

The Book of Acts



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The whole of the book of Acts should receive careful study. It is full of precious instruction; it records experiences in evangelistic work, the teachings of which we need in our work today. This is wonderful history; it deals with the highest education, which the students in our schools are to receive. {Lt100-1909}

The book of Acts is a wonderful revelation of God. In it are recorded the acts performed by the apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Just before His ascension Christ said to the disciples, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." {Ms22-1900}

March 30, 2019

**THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.—
ACTS 1: 1-12
(MEMORY VERSES, 8-11)**

GOLDEN TEXT.—"When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." Acts 1:9

1. To whom was the book of the Acts of the Apostles addressed? Acts 1: 1

2. What previous treatise was addressed to Theophilus? Luke I:3, 4.

3. Then who was the writer of the book of Acts ?

4. What does Luke say his former treatise contained?

Acts 1: **1, 2.**

5. What ground does this allow for the supposition that there were some things that Jesus communicated to his disciples, which are not recorded?

NOTE.—The writer of the book of Acts says that in his previous treatise he recorded all that Jesus began to do and teach, up to the very day that he ascended. This does not mean that he recorded every word and act that Jesus said and did, for that would have been impossible.

See John 21:25. We have not every thing that Jesus said in regard to any doctrine, but we have every doctrine that he taught. Of course the assumption that Jesus taught certain things that are now held, which are not contained in the New Testament, is folly. For if a thing is not recorded, nobody can know anything about it; but this text expressly tells us that no truth that Jesus gave utterance to has been omitted by the evangelists.

As Paul afterwards said of himself (Acts 20: 20), they kept back nothing that was profitable.

6. How long was Jesus with his disciples after his resurrection? Acts 1:3 .

7. What did he do in this time?—Ib.

8. While they were together, what command did he give them? Verse 4.

9. To what promise did he refer? Verse 5.

10. What record have we of their having had this promise? John 14: 16, 26; 15:26.

11. At the close of the forty days, when the disciples met with Jesus, what did they ask '...? Acts 1:6.

12. To what was this question equivalent?

NOTE.—In the beginning God created man to have "dominion over the fish 'of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 8:6-8. The whole earth, therefore, was his kingdom, but when man fell he lost his dominion, so that, as the apostle says, " Now we see not yet all things put under him." Heb. 2:8. This inheritance was promised to Abraham and his seed (Rom. 4:13), and also to David, whose throne God said should endure forever.

The one through whom David's throne is to be perpetuated is Christ (see Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2: 29, 30), whose possession is to be the " uttermost parts of the earth." Ps. 2: 7,8. Because of the wickedness of David's successors, the kingdom (that is, the whole earth) was given to Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 27: 2-7), and after him to other people, no more to be controlled by David's line until the coming of Christ, to whom it rightly belongs.

See Eze. 21: 25-27. The control of the earth by heathen kings, and the taking of it by the Lord Jesus Christ, are described in Dan. 2:37-44. This kingdom is received from the Father by Christ while in heaven, for he likened himself to a nobleman going into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return after having received the kingdom. Luke 19: 12-15. So when he comes the second time he comes in his kingdom. Matt. 25: 31;

2 Tim 4:1. He subdues it by destroying the wicked from out of it (Ps. 2: 9; Matt. 13: 41, 42), and then the righteous inherit the dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, and delight themselves forever in the abundance of peace (Dan. 7. 27; Ps. 37: 9-11; Matt. 13:43). So when the disciples asked if Christ would at that time restore the kingdom of Israel, they were asking if that was the time when they should be taken to reign with him in glory. From the prophets they knew that glory was to follow the suffering of Christ (t Peter I: t), but how long after the suffering before the glory would follow, even the prophets themselves did not know. That time is in God's own power, and he has not revealed it to any. What he says to all is, Watch.

13. What reply did Jesus make? Acts 1: 7.
14. What did he say they would receive when the Holy Spirit came upon them? Verse 8.
15. In this strength what were they to do?—lb.
16. When did this conversation take place? Luke 24:49, 50.
17. What did Jesus do when they reached Bethany? Verse 50.
18. When he was blessing them, what took place? Verse 51; Acts 1:9.
19. While the disciples were looking toward heaven as Jesus went up, who stood by them? Verse 10.
20. What did these angels say to them? Verse 11
21. Since a cloud received Jesus when he ascended, and he is to come again as he went, how must he come? Matt. 24:30.
22. Since the cloud that received Jesus, diminishing in size as it receded, was the last thing seen by the disciples, what must be the "sign of the Son of Man in heaven ? "
23. Did Jesus ascend secretly or openly? Acts 1:9.

24. Then, since he is to come "in like manner" as he ascended, how must it be when he comes? Rev. 1: 7.
25. Did the angels leave it doubtful as to who would return ? Acts 1 :11
26. What testimony is borne by the apostle Paul? 1 Thess. 4:16. •
27. What assurance comforted the patriarch Job? Job 19:25-27, margin.
28. When the disciples had received the assurance of Christ's return, what did they do? Acts 1: 12.
29. With what feelings did they return ? Luke 24:52.
- 30 How will those who love the Lord always regard his coming? Rom. 5: 2; Titus 2: 13.

April 6, 2019

**LESSON TWO APRIL 6, 2019.
THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

ACTS 2: 1-21.

(MEMORY VERSES 1-4.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—" When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." John 16:43.

1. To what place did the disciples return after the ascension of Christ? Acts 1:12,13

2. What command had Jesus given them? Verse 4.

3. How many of them were gathered together? Verse 15.

4. At what time was the promise fulfilled? Acts 2: 1.

5. How long had they been praying together?
NOTE.—Pentecost was the fiftieth day from the day that Jesus lay in the grave. As he was seen after his resurrection for forty days, the disciples must have been praying together about ten days.

