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The Sabbath School

LESSON V.—July 30.

PAUL AT EPHESUS.—Acts xix: 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.—John vii 13.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—To the earnest Christian God gives now light, new life, and new power.

DAILY READINGS.

- 21 M. Acts xix. 1-12.
- 25 T. Acts xix. 13-20.
- 26 W. Acts xix. 21-29.
- 27 Th. Acts xix. 30-41.
- 28 F. Mark i. 18.
- 29 S. John xiv. 15-26.
- 30 Su. 1 Cor. xii. 1-11.

TIME.—Paul came to Ephesus in the spring or early summer of A.D. 54. He remained there about three years, till May, A.D. 57.

PLACE.—Ephesus, the chief city of Asia Minor.

PAUL.—Aged fifty-two to fifty-five; on his third missionary journey.

RULERS.—Claudius Caesar, died October 13, A.D. 54, and Nero became emperor of Rome at seventeen years of age. Felix, governor of Judea. Josephus, the historian, sixteen years old, at Jerusalem.

EPHESUS.—(1) "The city" stood on a plain five miles long by three wide, on the western coast of Asia Minor, upon the Icarian Sea, an arm of the Aegean. It was forty miles south of Smyrna. It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. (2) "Public buildings:" The chief were the "Stadium," 635 feet long by 200 wide, used for foot-racing, pugilistic contests, and beast-fights. The "theatre" was excavated from a hillside, with circular seats, and would hold 50,000 people,—the largest audience room in the world. "The Temple of Diana" was one of the seven wonders of the world. It was built of white marble, 475 feet long and 220 broad, and had 127 Parian marble columns, each 60 feet high. (3) "The inhabitants" were Greeks, noted for literature and art, especially painting, and much given to magic arts. (4) "Modern Ephesus" is a desolate ruin.

THE SECTION OF HISTORY includes chapter xviii 18 19: 41, extending over three years.

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.—After our last lesson Paul returned home to Jerusalem and to Antioch. After a time he started early in 54 for his third tour, visiting the cities of Asia Minor, till he reached Ephesus about May. Here he remained three years, when, May, 57, he revisited the cities of Greece and Macedonia, and returned to Jerusalem in the summer of 58, completing a tour of nearly four years.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—1. "Apollos at Corinth:" see xviii. 24-28. "Upper coasts:" borders, or country. 2. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?" the special manifestations of His power. "Not so much as heard:" of these special gifts of the Holy Spirit, the extraordinary endowments he brings to those who believe. They had been living a life of duty and obedience, without the brightness and comfort and power the Holy Spirit brings. 3. "Unto John's baptism:" repentance, of a Messiah to come. 6. "Spake with tongues:" as on the day of Pentecost. 8. "Spake boldly:" it required great boldness to preach to these Jews that Jesus was the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. It was sure to awaken opposition and persecution, and might cost him his life. "Disputing:" reasoning, arguing. 9. "Divers:" some. "Were hardened:" became insensible to the influences of the Gospel; set against the truth. "And believed not:" or, as in the Revised Version, "were disobedient:" this was the cause, and also the result, of the hardening. "Spake evil of that way:" that is, of the Gospel, the way of living, the way of truth. 10. "Two years:" he had been there three months before this, and remained some months after (see Acts xx: 31). The two years end with v. 20. "Asia:" the Roman province, so called—the western part of Asia Minor.