Sunday School Lesson

August 26. Lesson IX, Paul in a Roman Prison—Acts 16: 19-34. Golden Text—Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again, I say, Rejoice.—Phil. 4: 4.

ANALYSIS

I. THE SLAVE GIRL, 16-24.

II. THE JAILER, 25-34.

INTRODUCTION—Luke does not tell us anything about the founding of the church at Philippi, but we learn much from the letter which Paul wrote to that congregation at a later time. We learn that the Philippians were very devoted to Paul and ready to make all kinds of sacrifice for their faith. In Acts we are introduced to three interesting characters, one of whom was described in the last lesson. In the two instances given here, we see how the gospel came into conflict with forces that threatened to destroy the religion of Jesus.

I. THE SLAVE GIRL, 16-24.

In striking contrast to Lydia is the girl with a spirit of divination, through whom we obtain a glimpse into the pagan beliefs on the difficult subject of demonaical possession. We read quite often in the gospel that Jesus was brought into contact with these evil spirits and that he was able to drive them out. In this particular instance the girl appears to have the power of a ventriloquist, and was likely subject to outbursts of ecstasy, which the common people regarded as a mark of the divine presence in her. She greatly annoyed the apostles by addressing them as servants of the Most High God, who brought salvation. The belief in Saviour God was quite widespread, and it is probable that among some pagans the God of the Jews was addressed as the "Most High." Paul commands the spirit to come out of the girl and as a result her special gifts are lost and she is no longer of any money value to her masters.

V. 19. Paul's action brings him at once into conflict with the vested interests of the group of men, perhaps priests, who had made a small fortune out of the miseries of this maid. It is striking that the gospel received its first attack from heathendom from the side of commerce. Men are most sensitive in matters of loss and gain. Accordingly these men decide to wait for the day when the magistrates held their court, and they lay hold of Paul and Silas and bring them into the marketplace for trial.

V. 20. In this Roman colony thty followed the example of the capital, and had two magistrates who presided over their courts. Luke is very accurate in his use of the titles for the various officials.

The accusers, true to type, do not mention the real cause of offence. They say nothing about their own personal loss, nor do they mention the fact that a poor girl had been healed of a sore trouble. They accuse Paul and Silas of causing riot and disturbance and of introducing new customs that may break up society. The men further remind the judges that they are Romans, thus giving a hint that if they fail to act severely in this case they may themselves be charged with unfaithfulness to the interests of the Roman Empipe.

V. 22. The expected result took place. The fickle mob is roused to fury, and the magistrates condemn the prisoners. The words might suggest that these judges rent their own clothes, but people are usually more ready to tear other people's clothes than their own; and here the victims are Paul and Silas, who the being prepared for the punishment assigned to them.

V. 23. They are beaten by the lictors and sent to prison with a special order to the jailor to guard them as dangtrous political enemies.

V. 24. The jailer makes sure of this by thrusting them into the inner prison, which was likely a cell carved out of the rock, where he also secures them with chains on their feet.

II. THE JAILER, 25-34.

This introduces us to the third important personage in Luke's narrative, so different from either Lydia or the slave girl. He was probably a Roman soldier with a strict sense of his responsibility, conscious also that any neglect on his part will be severely punished.

V. 25.—The picture here presented is very vivid and interesting. Paul and Silas, though prisoners, cannot forget that they are suffering for their Master, and their joy breaks out into song, either the Psalms or some early Christian hymn, such as the historian Pliny speaks of in his letters in the early part of the next century. Their fellow prisoners are much astonished to hear such unusual sounds in a place where rough language and foul pests are the order.

V. 26. The earthquake follows, and opens up the doors so that the way of escape lies before them, but the fact is not given in order to show how prayer was answered, but rather to reveal the courage and kind feelings which Paul reveals in this hour when he could have so easily escaped.