6. In what way did the Spirit come? Verses 2, 3.

NOTE.—Note that the text does not say that there came a wind from heaven, but that there came a sound as of a rushing, mighty wind. Notice also that it is not stated that fire sat upon the disciples. There was no fire, but the appearance of fire,—cloven tongues, "like as of fire."

Since it was only *like fire*, it could not have been fire.

This, therefore, has no connection with the baptism of fire spoken of by John the Baptist. Matt. 3: 11.

7. What special gift did it impart? Verse 4.

8. What purpose do tongues serve? I Cor. 14: 22.

9. Who were in Jerusalem at that time? Acts 2:5, 9-11.

10. How were the multitudes affected when the sound drew them to the place where the disciples were, and they heard the uneducated

disciples speaking in every language? Verses 6-8.

11. What did each man hear in his own tongue? Verse 11

12. What question did they ask? Verse 12.

13. What did the ungodly ones say? Verse 13.

14. With what simple statement did Peter repel the mocking charge? Verses 14, 15; compare 1Thess. 5: 7.

15. Of what prophecy did he say that this wonderful manifestation was a fulfillment? Acts 2: 16.

16. Give the substance of the prophecy. Verses 17-21.

17. For what purpose are the gifts of the Spirit bestowed? Eph. 4: 11-13; 1 Cor. 12: 7.

18. How long is the gospel to be preached? Matt. 24: 14.

19. Will it meet with greater opposition, or less, as the end approaches? 2 Thess. 2: 9, 10; 2 Tim. 3:13.

20. Then since the Spirit was needed in such power for the success of the gospel eighteen hundred years ago, how must it be now?

21. When Jesus promised the Spirit, how long did he say it should remain in the church? John 14: 16.

NOTE. Jesus told the disciples that they should receive power after the Holy Ghost came upon them, and that by this power they should be witnesses for him unto the uttermost parts of the earth. The commission to preach the gospel to every creature has not yet expired, for the gospel is to be preached as a witness until the end comes. Matt. 24:

14. Therefore the Spirit of power, with its gifts, must remain until the end. In every age wherever the gospel has gone with power, some of the gifts of the Spirit have been manifested. This must of necessity be more marked as the end approaches. Satan will work " with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them

that perish." 2 Thess. 2: 9, 10. But he will not have the field all to himself; for God, by his Spirit, will work with all power and signs and wonders of truth in them that

believe. On the day of Pentecost only one gift of the Spirit was manifested; consequently that did not exhaust

Joel's prophecy. Others have been exhibited at different times since, and as the end draws near all the gifts will be manifested at once. All the believers will not have all the gifts, but everyone may have at least the gift of helping or ministering.

22. How many members of the church of Christ are to receive the Spirit? 1 Cor. 12:7-13.

23. Will all receive the same gifts? Verses 11:28-30.

24. Which one of these last-mentioned gifts may everyone possess? **See note under question 22.**

LESSON 3.-APRIL 13, 2019
THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH.—
ACTS 2:37-47.

(MEMORY VERSES, 12-47.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—" The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:47.

INTRODUCTION

The title of this lesson is a misnomer.

The Christian church antedated Pentecost by many hundred years. In Acts 7:37, 38 we read of the "church in the wilderness " in connection with Moses. And in Heb.

11 : 24-26 we read that when Moses cast in his lot with the people of God, suffering affliction with them, he was sharing the reproach of Christ. Thus it is clear that believers in the days of Moses constituted the Christian church just as surely as in Peter's time, or to-day.

It was several years after this Pentecost before the disciples were *called* Christians; but whatever is described by the term had existed for hundreds and even thousands of years. Ever since there have been believers in God and in his power to save through Christ, there has been a Christian church.

1 Give a brief synopsis of Peter's sermon on Pentecost.

NOTE.-The student who does not study carefully and thoughtfully Acts 2:22-36 will lose very much of the force of this lesson. Let us briefly summarize Peter's discourse.

As seen in last week's lesson, the apostle cited Joel's prophecy as an explanation of what was taking place. Next he referred to the facts of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Acts 2: 22-24. These he mentioned as well-known events. Then in verses 25-28 he quotes the words of David in Ps. 16:8-11. He shows (verse 29) that this would not apply to David, because he was dead, and his sepulcher was with them till that day.

There was no one to whom the words could apply except to Jesus, who was raised from the grave before he saw corruption. Therefore, David was speaking prophetically of the resurrection of Christ. Verses 30-32. In harmony with the words of the Psalmist, Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God, and it was from him that this manifestation of the Spirit had come. Verse 33. Still further it is shown that Christ must be the one referred to, because he had not ascended into the heavens, but in Ps. 16: 8-11 he had said, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Therefore the irresistible conclusion which produced such sharp conviction was, "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

2. What was its effect upon the multitude?
Acts 2: 37.

3. What question was asked?—lb

4. What reply did Peter make? Verse 38.

5. What comforting assurance did he give them? Verse 39.

6. How many does the Lord call? Rev. 22:17; Isa. 55: I.

7. Is the whole of Peter's exhortation recorded? Acts 2: 40.

8. How was his exhortation received? Verse 41.

9. How many were added to the church as the result?—lb

10. In what did they continue? Verse 42.

How did such power in the church affect the people? Verse 43.

