

24; 1 Thess. 5, 23, 24; 2 Thess. 3, 3; Deut. 31, 6; 2 Cor. 12, 9; Prov. 1, 33; 2 Chron. 16, 9; Psa. 57, 1; 59, 10; 91, 3-7.

3. It can scarcely be thought remarkable that Paul, a student of the Scriptures, and a devout believer in their divine authority and promises, was thus heroic in great personal affliction. Psa. 46, 1; Josh. 1, 5; Psa. 121, 3; Isa. 41, 10; 50, 7; Judges 7, 7; 1 Sam. 17, 45, 50; 2 Chron. 14, 11; Psa. 9, 9; Deut. 10, 4-7; 33, 27; Isa. 59, 19; 6, 10; Dan. 3, 25; 6, 22; Gen. 40, 35-25.

4. The Greeks in the exclusiveness of their pride of culture, the Romans of power, and the Jews of ecclesiasticism, called all other peoples "barbarians," ver. 2, Rom. 1, 14; 1 Cor. 14, 11; Exod. 12, 45; Lev. 22, 10; Eph. 2, 12; Deut. 15, 3; 23, 20; Obad. 11.

5. The Bible law of kindness has been written by the Creator upon the human heart, and remains there until erased by prolonged hereditary, social, ecclesiastical, political, or military cruelty. Ruth 2, 3; 1 Cor. 13, 4-7; Prov. 19, 22; 31, 26; Rom. 12, 10; Eph. 4, 32; 2 Pet. 1, 5-7.

6. God gave to the disciples of old power over one class of serpents, and to those of to-day power over another, and more virulent, class, ver. 3. Mark 16, 18; Luke 10, 19; 1 Cor. 10, 13; James 1, 2-4, 12; 1 Cor. 15, 56, 57; Rom. 6, 6, 18; 12, 2; Gal. 6, 14; James 1, 27.

7. Seven different kinds of serpents are mentioned in the Bible, five of which are identified as belonging to existing species. Gen. 49, 17; Psa. 58, 4; 91, 13; 140, 3; Isa. 14, 29; 59, 5; Job 20, 16; Isa. 30, 6.

8. The serpent we have reason to fear. Isa. 27, 1; Psa. 74, 14; Rev. 12, 9; 20, 2; Gen. 3, 4, 14; 2 Cor. 11, 3, 14; Job 1, 9-11; Eph. 6, 11-16; Rom. 16, 20.

9. It is God that heals the sick even when that are known as successful means are employed, ver. 8. Deut. 32, 39; Psa. 103, 3; Isa. 38, 5, 9, 17; Phil. 2, 27; Luke 5, 17; Exod. 23, 25; 2 Kings 20, 5.

(b) In Italy.

Italy and Rome in the 21st. ver. 14. Acts 18, 2; 27, 1; Heb. 13, 24; Acts 19, 21; Dan. 2, 33; 7; Luke 2, 1; Acts 16, 37; 25, 23-25; 25, 11, 16; 26, 32.

Lessons:

1. Not the actual trials experienced, but the possible ones escaped, should be the principal theme of our reflection and thanksgiving, ver. 1, 2.

2. Unexpectedly, at any moment, we may be stung by specific temptation, but we will experience no harm if, instantaneously, and in God's appointed way, we shake it off into the fire of Christian watchfulness, ver. 3, 5.

3. Mankind has an intuitive, and most impressive, sense of the exact and unfalling justice of the supernatural, ver. 4.

4. If the human mind has one characteristic more pronounced than another, it is variability and turning, ver. 6.

5. To insure from others good treatment, we need, not only personal merit, but, as well, meritorious associates, ver. 7.

6. God's way of working in this world: (a) By means, or "naturally." (b) Without means, or "supernaturally."

7. The best and sufficient evidence of the divineness of the Gospel are its blessed fruits, ver. 9.

8. We have, too, in this lesson an illustration of a precept of inspiration, that the laborer, being worthy of his hire, gets it, ver. 10.

9. God freely uses the agencies of secular progress to carry on the work of the Gospel, v. 11.

10. Great success in Christian work is impossible, unless the worker knows just how to "fetch a compass," or reach the port of his point for human good and Christ's glory by skillful indirection, ver. 13.

11. Numerous and prosperous friends are God's way of supporting his otherwise hopelessly discouraged workers, ver. 15.

12. It is not safe to judge a man's heart and record by present physical appearances or misfortunes, ver. 4.

April 26. Paul at Rome. Acts 28. 16-31.

At last, and in God's way, Paul reached the capital city of the Gentile world, his parish. God's promise and his own ambition were realized. The end of the "good fight" was at hand. Let the word illumine the narrative.

1. Rome as mentioned in the word, together with Paul's valuable, systematic, and argumentative epistle to her people, written during his three months' residence at Corinth A. D. 58. Rev. 17, 9; Rom. 1, 23-32; Dan. 2, 33, 40; 7, 19; Acts 18, 2; Rom. 16, 3; 1, 8; 16, 19; 15, 25; Acts 20, 2, 3, 16; Rom. 13, 23; 1 Cor. 1, 14; 2 Tim. 4, 20.

