

No toil wearies him, no opposition daunts him, no sufferings discourage him. Forgetting everything which he has already accomplished, he presses on with as much ardor and enthusiasm as if he had just entered the race, in order that he may reach the goal, the measure of work that Christ has laid out for him, and the reward of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. Is he in prison or in want? It matters little. He has learned to be content in every condition where God puts him. Does a martyr's death impend? That matters still less. For him to live means simply the privilege of continued work for Christ, and death means the glory of being with Christ. Does a life of Christian service, of conflict and suffering, pay? Is it wise to sacrifice material good for heavenly ideals? Paul's review of his life answers that question beyond controversy or doubt. The circumference of a life that is fixed on Christ may be storm-tossed, but at the centre there is peace, joy, light, and confidence. There is that which the world cannot give, and which he who has once known its blessedness would not exchange for a sceptre and an empire.

## FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

### International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON V.—PAUL'S VOYAGE AND SHIPWRECK.—OCT. 31.

(Acts xxvii. 13-26.)

**GOLDEN TEXT**—"Be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." Acts xxvii. 25.

**TIME AND PLACE**—A. D. 60. Autumn. On the Mediterranean Sea, between the islands of Crete and Melita, the modern Malta.

**INTRODUCTION**—Paul having appealed to *Cæsar*, Festus the governor made arrangements to send him, with other prisoners, to Rome, in charge of a centurion with a guard of Roman soldiers. The first stage of the journey was the voyage from *Caesarea* to the port of Myra in the province of Lycia, *Asia Minor*. The vessel touched at Sidon, where Paul was permitted to see friends. Myra was a port where the Alexandrian grain ships on their way to Rome were accustomed to touch. Upon one of these the Roman centurion, with his guard and prisoners, took passage. This vessel must have been a large one, as it carried two hundred and seventy-six persons, including passengers and crew, besides its freight. The voyage was made in the fall of the year, near the beginning of the dangerous season on the Mediterranean, and on reaching the harbor of Fair Havens, on the south side of the island of Crete, they waited for more favorable winds. At length there came a change of wind and fairer prospects, and it was decided to proceed on the voyage, though the centurion and the master of the ship were warned by Paul of the danger before them. Soon a violent storm arose, which is described in our lesson.

**VERSE BY VERSE**—V. 13. "South wind blew softly."—This indicated, ordinarily, fair weather. "Obtained their purpose."—They hoped with a fair wind to be able to reach the harbor of Phenice. "Loosing thence."—That is, weighing anchor and sailing from the harbor of Fair Havens. "Closely by Crete."—That is, they followed closely the shore of the island. Crete was a large island of the Mediterranean, lying south of Greece.

V. 14. "Arose against." Rather, beat down from it, that is, from Crete. "A tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon."—This was a periodical gale from the southeast, called in these days a *Levanter*.

V. 15. "Could not bear up into."—That is, could not face. "We let her drive."—They let the ship drift before the wind.

V. 16. "A certain island . . . Claude."—This is a small island not far from the shores of Crete on the south. "We had much work to come by the boat."—Revised Version, we were able with difficulty to secure the boat. That is, the small boat belonging to the ship.

V. 17. "Used helps, undergirding the ship."—Cables were passed beneath and around the hull of the ship to strengthen it. "The quicksands."—The *Syrta Major*, dangerous quicksands, near the African coast, toward which the wind was driving them. "Strike sail."—They lowered the sails.

V. 18. "Lightened the ship."—By throwing overboard a portion of the cargo.

V. 19. "With our own hands."—The passengers assisting the ship's company. "Tackling."—Rather, furniture.

V. 20. "Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared."—As they had no compass there was no way to determine their position.

V. 21. "Long abstinence."—They were in fear of death, and the means of providing food were gone. "Ye should have hearkened."—Paul had advised the centurion and the master of the vessel not to leave the Fair Havens.

V. 24. "Thou must be brought before Cæsar."—That is, he would complete his journey to Rome as a prisoner. "God hath

given thee."—Implying that this was in answer to his prayer.

V. 26. "A certain island."—The island of Melita, on whose shores the ship was wrecked, and all the ship's company cast ashore.

**THOUGHTS**—God's promise had been given that Paul should testify for Him in Rome. Neither contrary winds, nor tempests, nor the despair of those around him, could shake his courage, or his trust that these words should be verified. Cargo, tackling everything could go overboard, but somehow, some time, in the Lord's own good hour, he should see the promise fulfilled. Sun and stars are hidden, but one star still shines for Paul, the promise spoken by Christ's own lips: "Fear not, Paul, for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Chap. xxiii. 11.

Luke's description is evidently that of an eye-witness, exceedingly vivid and exact. Modern investigators have been enabled to verify every part of the narrative, locate points, and even the direction of the winds. Luke and Aristarchus were Paul's companions in his journey.

Paul's warning at Fair Havens, was not the warning of a seaman. His words imply that he spoke under divine guidance. He had also, much experience of "perils at sea." 1 Cor. xi. 26. The fact that he was permitted to advise at all, showed the consequence in which he was held by the ship's company. This is one example in which the advice of a servant of God was valuable, even in strictly temporal affairs.

A deceitful wind lured these sailors out of the safe harbor into desperate peril. The day was like the vanished summer, and the south wind blew as gently as if rocking a sleeping infant. They had "boasted themselves of the morrow," and they did not "know what a day might bring forth." The tempest came upon them as an absolute, startling surprise.

## CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—Paul's Voyage and Shipwreck.—Acts xxvii. 1-26.

Second Day—"They escaped all safe to land."—Acts xxvii. 27-44.

Third Day—"The winds and the sea obey him."—Matt. viii. 18-27.

Fourth Day—"Surely he shall deliver thee."—Ps. xli. 1-16.

Fifth Day—"He bringeth them out of their distresses."—Ps. cvii. 21-43.

Sixth Day—"Our God is in the heaven."—Ps. cxv. 1-18.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, Oct. 31.—TRUST CHRIST—FOR WHAT? 2. Tim. i. 1-12.

Put thou thy trust in God  
In duty's path go on:  
Fix on His Word thy steadfast eye,  
So shall thy work be done.

Martin Luther.

"All we want in Christ we shall find in Christ. If we want little we shall find little. If we want much we shall find much. And if in utter helplessness we cast our all on Christ, He will be to us the whole treasury of God."

### TRUST IN CHRIST.

In contemplating the work of our Redeemer, we are apt to think of Him as He was when upon earth, going about doing good, hearing the voice of men's necessities and his cries for help. We remember also that Christ endured cruel mockings and scourgings; and that after suffering death for us, He arose from the grave, and ascended to heaven.

But the great fact that we have still an interceding Saviour, is too much out of our thoughts. While we remember what He was, let us think of what He is; He liveth to make intercession for us, as though this was no to speak, the governing object of His present existence, the governing object of a mere man often becoming a power for good or for evil. When we can say, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after," that one thing pursued with all our endeavors is most generally obtained. Then what well grounded hopes must cluster around the concentrated intercessions of a divine Saviour;

He liveth to make intercession for us. While such a voice is lifted up for us, close to the ear of God, ought we not to cherish the most joyful hope?

Poor afflicted disciple? When it seems as though there was no eye to pity or arm to save; remember that thy Redeemer is praying for thee! The same voice that was lifted up on Calvary, saying, "Father, forgive them!" still prays for them. He sympathizes with all thy distresses, He means to save thee from all thy sins. The good work He has begun in thee He will not leave half done. He is praying for thee! Never again be discouraged. Thy Saviour is praying for thee. Trust in Christ for He is able to save to the uttermost all that call upon Him.