

The Sunday-School.

SECOND QUARTER, LESSON I.—April 5.

PAUL'S FAREWELL TO EPHEBUS.

Acts 20: 28-38.

Study Verses 17-38. Read Verses 1-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.—Acts 20: 35.

LEARN BY HEART.—Vs. 24, 32, 35.

HISTORICAL SETTING. Time.—Early in A.D. 57. A few months after he closed his work at Ephesus. Place.—Miletus, a celebrated city of Asia Minor, thirty miles south of Ephesus, at the mouth of the river Meander. It was the port where the vessel in which Paul sailed stopped a few days. Place in History.—Paul is returning from his third and last missionary journey. On his way to Jerusalem.

PAUL REVISITS THE CHURCHES IN MACEDONIA AND GREECE.—Vs. 1-3. Paul determined to revisit the churches he had founded in Europe.

1. From Rom. 15: 19 it would appear that his work in Macedonia continued some time, and that he extended the gospel into neighboring regions.

2. He spent three months in Greece, chiefly in Corinth, where he had much to do in caring for all the churches, correcting wrong conduct.

3. A collection was taken up in the various churches on this tour for Paul to carry to the poor disciples at Jerusalem.

4. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written during this tour in Macedonia, late in A.D. 57.

5. The Epistle to the Galatians was written about this time from Corinth.

6. The Epistle to the Romans was also written at Corinth during this visit.

7. Paul was giving his last farewells to the churches he loved. The address to the Ephesian elders is a sample of these farewell visits.

THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY TOWARD JERUSALEM.—Vs. 4-16. After remaining in Corinth three months Paul decided to start on his journey to Jerusalem. For two reasons: (1) The antagonism of the Jews was again aroused against him as during his previous visit (Acts 18: 12). (2) It was now April and he was anxious to reach Jerusalem by the last of May, when the feast of Pentecost occurred the best time for harmonizing the two great divisions of the church, the Jewish and the Gentile elements. Paul's first plan was to sail directly from Corinth to Palestine, but the Jews plotted a secret attack upon him, and to avoid this he suddenly changed his plan and went northward by land to Philippi, where he took a vessel across the Aegean to Troas, the nearest city in Asia Minor.

Five leading Christians went with Paul from Corinth; Luke joined him at Philippi, and two more from the province of Asia.

PAUL'S COUNSEL TO THE EPHESIAN CHURCH.—A Review of the Past.—Vs. 17-31. At Miletus the vessel was detained for a brief interval. He sent for the elders of the Ephesians to come to him at Miletus, and made to them

one of the most touching appeals in literature.

COUNSELS TO THE CHURCH.—Vs. 28-35. Watch, Take Heed.—Vs. 28-31. Take heed therefore yourselves. That you be right and true, a good example, filled with the Spirit, a fit and willing instrument for his work. And to all his flock. The church, the disciples. Note the word *all*, to the poorest, the weakest, the erring, the neglected, the disagreeable; and especially to the lambs of the flock. Over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you. Because he directed the church to choose you; he endowed you with the needful talents; he gave you the needful spiritual grace. Overseers, one charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly. Usually translated "bishop." To see that you feed the church, to do all that is necessary in caring for a flock. The flock is to be fed with the word of God, guarded from false teachers and errors of doctrines, to be led into the highest Christian experience, and into fields of usefulness. Which he hath purchased with his own blood. At the cost of his life, in Christ. Nothing can so show the intensity of God's love for his people as does this fact of the infinite cost to him of their redemption. For I know, from observation and experience. After my departing, from Ephesus. Shall grievous wolves. The enemies of the flock. They were those who taught false doctrines, evil principles, and bad morals. Not sparing the flock. Seeking their own selfish interests. Also of your own selves. The greatest dangers often arise from those within the church. Speaking perverse things. Truths distorted from their true meaning. Truth enough to make some believe them, and error enough to injure or ruin those who do believe. Therefore watch. The word expresses a state of wakefulness and watching, that overlooks no duty, indulges no indolence. Remember. Let my life among you for three years be your example and inspiration. By the space of three years. In round numbers. Warn. . . . night and day with tears. The approving words to the angel of the church at Ephesus (Rev. 2: 1-7) show that Paul did not warn in vain.

HOPE.—And now . . . I commend you to the word of his grace. The precious truths and promises of God. Able to build you up. The Christian is to be built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. Made holy. Without holiness no man can see God.

BE INDUSTRIOUS.—I have coveted, etc. I have sought you and not yours. And I have shown it as ye yourselves know, by supporting myself by the labor of my hands at tent-making, as at Corinth (Acts 18: 3).

BE HELPFUL TO OTHERS.—I have shewed you all things. In all ways, by teaching and by example. Ye ought to support the weak. That is, those unable to labor for their own support. And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus. The words are not in our Gospels. From what source Paul obtained these words is unknown, but his calling on the elders to remember them shows

that they were familiar words. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

THE FAREWELL SCENE.—Vs. 36-38. He kneeled down. The most appropriate attitude for praying. They all wept sore. Tears are often a relief in sorrow. And kissed him, they showed kisses upon him. That they should see his face no more.



OLD BIBLE NAMES.

The Gutenberg Bible is the earliest book printed from moveable metal type. It is in the Latin language, and was printed by Gutenberg at Mentz in 1450.

The Bug Bible is so called from its rendering of Ps. 91: 5: "Afraid of bugs by night." It was issued in 1551.

The Breeches Bible gets its queer name from its rendering of Gen. 3: 7: "Making themselves breeches out of fig leaves."

The Place-Maker's Bible translates Matt. 5: 9 as follows: "Blessed are the place-makers." It was printed in 1562.

The Treacle Bible translates Jer. 8: 22 thus: "Is there no treacle (instead of balm) in Gilead?" It was issued in 1568.

The Rosin Bible translates the same chapter and verse in Jeremiah: "Is there no rosin in Gilead?" Issued in 1609.

The He and She Bible reads Ruth 3: 15, thus: "She went into the city." The other has it: "He went into the city."

The Thumb Bible gets its name from its size, being one inch square and an half an inch thick. It was issued in 1670.

The Vinegar Bible is so named because in the twentieth chapter of Luke the parable of the vineyard is printed "The Parable of the Vinegar." Issued in 1717.

The Printers' Bible is so called because in Ps. 119 the word "printer" was used instead of the word "prince."

The Murderers' Bible translates in Jude, verse 16, the word "murderers" instead of "murmurers." It was issued in 1801.

The Caxton Memorial Bible was wholly printed and bound in twelve hours, but only one hundred copies were finished. This was done in 1877.—Ex.



TO READ THE BIBLE IN A YEAR.

The following schedule for reading the Bible in one year has been recently furnished:

January—Read Genesis and Exodus. February—To the tenth of Deuteronomy.

March—To the end of First Samuel.

April—To the end of Second Samuel.

May—To the end of Nehemiah.

June—To the one hundredth Psalm.

July—To the end of Isaiah.

August—To the end of the Old Testament.

October—To the end of Luke.

November—To the end of Corinthians.

December—To the end of the New Testament.

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