2. Paul's magnificent character, as revealed in his face, voice, and spirit, always seeming from his Roman captives most considerate treatment, his heart still yearned for the salvation of his misguided countrymen, ver. 16, 17. Acts 24, 23; 27, 3; 28, 31, 32; Rom. 1, 16; Acts 3, 26; Matt. 10, 5-7; Luke 24, 47; Acts 1, 8; Gen. 12, 3; 27, 29; Psa. 122, 6.

3. The "hope of Israel," the pronounced and pre-eminent peculiarity of that strange people, the easy conquest of their national individuality and exclusiveness, is the expectation of Messiah, ver. 20. Dan. 9, 25; Deut. 18, 15, 18; Isa. 52, 7; Nah. 1, 15; Zech. 6, 12, 13; Act. 1, 18-20; Num. 24, 17; Isa. 9, 7; Jer. 23, 5; Mic. 5, 2; Zech. 9, 9.

4. Now, Paul knew that Jesus of Nazareth answered exactly to the Messiah of prophetic promise; and he insisted, at any cost to himself, or to his followers, ver. 20. John 1, 41; 4, 25, 26; Eph. 2, 13-18; Heb. 1, 15; 12, 24; 1 Tim. 2, 6; Col. 2, 3; Heb. 3, 1, 2; 5, 4, 5; 7, 11, 16, 22; Rom. 14, 17; 1 Cor. 15, 50.

5. The ethical principles of the Christian religion are now universally conceded. Intellectually the conquering nations have surrendered to Christ. The human brain is saved. Phil. 2, 15; Prov. 28, 1; Matt. 5, 6; Gen. 6, 9; Luke 2, 25; Rom. 14, 17; 1 John 2, 29; 2 Cor. 6, 14; Rom. 6, 16, 18; Job 29, 17; Eph. 6, 14; 1 Tim. 1, 5.

6. The foregoing proposition being true, the persecution of Christians has ceased. Once Christians had this to expect. Mark 10, 30; Luke 21, 12; John 15, 20; 2 Tim. 3, 12; Gal. 4, 29; Matt. 26, 52; 5, 10; Heb. 11, 36; Acts 8, 1; 7, 52; 1 Pet. 4, 13.

7. The practical, governing principle of Christ, and the once despised, but now infinitely exalted, seed he founded, ver. 22. John 13, 34; 15, 12; 1 John 3, 23; Eph. 5, 2; 1 Cor. 13, 4-7; Matt. 22, 37-39; 1 Thess. 1, 3; Heb. 6, 10; 1 Cor. 13, 8, 13; Gal. 5, 6, 22; Col. 1, 8.

8. The Shakespearean is the true way of accounting for the unpopularity of the Christian sect at Rome in Paul's day, ver. 22. Prov. 6, 16-19; 12, 22; 13, 5; 17, 7; 14, 5, 25; 29, 12; Lev. 19, 11; 1 Kings 22, 32; Hos. 11, 12; Psa. 4, 2; 7, 14; 52, 3; 58, 3; 62, 4.

9. The present duty and opportunity of the preacher, would he secure the salvation of men, is to find Christ in the word, and in personal experience, or testimony, and so publish them to the people, ver. 23. Deut. 18, 15, 18; Psa. 110, 4, with Heb. 5, 6; Num. 24, 17; Jer. 31, 10; Zech. 13, 7; Gen. 20, 27; Psa. 1, 3; Isa. 61, 9, 10; Eccl. 1, 16; Isa. 35, 8; Heb. 12, 14; 2 Cor. 7, 1.

10. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is adapted to and intended for all humanity, Jews and Gentiles, ver. 28. Luke 24, 47; Acts 13, 46; Mark 13, 10; Gal. 2, 2; Matt. 11, 5; Col. 3, 23; Eph. 6, 15; Rom. 15, 29; 2 Tim. 1, 8; 1 Cor. 9, 12; 2 Thess. 1, 8, 9; Rom. 11, 28.

Lessons:

1. An opportunity to preach the Gospel is ever at hand, but the opportunity is not always easy to reach and master, ver. 16.

2. The high personal character of an innocent prisoner may be employed as his sufficient custodian, ver. 16.

3. The Pauline plan of preaching the Gospel is first to offer it to those of his own blood, ver. 17.

4. Our evangelized blood, husband, wife, child, sister, employed, and employer, should get our first evangelistic attention.

5. A minister's orthodoxy may be unjustly impugned, and he is then at liberty, and it is in perfect Christian taste, to publicly and boldly avow its purity, ver. 17.

6. We ought not to waste much time in fruitless evangelistic persuasion before appealing our case to the Caesar of the universe, ver. 19.

7. Israel's hope of Messiah, realized in the Lord Jesus Christ of the Gospel, is still the Christian minister's only theme, ver. 20.

8. Malicious persecutors of undoubted innocence, before a fair tribunal, are apt to be slow in presenting their case, ver. 21.