12. How did the believers hold their property? Verse 44.

13. Does this indicate an equal dividing of property among all the believers? Verse 45.

NOTE."And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Several reasons might be given to show that this was not a dividing up of the property, in the

church, so that each member has an equal share, according to the modern communistic idea. It is sufficient, however, to note that believers were being added every day, and such a plan would have involved an inventory and a redistribution every day, which would have been an impossibility. They simply parted with their possessions " as every man had need." It was the natural outgrowth of the Spirit of Christ in the church, making all feel that they were members of the same body. It was the pure unselfishness of Christ. The trouble with modern " anti-poverty " societies is that they try to do arbitrarily and by resolution that which can be accomplished purely by the Spirit of God. They try to produce results without the cause. The results at which they aim are often good, but they cannot be produced in unregenerate, selfish hearts, and no pledge or compact can take selfishness out of the heart.

14. What description is given of the daily conduct of the believers. Verse 46.

NOTE. Many questions will doubtless be asked in regard to the breaking of bread,— was it the Lord's Supper? or was it only a common meal? Such questions are useless.

All we have is the simple statement that they broke bread from house to house. A child who is old enough to read can tell as much about it as a Doctor of Divinity can; he can reply in the words of Scripture. Innumerable evils have arisen and still arise from *guessing* at the meaning of texts of Scripture, and raising an arbitrary opinion.

15. How were they regarded by the people? Verse 47.

16. How often were additions made to their number? See golden text.

LESSON 4.—APRIL 20, 2019
THE LAME MAN HEALED.

ACTS 3: 1-16

(MEMORY VERSES, 6-8.)

GULDEN TEXT—"And His Came through faith in His name bath made this man strong." Acts 3:16.

I. As Peter and John went up to the temple one afternoon at the hour of prayer, whom did they see? Acts 3:1,2.

2. How long had the man been unable to walk? Verse 2; Acts 4: 22.

3. What did he ask of the apostles? Acts 3:3.

4. What did Peter reply? Verse 4.

5. From this what did the lame man expect? Verse 5.

6. What did Peter then say? Verse 6.

7. What was the immediate result?

Verses 7, 8.

8. Who saw it? and how were they affected? Verses 9-11.

9. When Peter saw their astonishment, what did he say? Verse 12.

to. To whom did he at once direct their minds? Verse 13.

1. To what particular thing in connection with Christ did he refer? Verses 14, 15.

12. Was it for the purpose of taunting them that Peter referred to the crucifixion of Christ? Verse 17.

13. What fact did he want especially to impress on their minds? Verse 15, last part.

14. What power did he then say had made the lame man whole? Verse 16.

15. Because of the humility of Jesus, what has he received? Phil. 2:9, 10.

16. What was it that gave the lame man the perfect soundness?' Acts 3:16, last part.

17. Is there anything else that comes by the faith of Jesus Christ? Rom 3:22; Phil. 3:9.

18. Did the min who received strength by faith have actual power, or only imaginary power? Acts 3:8, 16.

19. Then what kind of righteousness must it be that comes from the same faith? Rom. 3:21, last part.

20. How does this righteousness compare with that which a man gets by his own efforts? Phil. 3: 6-9.

NOTE.—In this lesson we have a notable example of the working of faith. Similar ones may be found in Matt. 9: 2-8; 15:21-28; Luke 8:43-48; 18:35-43. Note the statement concerning these cases, that it was faith that healed them. In each case it was utterly impossible for the afflicted one to do anything for his own recovery. The only way they could even show their good will to be better was to submit to the power that could make them better. The same faith that restored these afflicted ones to health will make men righteous; and nothing else will.

What the Lord requires of us is to walk humbly with God. Micah 6:8. But we are "without strength " (Rom. 5: 8) and cannot walk. So God in his mercy lifts us up out of the pit, and sets our feet upon the Rock, and establishes our goings. Ps. 40:1-3. He makes us to walk in the way of his commandments; and the righteous acts done by faith are as real as were the steps taken by the man in the temple.

LESSON 5—APRIL 27, 2019
PETER AND JOHN BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

ACTS 4: 1-22.

(MEMORY VERSES, 8-11.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—" There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4: 12.

1. What did Peter say in closing his sermon to the people who had gathered around the lame man that was healed? Acts 3: 25, 26.
2. While the apostles were speaking, who came upon them? Acts 4: 1
3. What had aroused the priests and Sadducees? Verse 2.
4. What did they do with Peter and John? Verse 3.
5. Nevertheless, what was the effect of the discourse? Verse 4.
6. When the apostles were brought before the council the next day, what question was asked them? Verses 5-7.
7. Whom did Peter have to conduct his case before the council? Verse 8.

NOTE.-It is worth while to note carefully the " defense which the apostle made when brought before the council. In this, as in each succeeding instance, they simply preached the gospel. They did not act at all as if they were on trial, or as though their lives were in the least danger. One cannot detect the slightest difference between Peter's preaching before the council and his preaching on Pentecost. They had no thought of their own safety. Self did not appear at all. Whenever they were arraigned, they recognized that as an opportunity to preach the gospel to men who would probably never hear it in any other way. There are sincere, candid men in every walk of life. Even in courts where bitter prejudice seems to exist against the truth, there are misguided men who are susceptible to its influence when it is brought before them. But their business absorbs all their time;

and from what they have heard about the gospel, they do not think it worth while to go where it is regularly preached. Hence it must be carried to them. Therefore whenever any of God's people are brought into court because of the truth, they should remember that, that is God's means of bringing the truth before those men. God has graciously allowed them to be the agency through whom his truth is to be presented to men who would not otherwise be reached.

But only God, who knows the hearts of men, can tell what will reach those men. Therefore he must be allowed to speak in his own way, through his own instrument.

