

alone explains such seeming anomalies. Himself wounded, Saul himself fears to fall alive into the hands of the Philistines. Rather than be mocked by them, he will commit suicide by the hand of his armour-bearer, or on his refusal, by his own hand. Armour-bearer, said by Jews to have been Doeg (compare Ch. 22: 9, 18), followed his example.

Lesson—Sometimes the wicked come to a miserable end, even on this side of eternity.

V. 8, &c.—Before this Saul's crown and regal bracelet had been carried to David (2 Sam. 1: 10). "Cut off," &c.—for double purpose of insulting Israel, and doing honour to their idols, to whom they attributed their success. Bethshan was on a hill, and the bodies would be visible far on each side of Jordan. The head of Saul, and, probably, those of his sons, were fixed in the temple of Dagon (1 Chron. 10: 10). "Jabesh Gilead," beyond Jordan, opposite Bethshan, about 12 miles distant. Comp. Ch. 11. "Took the body." No mention of conflict, probably they got in unobserved, or surprised the guard. "Burnt them," probably to prevent their being retaken. So ends the sad story of a life that might have been glorious to the end, had he patiently and humbly followed God. Comp. Ch. 2: 30.

LESSON FOR JUNE 9.

Acts 18: 18-28. Text—1 Peter 4: 10. *Show from Scripture*—That we should use God's gifts in his service.

Close of second journey, and beginning of third. Apollos.

"A good while." During his stay in Corinth, he probably made short preaching tours in the neighbourhood. "Priscilla and Aquila." As Priscilla's name always comes first, she was probably more gifted, useful and prominent than her husband. "Having shown," &c. Some suppose Aquila is spoken of; but most understand Paul to be meant. "Cenchreae," Eastern harbour of Corinth, from which they would sail. A church had been formed there (Rom. 16: 1). "A vow"—perhaps made in some season of danger, or on his deliverance from such. Compare Num. 6.

"Ephesus," very important city, capital of Proconsular Asia, across Ægean sea, about ten days' sail with good winds. "Entered," &c.—The ship seems to have waited shortly. *Lesson*—Seize every opportunity to preach Christ. "Desired," &c. The Jews did not generally oppose him much at first, and the Jews of Ephesus

seem never to have given him general or violent opposition.

"Feast," supposed to have been Pentecost. "If God will." Comp. James 4: 15. "Gone up" to Jerusalem. "Saiuted," &c., and probably told them what the Lord had done by him. No mention is made of the feast, perhaps he was too late for it.

"Antioch." So ends his second missionary journey.

"Departed," on his third, never to return. "Galatia and Phrygia." Again, note his great care over disciples. He seems also to have now directed them to lay by them in store, weekly, what they could afford for the relief of the poor saints in Judæa (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2). We should do likewise for religious and benevolent purposes.

V. 24.—"Alexandria," capital of Lower Egypt, very large and important, mixed population, many Jews; a seat of learning and philosophy—a philosophy which had great influence on the early Christian Church. "Eloquent," probably a natural gift cultivated. "Mightily in the Scriptures"—great qualification for usefulness. "Instructed," &c.—partly by Old Testament, and partly by John the Baptist or one of his disciples. "Fervent," &c.—another qualification for success. "Spake," &c.—at first more privately, then boldly in the synagogue. "Diligently," or better, "accurately." "Things of the Lord," the true reading is "things of Jesus." "Knowing only," &c., comp. Ch. 19: 1-6—but Apollos seems to have been only instructed "more accurately" (same word as above). "Aquila," &c. What seems the true reading has, as elsewhere, Priscilla first. How providential that they were left here! Beautiful sight! Eloquent, learned preacher, humbly learning from a plain Christian woman and her husband. Apollos was not "licensed" or ordained, yet he was not silenced, or checked, but only helped and recommended. "Disposed," &c., perhaps through advice of Priscilla and Aquila, as better field for his gifts. "Brethren," probably fruit of labour of Priscilla and Aquila. "Through grace"—whether connected with "believed," or "helped," shows the source of all the good in us, or done by us.

Lessons—All our gifts should be devoted to God's service; He can find work for them. All may become mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, humble; and these are, under God, the qualifications for success. Whatever our natural gifts, or our circumstances, we may work for Jesus. Let all preach Christ who can, and whose hearts burn to do so. J. F. C.