V. 27. The jailer is awakened by the earthquake and hurries down from his private quarters. He sees the door open and rushes to the conclusion that the prisoners have escaped. Rather than face the consequencs eof this he preferred to take his own life. Suicide was no uncommon thing in the pagan world.

V. 28. How characteristic of Paul are these simple words, showing his sympathy with this poor man! He would not wish any one to be led to such a tragic death because of his own personal advantage.

V. 29. The jailer can scarcely believe what he sees and he is so overcome by the action of these strange prisoners that he falls down as if to worship.

V. 30. His question is most natural. The safety which he wanted was not merely protection from outward danger, but his mind had been awakened to the deeper needs of his soul. Had not these men been addressed as the heralds of salvation? v. 17. The events of the trial, the manner of the prisoners and most of all the scenes of this memorable night had showed him that there was something which he needed, salvation from evil and from death.

V. 31. Paul's reply has been the answer given to thousands of awakened sinners. It is only Jesus who can save from the guilt, fear and punishment of sin, and who can impart peace, and assurance of God's forgiving love.

V. 33. The necessary instruction is given, and through baptism they are given admission into the church. No doubt this man became one of the active leaders of the community.

The rest of the chapter describes the way in which Paul asserts his rights as a Roman citizen.

Yokes and Flares Are Smart This Season

Charmingly graceful is this modish frock having a flared skirt, tucks at each side of the bodice, and a wide crushed belt finished with a chic bow at the side. In View A the shaped yoke and lower part of the long sleeves are of contrasting material, while View B has the sleeves omitted. NO. 1621 is in sizes 36, 38, 40, 42 and 44 inches bust. View A, size 38, requires 2⅞ yards 39-inch, or 2 yards 54-inch material, and ¾ yard 39-inch contrasting; 2½ yards 39-inch, or 1⅜ yards 54-inch material for View B. Price 20 cents the pattern.

HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number and address your order to Wilson Pattern Service, 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto. Patterns sent by return mail.

Visitor: "And do your shorthand pupils do well?" Principal: "Wonderfully. Just think, 35 of the 50 I sent out last year have already married their employers."

"What became of that shocking bathing suit Maud was wearing?" "Maud didn't think it was shocking. In fact, she sent it back to the dressmaker to have the voltage increased."

Royal Interest in Fishing Industry

PRINCE OF WALES VISITS A FISHING TRAWLER

The heir to the throne during his visit to Grimsby as master of the merchant anvy and fishing fleet.

The Scapegoat

A Parable of Safed the Sage

I met a man whose business is the manufacture of furniture. And I inquired of him, saying, Is business good?

And he answered, It is rotten.

And I said, What is the matter?

And he replied, The people that should be buying furniture are buying a more expensive car, and paying for it on the installment plan.

And I met a dealer in pianos, and I inquired, saying, Is business good?

And he answered, It is rotten.

And I said, What is the matter?

And he said, The people who should be buying pianos are buying a more expensive car, and paying for it on the instalment plan.

And thus said other men of other crafts.

And one said, There hath been a survey, and it showeth that families will part with almost any cherished possession, their books, their oil paintings and their musical instruments, and that they will wear their old clothes and eat half rations rather than give up the car.

And I said, If this be true, it is rather sad. And I suspect that there is some truth in it. Neverthless, I am always interested and a trifle skeptical when I find such General Agreement on any one Scapegoat. For the Scapegoat in the history of Israel had the great value to the community of saving all men the trouble of thinking out their own sins and finding a better way, while the goat that was not let out unto the wilderness really was as bad a goat as the other, and there were just as many sins in the camp or city as there were before the scapegoat left on his vacation.

And he said, Hast thou any remedy for the present condition in business?

And I said, That is not exactly my trade. But I think there might be a deeper philosophy both of sin and of dull trade than the unanimous and contented appeal to the scapegoat. But how to discover that is up to thee and not me.

And he said, It is worth thinking about.