He wants to speak through the one whom he has

allowed to be brought into court. For that person to secure somebody else to speak for him, is to work directly against God. If he hires another to *plead* his *case*, he shows that he does not appreciate the situation. It is not he that is called in question, but God's truth; and it is the truth, and not himself, that is to be defended.

And God by his Spirit is to conduct the defense. No matter how humble a man may be, if he is brought into court for the truth's sake, God wants him to bear a testimony there, and he will speak through him. He who created the heavens and the earth is as able to speak through a laboring man as through a scholar, provided that man is acquainted with him. If the man is there solely on the Lord's account, the Lord should be allowed to conduct the case.

8. How much time is it to be supposed that Peter spent preparing the line of argument that he would pursue? Matt. 10:19, 20; Luke 21:12-15.

9. Why was it that the apostles were suffered to be brought before councils? Matt. 10:18.

10. How did Peter answer the question of the council? Acts 4:9, 10.

11. By what name was it that the impotent man stood before them whole? Verse 10.

12. What else is obtained only in that name?

Verse 12.

13. From what does it save us? Matt. I: 21.

14. What is sin? t John 3:4.

15. Then when a man is saved from sin, from what is he kept? *Ans.—From* transgressing the law.

16. How do all men by nature compare with the impotent man, in their ability to keep the commandments? Rom. 5: 6, 8; 7:8; Gal. 5:17.

17. What alone will work righteousness in us? Acts 4: 10-12 2; Eph. 2: 10.

NOTE.-" By grace are ye saved through faith." Eph. 2:8. Salvation is from sin, and sin is the transgression of the law. If a person is saved from transgressing the law, it necessarily follows that he is made to keep the law. Therefore salvation by faith means righteous acts performed by faith. This is indicated by what follows the verse first quoted in this paragraph. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Eph. 2: 10. The power of faith to work righteousness, and the reality of that righteousness, are shown by the miracles of healing wrought by faith.

18. How sure may we be that that name will produce actual righteousness, if we have faith in it? Acts 3:16.

19. What did the council perceive from the boldness of Peter and John ? Acts 4:13.

20. What could they say in reply to Peter's words? Verse 14.

21. Of what was this a fulfillment?

Luke 21:15.

22. What conference did the council have over the matter ? Acts 4 : 15-17.

23. What did the disciples reply to the command laid upon them? Verses 18-20,24.

With what did-the council content themselves at this time? Verse 21.

LESSON 6—MAY 6, 2019
THE APOSTLES' CONFIDENCE IN
GOD. ACTS 4:19-33.

(MEMORY VERSES, 29-31.)

GOLDEN TEXT. -" They spake the word of God with boldness." Acts 4:31

1. What bold reply did Peter and John make to the command of the council that they should not teach any more in the name of Jesus? Acts 4: 19-21.

2. When they were let go, what did they do? Verse 23.

3. When the brethren heard their story, what did they do? Verse 24.

4. In putting their trust in God, what power to help did they recognize him as having? -*lb.*

5. In what does the Psalmist say our help is? Ps. 124: 8.

6. In the last announcement of the gospel to what is our attention especially directed? Rev. 14:6, 7.

NOTE.—The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

Rom. I:16. The power of God is the power to create. Verse 20. The men who know most of the gospel are the men who know most of 4., power of God. The men who preach the gospel with the most power are those who have felt in themselves the creative power of God, making them new creatures. Consequently, they trust that power to carry on the work, and to deliver and protect them from the rage of the enemy. So the disciples put their trust in the God who can create. The Sabbath is the memorial of God's creative and sanctifying power. Ex. 20: 8-11; Eze. 20: 12. Therefore those who are carrying the gospel, with that which is the badge of its power, ought most of all men on earth to trust the Lord. He who puts his trust in man, instead of God, has but a poor knowledge of what the Sabbath is.

7. From what psalm of David did the disciples quote? Acts 4:25, 26; Ps. 2: 1, 2.

8. Were these David's words, or the Lord's? Acts 4:24, 25.

9. How had they been fulfilled? Verses 27, 28.

10. What did the disciples ask, in view of the threatenings of the Jews? Verses 29, 30.

11. What assurance did they receive that their prayer was answered? Verse 31.

12. Did they abate any of their activity and boldness in declaring the truth?

NOTE: The disciples had no thought of working any the less because they were threatened. They were in the Lord's hands, and upon him rested the responsibility of caring for them. But they would not even trust themselves not to be afraid; so they committed themselves to God, that he who made the earth might by the same power keep them from being moved by fear.

13. What characterized the believers? Verse 32, **first part.**

14. What exhortation is given in the name of the Lord Jesus? 1 Cor. 1:10.

15. How only can this be? Phil. 2:5.

16. What was the mind of Christ? Phil.2:6, 7.

Read Revised Version.

17. How was his grace shown? 2 Cor. 8:9.

18. How did the disciples manifest the same unselfish spirit? Acts 4:32, **last part.**

19. When the believers were in this condition, what characterized the preaching? Verse 33.

NOTE:"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." It is worth while to note that this was when the multitude of believers were of one heart and of one soul, and no one called anything that he had his own, but held it ready to bestow where there was need. In short, there was perfect unselfishness, and only the Spirit of Christ ruled.

LESSON 7—MAY 11, 2019

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

ACTS 5:1-14.

(MEMORY VERSES, 9-11.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—" Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6:7.

