

V. 45. Contradicting and blaspheming, the second participle intensifying the first.

V. 46. It was necessary, "the plan of God required it." See Luke xxiv, 47; The apostles in this respect obeyed the Saviour's command literally, (Acts ii, 8); JUDGE YOURSELVES UNWORTHY OF ETERNAL LIFE, "a man's actions may be taken as his own self-pronounced verdict as to his character and deserts."—*Hackett*; LO! WE TURN TO THE GENTILES. See ch. xvii, 6; xxviii, 28; Rom. xi, 11.

V. 47. So has the Lord commanded. Isa. xlix, 6. That which had been obscurely foretold in the Old Testament, that those should "seek after God who knew Him not," and that He should be honoured by "those who were not a people;" that which had seen its first instalments in a Centurion and a Syrophenician woman, in Cornelius and Sergius Paulus,—began now to be realized in a whole community. The counsels of God were not frustrated by the unbelief of His chosen people. A new "Israel," a new "election," succeeded to the former. In this way Paul turned repeatedly from the Jews to the Gentiles, as at Corinth (ch. xviii, 6), at Ephesus (ch. xix, 9), and at Rome (ch. xxviii, 28)—*Henson*.

V. 48. As many as were ordained, or "appointed" unto eternal life, believed. To render this "disputed" instead of "appointed" or "ordained," as Alford does, is not allowable by the philology of the passage.—So Calvin, Olshausen, De Wette, Winter, Meyer, Hackett. The doctrine of election is in it without doubt. In what sense men are ordained unto eternal life must be gathered from passages like these: Rom. viii, 28, etc.; ix, 11; Eph. i, 4-11; 2 Thess. ii, 13; 2 Tim. i, 9; 1 Peter i, 2. "All explanations" of these words of the historian "opposed" to the doctrine of election "are forced and unsatisfactory."

V. 50. Stirred up the devout and honorable women.—i. e., of the Gentiles who had embraced Judaism, quick to be excited against any new doctrine opposed to their adopted faith; OUT OF THEIR COASTS, or borders.

V. 51. Shook off the dust, (see Matt. x, 14; Luke x, 10, 11); CAME UNTO ICONIUM, ninety miles east of Antioch, the modern *Koniah*.

V. 52. Filled with joy, notwithstanding the persecution. See Matt. v, 10-12.

LESSON TOPICS.

- I. The Gospel sought earnestly.
- II. The Gospel opposed bitterly.
- III. The Gospel embraced gladly.

LESSON TEACHINGS.

1. We should be glad to receive the instructions of pious men.
2. We should carry the gospel to the despised classes.
3. We should beware of a persecuting or censorious spirit.

Selections.

"AS WE FORGIVE."

In the middle ages, for the great lords and knights were always at war with each other, one of them resolved to revenge himself upon a neighbour who had offended him. It happened that the very evening when he had made this resolution, he heard that his enemy was to pass near his castle, with only a few men with him. It was a good opportunity to take his revenge, and he determined not to let it pass. He spoke of this plan in the presence of his chaplain, who tried in vain to persuade him to give it up. The good man said a great deal to the duke about the sin of

what he was going to do, but in vain. At length, seeing that all his words had no effect, he said, "My lord, since I cannot persuade you to give up this plan of yours, will you at least consent to come with me to the chapel, that we may pray together before you go?" The duke consented, and the chaplain and he knelt together in prayer. Then the mercy-loving Christian said to the revengeful warrior, "Will you repeat after me, sentence by sentence, the prayer which our Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught to His disciples?"

"I will do it," replied the duke.

He did it accordingly. The chaplain said a sentence, and the duke repeated it, till he came to the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." There the duke was silent.

"My lord duke, you are silent," said the chaplain. "Will you be so good as to continue to repeat the words after me, if you dare say so?"—Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

"I cannot," replied the duke.