And I said, I have a profound distrust of all Cheap and Easy Solutions of any Problem. It is always worth while to listen to the stereotyped answer and the suggestion of the widely proclaimed panacea, and do a little sober thinking to find a deeper cause and a surer remedy.—The Christian Century.

Old friends are best. King James used to call for his old shoes; they were easiest for his feet.—John Selden.

Elsie: "Have you heard the story that's going around about Eunice?" Grace: "Heard it Why, honey, I started it."

Optimism Among Farmers

Winnipeg.—Reports from reliable sources in Western Canada indicate that conditions on the farms are comparatively satisfactory and there is a decided feeling of progressive optimism that characterizes sound development. Before the end of the month harvesting will be general in the Canadian West and a wheat crop of 500,000,000 bushels is the popular estimate. To garner this year's grain crop will require about 75,000 men. Many of the larger farms will, to some extent, overcome the labor problem by the fairly generous use of the harvester-combine, a machine which cuts and threshes the grain in one operation.

Meanwhile the annual trek of thousands of young men from Eastern Canada, the United States and this year from the British Isles to the harvest fields in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, has begun.

Not only are reports on the grain crops encouraging, but farmers everywhere state that all classes of live stock are in fine condition and prices are encouraging. Pastures and hay crops are good.

"Tom's mother says he's a great boon to her."

"Well, he's a baboon to me."

Vast Treasure House

Lindsay Post:—And Canadians have much to be proud of in this country of theirs. It is a vast treasure house which has not yet been even tapped, so rich are its resources. It is short of population, but that is a matter which is being remedied, though slowly, and perhaps all the better for that since it seems to indicate that a better quality of immigrant is being obtained. But outside of the mere shortage of people Canada can hold her head among the nations with pride and assurance that her claims will be recognized. She is one of the leading nations of the world and to-day wields a tremendous influence in the world. Within her boundaries she has all the requisites of a world power. Let all Canadians keep that proud fact in their minds and do their part towards making that dream come true.

Paris Fashions

Notable For Absence of Trimmings Except for Lavish Use of Furs on Coats—The New Millinery

That the return toward femininity continues unabated is evident in every field of Paris fashions. Thus the new French corsets which are coming to occupy a much more important place than they have in recent years, have practically done away with boning. It is their function to faintly emphasize the curves of the natural silhouette, and this they do by appearing in a one-piece garment and utilizing elastic absolutely devoid of whalebone. Satin and batiste are the principal materials.

Another notable theme which is stressed in these informal Paris openings is the comparative paucity of trimming. It appears that this winter's femininity will reach its goal principally through silhouette, material and ingenious fabric manipulations despite the accustomed rule of embroidery in all past phases of feminine fashions. This year's smart dresses will have considerably less trimming than had been anticipated.

Fall coats, however, will adopt fur with much gusto, it appears. The principal manifestation of the pelt trimming at the informal openings is to be found in the huge fur collars which have appeared on some of the smarter autumn wraps. It is interesting to note that many of the coats at the informal showings recognized an invisible censor which prevented them from utilizing a heavy fur trimming at the cuffs if it appeared on the collar, and vice versa. Indications are that this sensitive differentiation will continue throughout the major showings which are now taking place.

Velvet, felt and soleil will be the outstanding millinery fabrics for autumn and winter and a smart combination will be the liaison of panne and felt, the former being employed for the brim and the latter for the crown. The early autumn season will witness a vogue of the small hat developed on the lines of the beret. Royal blue, beige and Burgundy red have been the outstanding colors at the informal openings, and there has also been noted a definite tendency to combine several clashing colors in a single hat. Thus blue and green, as well as red and beige, have mingled smartly in some of the new fall models. Among the effective trimmings is a hand-painted feather pad which has been offered by such notables as Agnes, Reboux and Patou. This pad usually covers a complete side of the chapeau. Aigrettes, jet trimmings and narrow velvet bows also distinguish the early autumn millinery models.