1 How did the early disciples regard their possessions? Acts 4: 32.

2. What was the result of this feeling? Verse 34, **first part**.

3. What plan was followed in caring for the poor? Verses 34, 35.

4. What man, who afterwards became an apostle, thus disposed of his property? Verses 36, 37.

5. What course did Ananias and Sapphira pursue? Acts 5: 1, 2.

6. When Ananias brought the money, what did Peter say to him? Verse 3.

7. Was Ananias obliged to sell his land, or to bring the money to the apostles? Verse 4.

8. What motive must have actuated him?

NOTE: While the other disciples were honestly giving their means to help the cause and the poor, Ananias and Sapphira were wholly selfish. They wanted to be thought poor, so as to be supported from the treasury, and at the same time they secretly kept a good sum to use as they pleased.. They had a right to keep it all if they wished.

There was no compulsion. They were not punished for keeping back the money, but for hypocrisy,—for lying to God. The Holy Ghost, to whom they lied, exposed them.

9. To whom had he been guilty of lying? Verses 3, 4.

10. What happened to Ananias when he heard these words? Verses 5, 6.

11. When his wife came in, what conversation took place? Verses 7-9.

12. What also happened to her? Verse 10.

13. What was the result of this affair?

Verse 11.

14. What further exhibition of God's power was manifest through the apostles? Verse **12**.

15. Who were added to the church? Verse 14.

16. What about the others? Verse 13.

17. How is it, then, that Christ's church is to be kept free from those who would bring a reproach upon it? Isa. 5 :7, **first part**; 27:2, 3.

18. Why is it that we do not see it so kept now?

NOTE:When Christ is followed as the only leader, and he is allowed to control the church by his own word, he will keep it clear of hypocrites. There is a great temptation, when the church is in the condition that the early church was, for designing men to seek to come into it for their own pecuniary advantage. Sometimes this is used as an argument against doing the same now that the early church did. But see how Christ protected his church then, and by the prompt judgment upon the hypocrites caused others to feaeto join. Yet *believers* were added every day.

LESSON 8 MAY 18, 2019
THE APOSTLES PERSECUTED
ACTS 5: 17-41.

(MEMORY VERSES, 29-32.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29.

1. When the high priest and his associates saw the wonderful progress of the gospel, how did they feel and do? Acts 5: 17, 18.

NOTE: The first time the apostles were seized, the rulers were "grieved." This time they were "filled with indignation." The apostles had been guilty of contempt of court. They had deliberately disobeyed the orders of the council. The council no doubt thought that they were dealing very mildly with the disciples. They had not done anything to them the first time, but had threatened them, giving them fair warning for the future. In the apostles' persistent preaching they could see nothing but obstinacy, especially as the apostles had plainly said that they would not obey.

2. How did the Lord show that he did not want them in prison? Verses 19, 20.

NOTE: The Lord is the best deliverer and defender. When he has work elsewhere for his servants, he will not allow them to lie in prison. The council wanted the apostles in prison; the Lord wanted them to preach in the temple; so they left the prison as easily as they would have left their own houses. When Paul was in prison at Philippi, the Lord opened it by an earthquake, and let him out. But he left him in prison at Caesarea two whole years, because he wanted him to preach the gospel to Nero at Rome, and the only way that Paul could reach him was as a prisoner.

3. What took place in the morning when the council assembled? Verses 21-23.
4. When the council learned where the apostles were, what did they do? Verses 25-27.

5. What question did they ask them? Verse 28.

6. What reply did the apostles make? Verse 29.

7. What had they already told the council? Acts 4:19, 20.

8. Whom did they at once begin to preach? Acts 5:30.

9. What did they say that God had done for Jesus? Verse 31.

10. What does God through Christ give to men?

11. Was it only to the Jews that God gave repentance? Acts 11: 18.

12. In whom are all the blessings of God contained? Eph. 1: 3.

13. To how many is Christ given? John 6:51; Heb. 2:9.

14. Then to how many have God's blessings been given?

15. For what purpose does God give his blessing *a* to men? Acts 3:26.

16. Then how is it that all men are not saved? John 5:40; 1:11, 12.

17. Who did the apostles say were witnesses to the truth they spoke? Acts 5:32.

18. What must a witness always tell?

NOTE: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost." A witness must tell only what he knows. No one can know Christ except by his Spirit; therefore no one can be a witness for Christ who has not made his acquaintance through the Spirit.

19. Then what must also always bear witness whenever men really witness to the truth? 1 Peter 1:11; John 15:26.

20. What effect did the apostles' preaching have on the council? Acts 5:33.

21. By whom was their murderous purpose checked? Verse 34.

22. By what argument did he restrain the wrath of the council? Verses 35-39.

NOTE.—From this lesson it appears that it is sometimes allowable for a lawyer to plead in behalf of one who is accused on account of

the gospel. But God must choose the man. When God moves a lawyer to interest himself in a case, his plea will amount to something. It is very likely that if the apostles had been going to secure the services of a lawyer, they would not have chosen Gamaliel. And if they had, his words would not have had half the weight that they did coming voluntarily and without the knowledge of the apostles. The fact that so learned and conservative a man as Gamaliel would of his own accord intimate the possibility that to persecute those men might be to fight against God, would set some to thinking over the matter.

23. Although the men of the council agreed to Gamaliel's advice, what did their anger lead them to do? Verse 40.

24. How did the apostles receive this? Verse 41.

LESSON 9—August 25, 2019

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.— ACTS 7:54- 60; 8: 1-4.

(*MEMORY VERSES, 57-60*)

GOLDEN TEXT. —" He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge:" Acts 7:60.