"Well, God cannot forgive you, for He has said so. He Himself has given this prayer. Therefore you must either give up your revenge, or give up saying this prayer; for to ask God to pardon you as you pardon others, is to ask Him to take vengeance on you for all your sins. Go now, my lord, and meet your victim. God will meet you at the great day of judgment."

The iron will of the duke was broken.

"No," said he, "I will finish my prayer:—'My God, my Father, pardon me; forgive me as I desire to forgive him who has offended me; lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil!'"

"Amen," said the chaplain.

"Amen," repeated the duke, who now understood the Lord's prayer better than he had ever done before, since he had learned to apply it to himself.—*British Workmen*.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEARS.

(From the Baptist Teacher.)

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Their habit is to growl, their ailment is soreheadedness and their vocation is depression. Possibly there is use for them as there is for ballast in a boat, or for sand-bags in the car of a balloon, and as there was for Paul's thorn in the flesh, that messenger of Satan that was sent to buffet him; but it is very easy for the business to be overdone, and it requires special grace to bear the trial with becoming patience. It is a grievous thing, when, prompted by a noble inspiration, you are setting out upon some generous enterprise, to find yourself, to your dismay, confronted by—a bear. It requires no small amount of heroism to go on in spite of him. No individual or company has ever attempted anything worth anything without one or more determined bears, growling and glowering right in their pathway. We have become so accustomed to it that when we set our faces for any forward movement, we instinctively enquire: "Now where is the bear?" And we are a little disappointed if a gruff voice near to hand fails to echo—"Here."

It is especially calamitous for a bear to be let loose among a company of little children,

who have not been guilty of such atrocious wickedness as occasioned Elisha's curse. We have seen it tried repeatedly, and always with the same deplorable results. We have seen one entrusted with the care of a class, composed of innocent and unsuspecting children, whose parents had confidently sent them to Sunday-school supposing there was safety there, if anywhere in all the world. But he growled, and he growled, and GROWLED, and we knew he was a bear, and we thought of poor little "Red Riding Hood," and our very blood ran cold in our veins. We came a few weeks later, and the children almost all were gone, but whither, of course, we could not tell. We dare not say that he had eaten them, but if not, he at least had chased them so far away that they would never be likely to return again.

Aye, more and worse, we have known a Bear to climb to the superintendent's desk, and standing on his hind legs there, we have seen him roll his eyes, and shake his heavy head, and have heard him grind his teeth and growl after such a fashion as would have been quite sufficient to drive the scholars to a speedy stampede, if the doors had not been securely shut. But some time or other the doors must be opened, and the little ones breathe free again, and thank the Lord for their deliverance. It will require no small amount of moral suasion and of sugar candy to induce them to enter that "Bear's den" again.

We confess to a very warm sympathy, in such cases, with the children, and to a deepening dislike for every kind of bears.

We are just reminded that the animals that did such execution in Elisha's time are called *she* bears in the inspired record, with an intimation that because of their sex they were especially ferocious. We do not doubt that there are some such bears even now about, but of them we stand in such mortal dread, that we do not dare to do more than barely hint at the possibility of their existence. We have only in conclusion to suggest that when the apostle Paul admonishes Christians to "beware of dogs," he undoubtedly meant BEWARE OF BEARS.

STRIVE AND DARE.

Strive, brother, strive,
When kind hearts are cold,
And cold the reply of the once loving eye,
Strive to be bold.

Dare, brother, dare,
When shame's on thy cheek,
And anger's red glow on the face of thy foe,
Dare to be meek.

Strive, brother, strive,
Mid the glare of the new,
To the faith of the past, that has weathered the
Strive to be true. [blast,

Dare, brother, dare,
When compromise only
Can win back the train of the false ones again,
Dare to be lonely.

George Paulin.

When the Breton mariner puts to sea, his prayer is—"Keep me; my God; my boat is so small, and Thy ocean is so wide." It does not this beautiful prayer truly express the condition of each of us?