

THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

PAUL UNDER GUARD IN ROME

Golden Text—We know that all things work together for good to them that love God...

Approach to the Lesson

When the work of the Gospel was at its height in Ephesus, the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified in the salvation of great numbers...

surely this missionary strategist could envision the Roman roads becoming the highways of the Gospel to the ends of the earth...

But little did he realize at that juncture by what means and in what condition he would reach Rome. He did not know that he would go there as a prisoner...

Verse by Verse

Acts 28:14.—'So we went toward Rome.' Mark that word 'so.' It covers all the incidents since Paul's arrest...

Paul was suffered to dwell by himself.' The written report of Festus (see 25:24-27) and the report of the centurion regarding the voyage doubtless secured for Paul this special treatment.

Verse 17.—'I have committed nothing against the people... yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem.' Paul knew that the Christian faith was not contrary to the Jewish faith...

Verse 18.—'They... would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.' (See 26:31, 32.) He had been examined by three judges—Felix, Festus and Agrippa...

Verse 19.—'But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar.' This was his privilege as a Roman citizen.

Verse 20.—'For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.' The hope of Israel was the Messiah. They did not know Him when He came...

Verse 21.—'We neither received letters... neither any of the brethren... spake any harm of thee.' This is really remarkable, considering the intense bitterness which the Jews entertained toward him.

Verse 22.—'But we desire to hear... everywhere it is spoken against.' That seemed like open-mindedness considering the widespread prejudice against the Christian faith...

Verse 23.—'He expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading.' In this verse notice the message—the Kingdom of God; the method—expounding, testifying, persuading...

Verse 24.—'And some believed... and some believed not.' Once again, the great

separation. Jesus is indeed a divider of men. See Matthew 10:34, 35.

Verse 30.—'And Paul dwelt two whole years... and received all that came.' Here was one situation in which the people had come to the witness for the witness could not go to the people. Nevertheless all Rome was filled with the message. See Philip. 1:12-18; 4:22.

Verse 31.—'Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching... the Lord Jesus Christ... no man forbidding him.' Once again see the Kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ put together. Acts ends with Paul a prisoner, chained and guarded, but it ends with the word, 'unhindered.' A confined, bound body, but a free, unhindered ministry...

The Heart of the Lesson

I have just been reading the report of an evangelistic campaign in an ancient city of England. It makes thrilling reading. The careful preparation, the saturation advertising, the thorough organization, the imposing array of workers, the enthusiastic opening of the meetings by the Lord Mayor, the remarkable co-operation of the public press—all are marked features. It is something for which to be very thankful.

The Apostle Paul's assault on Rome was very different. Not only was all that goes into the preparation of a modern campaign lacking, but the evangelist himself entered Rome as a prisoner. Instead of an enthusiastic parade, see that sorry little band of chained men guarded by soldiers, with a few brave souls who have hazarded the ridicule of the crowds to go out some miles to accompany one of the prisoners into the city. Instead of a great public hall for the well-announced meetings, or even the use of a synagogue or a school, this evangelist must content himself in the capital city of the empire, with a small rented house, thankful for the liberty to have any who would come to see him. Instead of an address of welcome, he has the constant watchfulness of a Roman soldier—and a chain.

It did not seem a very propitious opening for the 'Christ for Rome' campaign. But listen to the evangelist's report: 'The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.' He is reporting great success, great fruitfulness, 'great blessing.' Indeed, he is declaring that his bondage has turned out to be a real stroke of promotion for the work. If he had been free, the preaching would have been left largely to him.

DICKSON HILL

(Thursday, April 30) On Monday evening Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Risebrough opened their spacious home to people of the community who gathered to honour Mr. and Mrs. Smith, nee Miss Gwen Finlay. A short but interesting program, proceeded the presentation of a variety of lovely gifts. In their words of thanks, Mrs. Smith voiced her appreciation of the school children, their parents, and the section, where she served for three years. Mr. Smith expressed pleasure in meeting the people on the happy occasion. Best wishes for a happy and prosperous life are extended by all the friends. A very edifying Missionary Convention was brought to a successful close on Sunday evening when Rev. R. Adams of Elkhardt, Ind. addressed a full house on Sunday evening. As a missionary in China and Japan, and a traveller in other countries, he gave a very informative message. Other convention speakers included Mrs. Brubaker, Miss Yeo, Mr. & Mrs. Hunking, on furlough from Nigeria & Miss Landis, of India. Welcome to Mr. & Mrs. Ward Hallman and Janet who have returned from Florida where they spent the winter.

PEACHES

(Thursday, April 30) Our local hockey squad, the Peaches A.C.'s have now completed their schedule in the King Clancy series and are now in full swing in the play-offs, having won their first game to the score of 2-1 Saturday evening.

A large miscellaneous show was held Monday evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Risebrough in the honor of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Smith being the former Miss Gwen Finlay. Many fine gifts were received by the newly wed couple, after which lunch was served.

On Thursday afternoon the W.M.S. ladies held a quilting bee at the home of Mrs. Joseph Kirk. The needlework completed, the hostess served her guests a dainty afternoon tea.

Congratulations to Mr. Lon Elizard who celebrated his birthday Sunday. For the celebration Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Blizard and family motored out from Toronto to join in the festivities. Mrs. Henry Miller spent a day in Toronto visiting her daughter Mrs. Joe Deavitt.

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