1. What is the subject of the sixth chapter of Acts?
2. What wonderful prominence had Stephen? Acts 6:8-10.
3. When he was brought before the council on a false charge, what did he do?
4. What plainly appeared from his rehearsal of the history of Israel?
Note: The whole of Stephen's discourse was calculated to fix the minds of his hearers directly upon Christ.
There were also direct references to Christ as in the prophecy of Moses: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." He was not pleading for his life, but was preaching the gospel. Indeed, at the close of his discourse the Holy Spirit made him an accuser, plainly showing that his judges were the guilty ones.
5. With what charge did he suddenly terminate his discourse? Acts 7: 51-53.
6. Who was it that was thus accusing the judges? Matt. 23: 19, 20; Acts 7: 55.
7. How did Stephen's words affect the members of the council? Acts 7: 54.
8. Where was Stephen's gaze directed? Verse 55.
9. What did he see? Verses 55, 56.
To. What did the angry mob then do? Verses 57, 58.
What did Stephen do while he was being stoned? Verse 59.
12. What spirit did he exhibit toward his murderers? Verse 60.

NOTE: While the mob was clamoring for Stephen's life, he was calmly gazing into heaven, entirely lost to all his surroundings. Only for a moment did he seem to take notice of what was going on, and that was to pray for his persecutors. But most wonderfully expressive of perfect indifference to all that was going on around him, and of a soul resting in perfect peace, is the sentence which describes his death,— "He fell asleep." The mob was howling with rage; a jargon of sounds appalling to the ordinary ear must have issued from it. Added to this was the pelting of the stones upon Stephen's body. But amid all this noise and tumult, Stephen calmly fell asleep.

Happy is the man who is so completely lifted out of and above self.

13. Whose Spirit was thus manifested?

Luke 23: 34.

14. Who was one of the leaders in the persecution of Stephen? Acts 7:58; 8:1 ; 22:20.

15. What began with Stephen's death? Acts 8: 1.

16. Who was the leader in this persecution? Verse 3; Acts 26: 10.

17. How did he feel toward the church? Acts 26: 11 ; Gal. 1: 13.

18. What led him to do this? Acts 26: 9.

19. Did this persecution succeed in suppressing the gospel? Acts 8: 1, 4.

NOTE.—Satan thought to put out the fire that had begun to burn so brightly in Jerusalem. The result was that he kindled thousands of others. He scattered the firebrands everywhere.. Thus persecution worked out God's plan. If the disciples had stayed in Jerusalem, they would have stagnated. There would not have been enough scope for their activity to keep their piety alive. The church is the salt of the earth, and salt is of no use unless it comes in contact with that which needs preserving.

20. What was thus demonstrated? 2 Cor. 13:8.

LESSON 10. JUNE 1, 2019
PHILIP PREACHING AT SAMARIA.
ACTS 8: 5-25.

(MEMORY VERSES, 5-8.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And there was great joy in that city." Acts 8:8.

1. When the brethren went everywhere preaching the word, where did Philip go? Acts 8 :5.

2. How did the people receive the preaching of Christ? Verse 6.

3. What special manifestation of power accompanied his preaching? Verse 7.

4. What was caused by the reception of the word? Golden text.

5. Who else was preaching in the city at the same time ? Verse 9.

6. Whom was he preaching? Verse 9, last part.

7. What influence had he gained over the people?

Verses 10,11 .

8. What influence had Philip's preaching? Verses 12, 13.

9. When the apostles heard of the work in Samaria, what did they do ? Verse 14.

10 What followed when Peter and John came? Verses 15-17.

II: When Simon the sorcerer saw the power conferred through the laying on of- the hands of Peter and John, what did he do and say? • Verses 18, 19.

12. What was Peter's reply? Verse 20.

13. What did Simon's offer show? Verses 21, 23.

NOTE: We must not understand that none of the Samaritans had been converted until Peter and John came down, although they had not received the gifts of the Holy Ghost. That was to fit them for work. When Simon saw what the apostles did, he wanted to learn how to impart the same power to others. He saw that if he only had the ability to do what Peter and John did, he could make it exceedingly profitable to himself. But that showed that he

did not know the first principles of the gospel. The apostles never received the power until they were completely emptied of self; but he was wholly filled with self. The grace of Christ is to give riches to others, and not to seek it for self. 2 Cor. 8: 9. Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Matt. 20:28. God does not give his Spirit to men to use for their own selfish interest.

14. What was he exhorted to do? Verse 22.

15. What was still uppermost in Simon's mind? Verse 24.

16. What did the apostles do as they returned to Jerusalem? Verse 25.

LESSON 11.—JUNE 8, 2019

PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.—ACTS 8:26-40,

(MEMORY VERSES, 35-38.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—" He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 3: 36.

1. Where did Philip preach the gospel after he left Jerusalem?
2. After the work had been finished in Samaria, where did the Spirit send him? Acts 8:26.

NOTE: It is interesting to note how completely the work of the gospel in the early part of the first century was under the direction of the Holy Spirit. It will be a good point to keep in mind in succeeding lessons. Philip was not left to go here or there as chance might dictate, 1

but was directed by the Spirit, When he went toward Gaza, he knew that there was work for him there to do.

When he got there, the Spirit told him just what to do.

Under such guidance there is no room for doubts or regrets.

Is it now past that time for the Lord to thus direct his ministers in their work? Did the Lord set his servants to work in any different way from what he wants them to continue to the end ?

3. When he had reached the designated place, whom did he see? Verse 27.
4. What was the eunuch doing? Verse 28.
5. What did the Spirit tell Philip to do? Verse 29.
6. What question did Philip ask when he heard the eunuch read? Verse 30.
7. What was the reply? Verse 31.
8. What scripture was the eunuch reading? Verses 32, 33.
9. Where is the scripture found?
to. What question did the eunuch ask? Verse 34.
10. What did Philip then do? Verse 35.

