East side line sixty-five chains, more or less, to the first beginning bounds, containing by estimation Fifty-three acres, more or less, as will more fully appear by a plan annexed to the said deed; with the buildings and appurtenances thereon, the same having been levied on, under an execution issued out of the King's County Court, William Pugsley, Jr., vs. Daniel McNamara.
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