

Lesson VIII.

PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA

May 24, 1903

Acts 26: 19-29—Memory Verses, 27-29.

Golden Text— Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.—
Acts 26: 22.



19 Whereupon, O king Agrip'pa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision :

20 But shewed first unto them of Damasc'us, and at Jeru'salem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæ'a, and then to the Gen'tiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Mo'ses did say should come :

23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gen'tiles.

24 And as he thus spake for himself, Fes'tus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself : much learning doth make thee mad.

25 But he said, I am not mad most noble Fes'tus ; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely : for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him ; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King Agrip'pa, believest thou the prophets ? I know that thou believest.

28 Then Agrip'pa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

THE LESSON RETOLD

Though Felix knew that Paul had done no wrong, yet to please the Jews he kept him in prison for more than two years.

Then Festus was appointed governor at Casarea in the place of Felix.

One day Festus received a state visit from king Agrippa and his royal sister Bernice.

Hearing of Paul and the long dispute that had been going on about him, Agrippa said to his host, "I should like to hear this person of whom every one is talking."

Then Festus made a party, and inviting all the chief people of the town, he sent to the prison for Paul to come and give them an address.

As soon as the king and Bernice and the other guests had taken their seats, Paul, chained, and bound between two soldiers, was led in to tell the story of his life.

"It is only by the mercy of God, great king

Agrippa," began the brave apostle, "that I am alive and able to speak before you this day. For when I was in the temple, the Jews caught me and tried to kill me. And this is the chief reason why they hate me, because that, ever since the day when the Lord Himself met me on the way to Damascus, I have gone everywhere preaching to both Jews and Gentiles that Jesus is the promised Saviour." In Him alone may all men turn to God and receive strength to please and obey Him.

As Paul was speaking, his hearers felt that they were listening to the words of no common man ; and in a moment of surprise at Paul's wisdom and eloquence, Festus interrupted with a loud voice saying, "Paul ! Paul ! you are mad ! Much study has turned your head !"

"I am not mad, your Excellency," answered Paul quietly. And turning towards