NOTE.—" Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." That scripture was the 53d chapter of Isaiah. There is a wonderful amount of gospel in that chapter. It describes man's lost condition, and Christ's humiliation and suffering - because of it. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." " He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." It also describes his glorious triumph, when, having received those whom he has purchased with his own blood, Jesus sees the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

He preached Jesus unto him. This was just what Philip preached to the Samaritans. Later, Paul determined to know only Christ and him crucified. (z Cor. 2:2,, and would not glory in anything save the cross (Gal. 6: 14). Ought anything different to be preached in these days?

We have no warrant for it in the Bible. The apostle says that Christ is "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all ."

Eph. 1:23. Surely it would be difficult to get anything real outside of that fullness..

12. What question did the eunuch ask as they went on? Verse 36.

13. From this question what do we learn is necessarily included in the preaching of Jesus?

14. What is the significance of baptism? Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:11-13; Gal. 3:27.

NOTE: After Philip had preached Jesus awhile, the eunuch said, "See, here is water, what cloth hinder me to be baptized ?" So we see that the preaching of Jesus necessarily includes baptism. Philip said: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God."

And upon this declaration Philip baptized him. Well, what is enough to save a man is

surely enough to allow of his being baptized, and the apostle Paul says, " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10: 9.

15. What did Philip say to the eunuch's request to be baptized? Acts 8:37.

16. What profession of faith did the eunuch make? *lb.*

17. Is simple faith in Christ sufficient for admission by baptism into the church of Christ? Acts 16:30, 31; Rom. 10:8, 9; John 3:16.

18 . What is scriptural faith in the Lord Jesus?

NOTE: Let us see what it is to believe in Jesus. In the first place, how do we know anything about him, what and wit) he is ?— Only as we read in the Bible.

Therefore to believe in Jesus Means to believe all that the Bible tells about him. It takes all that the Bible says of him to describe him, so that we may know who he is.

So if there is anything that the Bible says of him that we do not accept, we do not believe in Jesus. We must believe that he came to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1: 15. We must believe that he has the power to do this. Matt. 28:18; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 7:25. He gave himself for the world.

John 3:16; 6: 5i; Heb. 2 : 9. Therefore, he who believes in Christ must necessarily believe that without him every man is a sinner without life or hope of life. But he who believes this must acknowledge that he himself is a lost sinner. Now if a man acknowledges that he is a sinner, lie will accept Christ as his Saviour, if he believes that Christ is the Saviour of sinners. The sinner who does not accept. Christ as his Saviour from sin, does not believe in him. Therefore it follows, as the Scripture says,

that whosoever believes in Jesus must be saved. Therefore the preaching of Jesus must embrace the preaching

of every doctrine that the Bible sets forth as necessary for salvation. Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. John 14: 6.

19. In order for Philip to baptize the eunuch, what was it necessary for both to do? Acts 8: 38.

20. What took place when they were both come up out of the water? Verses 39, 40.

LESSON 12 JUNE 15, 2019

STEPHEN'S DISCOURSE.

ACTS 7:2-50.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," Heb. 8:1

(In the schedule of the lessons a *review* is indicated as the lesson for this week; but as Stephen's discourse before the Sanhedrim was entirely omitted in the regular course, it has been thought best to insert a lesson on that subject at this time.)

1. Where was Abraham when God first appeared to him? Acts 7: 2.
 2. What did God at that time say to him? Verse 3. Compare Gen 12:1-3.
 3. To what place did Abraham finally come? Acts 7:4.
 4. How much of the land of Canaan did Abraham possess? Verse 5, first part.
 5. Yet how much had God promised? Verse 5, last part.
 6. By what had that promise been confirmed? Heb. 6:13, 17.
 7. Was it possible that God could lie in this matter of the inheritance? Verse 18.
 8. Then what conclusion must be drawn from Stephen's statement in Acts 7:5?
- NOTE:** Stephen's statement in Acts 7:5 most conclusively proves the resurrection. God promised Abraham an inheritance, yet Abraham died without having received a foot of it. But God cannot lie, therefore his promise will be fulfilled, and that means a resurrection for Abraham, and not only for Abraham, but also for all his seed.
9. What, then, did he thus early in his discourse bring vividly before his hearers?
- NOTE.**—In Heb. 13 we are told of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that they "all died in faith, not having received the promises." This shows that they did not expect their

inheritance in the land of Canaan in this life. This is further shown by the fact that in their lifetime they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

They looked for "an heavenly" country. Heb. 16.

Moreover, at the very time God made the covenant with Abraham, confirming the promise, he plainly told him that he should die without receiving the inheritance, and that his seed should be in bondage for four hundred years. Gen. 15: 13-16.

10 What did God say to Abraham concerning his seed ? Acts 7 :6, 7.

11. What did he give to Abraham? Verse 8.

12. What was its significance? Rom. 4: II . Compare Gen. 17:7, 8, 11.

NOT:A few other points about Abraham's inheritance might be noted. The promise included the whole earth. Rom 4:13. It is an everlasting inheritance. Gen: 17:8. Consequently, when Abraham and his seed possess it, they will have everlasting life. The righteous only can possess the inheritance. Rom. 4:13. This is also shown by the fact that circumcision—the sign of righteousness (Rom. 4:11)—was the token of the covenant. Gen. 17:11. Still further, when God first made the promise to Abraham, as well as afterwards (Gen. 12:3; 22:18), he said that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed. But in Gal. 3:8 we learn that when God said that, he was preaching the gospel. Therefore the inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed was such as could be obtained

only through the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation through the cross of Christ. Rom. I: 16; 1 Cor.1:17, 18.