The tendency to separate sports and formal dress has been continued to a point where sports attire has become quite *outre* for anything but sports affairs. There are no longer afternoon *dansants* attended in a sports frock, and these first informal showings have very definitely raised the barriers between the various types of costume. This is a rather happy gesture and it completely discourages the occasional sporadic attempts to revive that informal careless chic which existed several years back.

In line with this separatist movement the really smart sports costume—except for the active participant—has been driven to copy some of the elaborations which are appearing in formal daytime styles. Prominent among these is the normal waistline, which looks particularly attractive in sports attire for the young and lissome.

Should School Teachers Have Children?

W. L. A. in the Leeds Mercury: Critics say, or they imply, that motherhood unfits a woman for the care of other people's children. They resent that women teachers should be able to enjoy, as men do, both a career and marriage. These critics see nothing to deplore if the coming of a baby means the wrecking of a talented woman's professional life. They do not stay to consider whether if the woman can get a good income this may not be better for the child in the end than that she should give him her undivided attention. The French, unlike ourselves, believe in encouraging fertility among the solid intellectual elements of society. They do not penalize the married woman teacher. Are we not coming to a point at which we may benefit by the example of France? I say it is plain nonsense to argue that motherhood unfits a woman to have charge of other people's children in school hours. It is equally plain nonsense to say that a baby is being cheated of his due if his mother delegates to a good nurse the supervision of his life hour by hour, for this implies that all wealthy people and most middle-class people cheat their children—which is absurd.

Man's Interest in Religion

Those sophisticated moderns who disdainfully assure us that the world has lost interest in creeds and that only old-fashioned people retain an interest in religion, must have difficulty in explaining the English prayer book controversy. Here is a dispute over the doctrines of a religion which, comparatively speaking, is not large in numbers. Yet because it goes to the roots of religious traditions and historic aiths, it is sufficient to stir up a discussion that is read and followed with interest throughout the English-speaking world. The moral is that, taken all in all, men are as interested to-day as ever in their history in theological beliefs and creeds. The march in science, the so-called growth of unbelief, the gigantic and complex organiation of industry, accompanied as it is by the pursuit of wealth and pleasure—these have not dulled man's interest in God and the supernatural. Well, perhaps, for civilization and the world that it is so.—Ottawa Journal.

New Materials of Artificial Silk

All-artificial silks are being used for afternoon and evening wear extensively. Several new fabrics have been produced to meet this demand. The loveliest one so far is an artificial silk-satin with an artificial silk face and back, the latter dyed a slightly darker tone than the face of the material.

Several innovations have been made in the production of the artificial silk voile featured two seasons ago, but not extensively popular. Although even at that time the patterns and coloring were beautiful and the sheerness almost equal to that of chiffon, the threads raveled and pulled, not only during the making but afterward at the slightest friction. It was difficult to cut because of this slippery quality of the thread, and it was extremely hard to launder. These faults, however, have been overcome, not only by the continental houses where the artificial voiles were first made, but by British houses in Manchester. The threads do not slip, the material is made in designs more beautiful than before and are well adapted to this season's feminine fashions.

There is need, as one department store buyer recently said, to educate the public, regarding the laundering qualities of this material and also concerning the proper method of washing it. For retaining the sheen there is said to be a chemical substance which should be added to the last rinsing water, and which will leave the articles undamaged. This is a new preparation, and if the claim of the manufacturer is established, it will be an added factor in determining the durability of the material.

I cannot see that lovely woman is much of an improvement over blundering man.—Elizabeth Marbury.

Tottenham magistrate to a woman complainant: "What do you know against this man?" The Woman: "Only that he is my husband."

A curate, who was also a keen naturalist, went to see a sick woman in his parish. She had been expecting him for some days, and said with a sigh: "Had I been a rare toadstool, you would have come to see me long, long ago."

They Get a Lot of Good Out of Solving Cross Word Puzzles.

MUTT AND JEFF—Bud Fisher