

Sabbath School.

BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER.

Lesson I. July 2. Acts 16: 6-15.

PAUL CALLED TO EUROPE.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Matt. 28: 19.

CONNECTION.—Six months ago, when we closed our studies in the Acts for a time, we left Paul and Barnabas in Jerusalem, where they had told the story of their first great missionary tour to the Gentiles, with its marvellous success, as a proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit and the Divine endorsement of their labor.

EXPLANATORY.

Paul and Barnabas, with two delegates from the Jerusalem church, returned to Antioch, bearing with them the decree of the council. They remained at Antioch for a time. Then Paul proposed to Barnabas that they revisit the churches which they had founded in Asia Minor during their first missionary tour. Barnabas agreed with Paul. But there arose a practical question. Barnabas wished to take with him his cousin John Mark, who started with them on their former journey, but left them and returned home, when they began to enter upon the dangerous and difficult part of their tour.

6. Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia. An undefined region round about Antioch of Pisidia to the north, east and west. And the region of Galatia. The great central tableland, north and east of Phrygia, but its boundaries are undefined. Forbidden of the Holy Ghost. Their plans were to preach in Asia, but they were prevented by the Holy Spirit. How? Either (1) by some special providence, or (2) by direct communication of the Holy Spirit. Why? In order to lead him into a wider and more important field, the very heart of civilized headland. God shuts us off from one field of work because He has other greater work for us to do.

7. Come to Mysia. A province on the Aegean Sea, north of Asia. They assayed they planned, proposed, and desired to go into Bithynia. A northern province of Asia Minor upon the Black Sea, north-east of Mysia. But the Spirit said, "Nonesuch." The Spirit sent by Jesus according to His promise. Suffered (permitted) them not. In the same way as in ver. 6. God hedged up the ways He did not wish them to go, and so gradually directed them in the right way.

8. And they passing by Mysia. Left it aside without remaining to preach there. Came down to Troas. Called fully Alexandria Troas, on the Hellespont, about four miles from the site of the ancient Troy.

9. A vision. This was the third supernatural revelation. It was not a real person, but a vision, but not necessarily imparted in a dream. Come over... and help us. This vision has been rightly recognized by the church as interpreting the unuttered cry of heathendom for help. And it has been abundantly shown that it is death to a church or a Christian, either not to hear this cry, or, having heard it, not to heed it.

10. We endeavored. By seeking for a ship. Assuredly gathering. The verb has the sense of "coming to a conclusion from putting things side by side." Paul hatched out his plan to do as where God would have him preach.

11. Samothracia. An island of the Aegean; between Troas and Neapolis. Neapolis. "New city." "Naples," the seaport of Philipp. It was 65 miles from Troas.

12. Thence to Philippi. About ten miles from Neapolis. Which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia. This city was built by Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, who named it after himself. The city has long disappeared, and its site is occupied by a small village named Filippa. A colony of Rome. A Roman colony was a miniature of the Imperial City—a portion of Roman life transplanted to the provinces. Some of the inhabitants, being colonists and the descendants of colonists, were Roman citizens, and were still enrolled in one of the tribes, and possessed the privilege of voting at Rome.

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A NORWOOD MIRACLE.

HEALTH REGAINED AFTER SEVEN DOCTORS HAD FAILED.

The Remarkable Experience of Mr. John Slater Knox—Two Hours' Sleep after the Benefit Derived From Six Weeks' Treatment—Rescue From Suffering—Came After Doctors Had Pronounced His Case Hopeless.

(Norwood Register).

The readers of The Register will remember having read in this paper during the early part of last year of the very serious illness of Mr. John Slater Knox, who lives on lot 20, in the 3rd concession of Aphrodel township. I remember how in January, 1894, Mr. Knox was stricken down with a grippe; how from a man of about 185 pounds he fell away in flesh in a few short weeks until he was a mere skeleton of his former self, weighing only 120 pounds; how he was tormented with the most excruciating pain; how he longed for death to relieve him of his suffering; how he consulted doctors far and near, and how they failed to successfully diagnose his case. In fact they confessed their ignorance of the malady, and said he could not recover. But so much for the profession. Mr. Knox is alive to-day. He has recovered his wonted vigor and weighs 180 pounds, and his many friends in Norwood look upon him as a wonder.

14. Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira. The city of Thyatira, on the confines of Lydia and Mysia, one of the seven churches of Asia, addressed in the Apocalypse, was celebrated in very early days for its purple dyes and purple fabrics. The business which brought this Lydia to Philippi was connected either with the dyeing or the coloring matter, or more likely with the fabric already dyed. Her work was truly Godly. A Jewish proselyte. She was truly religious, and so was prepared to receive the true religion. "To him that hath shall be given," for the having some is a preparation for more. Where heart the Lord opened; i. e. in conformity with other passages (Matt. 11: 25 sq; Luke 24: 45; 1 Cor. 3: 6, 7) enlightened, impressed by His Spirit, and so prepared to receive the truth. The heart is of itself closed, but it is for God to open it. Probably the opening was a process that had been going on for a long time.