13. What, therefore, was in this also forcibly brought to the attention of the council?

14. What history did Stephen then briefly outline? Acts 7:9-36.

15 In identifying Moses, to what did he again direct their minds? Verse 37.

16. To what conduct of the Israelites did Stephen next refer? Verses 39-43.

NOTE. —" But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham," etc. When God delivered Israel from Egypt, it was to fulfill the promise to Abraham. But that, as we have seen, meant everlasting life in the new earth. That this was what God had in view is corroborated by the fact that the Israelites could not enter Canaan until they were sinless. After they crossed the Jordan, they were all circumcised—the sign of righteousness by faith—and the Lord said, " This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." Josh. 5:9. Jericho was taken by faith. Heb. 11:30.

But Ai could not be taken because there was sin in the camp, showing that when Jericho was taken all the people had the righteousness of faith. This fact was in itself sufficient to show the Jews the nature of the inheritance that God gave to Israel, and who should possess it. Although God gave the children of Israel the inheritance, they departed from the faith, and so did not go on to possess the land. Read Psalm Sr. Of this apostasy Stephen speaks in Acts 7: 39-43.

17. What is contrasted with the tabernacle of Moloch? Acts 7: 44.

18. Why is it called the tabernacle of witness?

NOTE: Reference to the tabernacle of Moloch naturally led to the mention of the " tabernacle of witness," which the fathers brought into the land with Joshua, and which afterwards gave place to the temple of Solomon. It was doubtless called the "tabernacle of witness " because its chief use was to contain the ark, in which was the law of God, which was a "testimony " and a " witness " against the children of Israel. Ex. 25:21; Deut. 31: 26. But neither the tabernacle nor the temple of Solomon could be a dwelling-place for God. Solomon himself, in his prayer at the dedication of the

temple, recognized the fact that his temple could not contain God. 2 Chron. 6:

18. The fact that God made all things is sufficient to show that no man can make a house that will be a fit dwelling-place for him. Acts 7: 48, 49; Isa. 66: I, 2. This necessarily led to the conclusion that he dwells in a temple made without hands; and that was so suggestive of the conclusion that Jesus is the high priest in that heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 8: I) that the council could stand no more.

19. What did Stephen say of its history? Acts 7: 45-47.

20. What did he say about God's dwelling-place? Verses 48, 49; Isa. 66:1, 2.

21. What must the council have seen as the evident conclusion of Stephen's argument? Heb. 8 : 1.

LESSON 13 JUNE 22, 2019

THE LORD'S SUPPER PROFANED.

I COR. : 20-34.

GOLDEN TEXT."And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me." 1 Cor. 20: 24.

1. What existed in the Corinthian church? I Corin 11 : 19.
2. As a consequence, were their meetings profitable or otherwise? Verse 17.
3. What was it impossible for them to do while in such confusion ? Verse 20, Revised Version.
4. What unseemly actions were indulged in at their professed celebration of the Lord's Supper? Verse 21.
5. Where should bodily hunger be satisfied? Verse 22.
6. Where had the apostles received that which he delivered to the Corinthians? Verse 23.
7. When Jesus, on the night of his betrayal, took bread, what did he say and do? Verses 23, 24.
8. What did he next do? Verse 25.
9. What does the apostle say of this cup and this bread? " I corinthian. 10: 16.

NOTE.—The Lord's Supper is called the "communion," since Paul declares that it is the communion of the body of Christ. That is, it is the symbol of our oneness with him. Eat and drink Christ by his word (John 6:63), and this is to be done constantly. So the Lord's Supper is only the occasional symbol of a continual feast. to. Then what must all those be who truly eat the Lord's Supper?

I Cor. 10: 17.

11 In that case can there be any division?

I Cor. 12:25-27.

12. What is signified by the Lord's Supper?

1 Cor. 11 : 26.

13. What did Jesus say of those who do not eat his flesh and drink his blood? John 6:53.

14. In thus acknowledging Christ's death, what else do we also acknowledge? Verse 53; Gal. 2: 20.

15. Why should a man examine himself before eating the Lord's Supper? 1 Cor. 11:27, 28.

16. How does one eat and drink unworthily? Verse 29.

NOTE:" He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." Strangely enough, many take this to mean that no man who is not worthy can eat the Lord's Supper. In that case no one could eat it. To eat the Lord's Supper is to feed upon the body of Christ. The eater must discern the Lord's body. Now Christ's body was given for sinners. Rom. 5: 6. Christ alone is worthy. The man who comes to the Lord's Supper thinking that he himself is worthy is the one who eats and drinks unworthily, for he does not discern that the Lord's body was a sacrifice for sinners. That man eats and drinks worthily who comes acknowledging that he is nothing, and is not worthy of anything, but that Christ is everything, and that Christ is his.

17. Then in what respect should a man examine himself? 2 Cor. 13 :5.

NOTE.--" Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." This, as indicated above, cannot mean that a man is to take an inventory of his deeds, good and bad, so as

to know how worthy he is to eat the Lord's Supper. The Lord does not want men to come as Pharisees. Neither has he abdicated the throne of judgment in favor of any man. He has not constituted a man the judge of his own actions any more than he has made him the judge of other men's actions. For what, then, shall a man examine himself? Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. 13:5. Let a man believe that Christ is the Saviour of sinners,—and he does not unless he believes that he is *his* Saviour,—and he will eat and

drink worthily.

18. For what purpose did Christ come into the world and die? I Tim. 1:15

19. When will the salvation be complete? Heb. 9:28; I Peter 1:3-5.

20. Then to what time does the celebration of the Lord's Supper necessarily direct the mind? 1 Cor 11:26.



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- 1st Journey
- - - 2nd Journey
- 3rd Journey
- · - · - 4th Journey

capitals

C 18 D 20 E 22 F 24 G 26 H 28 I 30 K 32 L 34 M 36