15. And when she was baptized. As soon as she believed, she made a public profession of her faith in the appointed way—by baptism. There is not much depth to that faith and love which does not desire openly to confess our Lord and Saviour, in the way of His own appointment. Primitive piety was not hidden piety. And her household. Whether we are to understand by this term her children, her slaves, or the work-people engaged in the manual employment connected with her trade, or all these collectively, cannot easily be decided. We do not know whether she had children, or even was married. If she was judged. The words contain a modest, almost a pathetic, appeal to the fact that the preacher had recognized her faith by admitting her to baptism. If she was fit for that, was she unfit to be their hostess? Come into my house and abide there. We have here the first example of that Christian hospitality which was so emphatically enjoined and so lovingly practised in the apostolic church. She constrained us. By much entreaty. So in Luke 24: 29, the disciples constrained Christ to accept their hospitality.

Nothing cuts us so keenly in the awful flood of separation by death as the remembrance of having misconceived the inmost life and character of one we have loved, or by whom we have been beloved. "O fools and blind," we cry out to ourselves, when by the light that breaks out of that final mystery we see what our friend really was—a being with whom we might have lived on earth in the only satisfying companionship of soul with soul. For many a mourner, death is the first clear, stern revealer of a loveliness unappreciated while the lost one was yet in sight.—Lucy Larcom, in The Unseen Friend.

Some one has said that ours is an age when everyone wishes to reform the world, but no one thinks of reforming himself. We must begin with ourselves. As we have sought to give the world, then we must first have received it. Life for God in public is a mere sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, unless it is balanced by life with God in secret. It makes a great difference whether we are going out, in a kind of social knight-errantry, to live for humanity, or our own motion, or whether we have met with Jesus Christ in secret, and go forth with His commission and promise at our back, and with His love and inspiration in our souls.—Rev. James Siskler, D. D., in Men and Morals.

There is a story of a Swiss martyr, who, on the day of his execution (he was burned at the stake), just before the fire was kindled, craved permission to say a word to the judge who had condemned him. In the presence of all the people he addressed him thus: "Sir, I have but one last request to make, and it is that you will now approach and place your hand first upon my heart and then upon your own, and tell this multitude which of the two beats more violently." It need not be said that the judge dared not fulfil the request, for he saw in the heroic martyr a calm tranquillity of soul to which he himself was a stranger. God help us to keep our hearts with all diligence, full and pure and transparent and tranquil, that from them, as from a clear mountain spring, there may issue influences of health and benediction to gladden our own lives and bless all around us.—Thain Davidson, D. D., in Thoroughness.

The secret of perfect trust is very simple, yet but few learn it. We are by many mistaken ways an increase of faith, and find only disappointment. Our greatest mistake is looking within rather than without. Mrs. Fletcher tells of a convert's dream: how he seemed to be deep down in a well, and looking up could see through the narrow rim of the well's mouth a star that seemed to let down silver lines of light to lift him up. If he looked upsteadily, he felt himself rising; if he looked down into the well, he felt himself falling; and by simply keeping his eyes fixed upward he rose out of the well. The dream is a parable: if we look up, we go up; if we look down, we go down. Faith is never perfected by a method of contemplation, but by "looking away unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." To get our eyes off self and on Him, that is the simple secret of increase of faith.—Arthur T. Pearson, D. D., in The Dove in the Heart.

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A Misdirected Letter.

The wind was blowing through the streets with the fierceness of March. Through the fog a man was seen. A timid, uncertain ring brought a member of the household to the door, who found standing on the stoop an old woman. Her dress gave every evidence of self-respecting poverty. Her face was wrinkled, but as though kindly smiles and sympathies tears had been the tools used by Father Time to etch her life-history thereon.

"Use a lady named—live here?" The name was so mispronounced that it was asked again, and then hurriedly followed the reason of the call: "She did not send this letter to the right place, to be sure! This place is a coal-yard; shure, nobody lives at a coal-yard." The listener, seemingly astonished at the location of the coal-yard, was not known. "This letter," he continued, holding out a letter the listener recognized as having mailed the evening before, "the postman gave me to-day. Scoundrel! I received it, and then I shure, shure—and he knew this was my name, though I live at 53, and this is 122; and I tore it open, never looking, and when I read it, and it was to a milliner to come and make a hat, see I to myself, 'Shure, this is Friday, now, and Friday will be disappointed, she wantin' her hat for Sunday; and I'll jist go over and tell her as she didn't know how to address the letter, and then I thought me that I'd better, and an' a'peeling look came into the kindly face, and she said, 'Shure, shure, shure, if she didn't get yer letter.'"

"The listener stood dumb. A walk of over a mile in that raw, fierce wind, to benefit two people whom she had never seen!" "You are very kind—" began the listener.

"Sure, what else are we here for but kindness? 'Deed, it might make a great difference all round; for if the girl got this letter, she'd be out, now, and ye might not be so happy if ye did not have yer hat. I've seen a time I cared; it don't matter now I'm old. I've got nothin' to do now but the little things; ye streets is in gone, but me heart, thank God! That's where it ever was. D'ye think ye can find the girl, and give her the work? Shure, I'd be glad to hunt yer head; I've lived on that street thirty years. Could I find her for ye, d'ye think? Shure, I'd have time to make it to-morrow, Saturday, and then ye'd both be happy." And the kindly face was full of hope and interest.

And only the day before the world seemed so inhuman, so indifferent whether a brother stood firm or fell by the wayside! The kindly, shabby figure went down the street, never dreaming of the lesson she had taught.—Ch. Union.

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