W. E. Howell

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Lessons on the Book of Acts

SENIOR DIVISION

Fourth Quarter, October to December, 1916

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Lessons *on the* Book *of* Acts

SENIOR DIVISION
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Introductory Note

As we progress in the study of the book of Acts, careful and frequent note should be made of the three agencies that are foremost in building up the church and carrying on the work of God. These three are the Holy Spirit, angels, and prayer. Prayer is the appeal of the soul to Heaven for help. The gift of the Spirit and the ministry of angels are Heaven's response. Prayers ascend from earth to heaven; the Holy Spirit and angels descend from heaven to earth. Thus the "way into the holiest" is kept open, and heaven is indeed brought close to earth.

It will be profitable to note the various instances of special prayer, and the various times that the Spirit or angels show Heaven's interest in the welfare and work of men.

1. PRAYER

The disciples prayed in unity and with heart-searching in the upper room.

The disciples prayed for guidance in the selection of a successor to Judas.

The believers continued "steadfastly . . . in prayers" after Pentecost.

Peter and John went up to the temple to pray.

The company of believers prayed on the return of Peter and John after their first imprisonment.

The apostles gave themselves "continually to prayer" and the ministry of the Word after the appointment of the deacons.

The apostles prayed in setting apart the deacons to their work.

Stephen died with prayer on his lips.

Peter bade Simon the sorcerer to pray for forgiveness.

Simon asked Peter to pray for him.

Saul prayed the Lord at his conversion to show him what to do.

Peter prayed when he raised Dorcas to life.

Cornelius "prayed to God alway."

Peter went up on the housetop to pray.

The prayer of Cornelius was "heard."

While Peter was strongly guarded in Herod's prison, "prayer was made without ceasing" by the church for his deliverance.

While many were gathered together praying at Mary's house, the angel delivered Peter out of prison, and he came and knocked at the door.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT

Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus gave the great commission to the apostles.

Jesus promised a baptism of the Holy Spirit soon after His ascension.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit should endue them with power for witnessing.

David prophesied through the Holy Spirit concerning the end of Judas.

The Holy Spirit descended in power on the day of Pentecost.

God promised, through Joel, to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh in the latter days.

The Holy Spirit is promised to all who repent and are baptized.

Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit when tried before the Sanhedrin for the healing of the impotent man.

The believers were filled with the Holy Spirit while praying for boldness to speak the Word in the face of commands from the authorities not to do so.

Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit.

Stephen was a man full of the Holy Spirit.

The believers in Samaria received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands by Peter and John.

Simon the sorcerer sought to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit directed Philip to join himself to the Ethiopian's chariot, and "caught away Philip" when his work was done.

Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands of Ananias of Damascus.

The Holy Spirit comforted the churches after the period of persecution.

The Spirit directed Peter to go down from the housetop and receive the messengers of Cornelius.

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.

The Holy Spirit fell on the household of Cornelius and his friends while Peter preached to them.

Barnabas was full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.

Agabus prophesied through the Spirit concerning a dearth throughout the world.

3. ANGELS

Angels received Jesus out of sight at His ascension.

Angels will announce Jesus' coming again.

The angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought Peter and John forth to continue preaching Jesus.

The angel of the Lord directed Philip to go down to meet the Ethiopian eunuch.

In his vision, Cornelius saw an angel of the Lord coming to him, and heard the angel speak to him.

In his vision on the housetop, Peter heard the voice of the same angel speaking to him.

The angel of the Lord delivered Peter from the prison of Herod.

The angel of the Lord smote Herod with a terrible death.

Lesson 1—Philip Preaching in Samaria

OCTOBER 7, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Church scattered by persecution .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 103-106.
Monday .....Philip preaches Christ in Samaria ....Ques. 4
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 106, 107.
Tuesday .....Simon the sorcerer .....Ques. 5-7
Wednesday ..Peter and John in Samaria .....Ques. 8-12
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-3
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 8: 4-25.

MEMORY VERSE: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51: 10.

The Narrative

1. After the death of Stephen, what experience did the church pass through? Acts 8: 1. Note 1.

2. Who took a leading part in this persecution? Verse 3; Acts 26: 9-11.

3. What resulted from the scattering abroad of the church members from Jerusalem? Acts 8: 4. Note 2.

4. How was the work opened up and carried on in Samaria? Verses 5-8. Note 3.

5. Describe the work of Simon the sorcerer. Verses 9-11.

6. How did Philip's preaching affect the influence of Simon? Verse 12.

7. How did his work affect Simon himself? Verse 13.

8. What part did Peter and John take in the work in Samaria? Verses 14-17.

9. How did their work affect Simon? Verses 18, 19.

10. What was Peter's answer to Simon's request? Verses 20-23.

11. What further request did Simon make? Verse 24.

12. What did Peter and John now do? Verse 25.

Lessons for Us

1. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Verse 1; 2 Tim. 3: 12. Note 4.

2. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." Acts 8: 4. Note 5.

3. It was the privilege of all the new converts in the early church to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Verses 14-17; Acts 2: 38.

Notes

1. The "church" as an organized body of believers was a matter of development. The apostles had been called as leaders of the flock. Of the call of the twelve by Christ we are told: "The first step was now to be taken in the organization of the church that after Christ's departure was to be His representative on earth. . . . As in the Old Testament the twelve patriarchs stand as representatives of Israel, so the twelve apostles were to stand as representatives of the gospel church." ("The Desire of Ages," page 291.)

As believers were raised up and churches established, we see the Holy Spirit guiding in the organization of the work. In the sixth chapter of Acts, we find the church organized, with elders and deacons to look after its varied interests in an orderly way. It is such a "church" that was scattered out from Jerusalem, as described in this lesson. (Acts 8: 1, 4.) The term "church" is not used again — the fifth time — till

chapter 11: 22. It is used again in verse 26, this time referring to the believers at Antioch, where the disciples were first called "Christians."

2. This experience marks the beginning of the second stage of witnessing for Jesus. In promising His disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, He had said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both [1] in Jerusalem, and [2] in all Judea, and [3] in Samaria, and [4] unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1: 8. They have now borne their witness in Jerusalem, and been scattered by persecution "throughout the regions of Judea." In these parts they now go "everywhere preaching the Word."

3. "Christ's message to the Samaritan woman with whom He had talked at Jacob's well, had borne fruit." ("The Acts of the Apostles," page 106.) In the carrying of the gospel into Samaria, the work of witnessing enters upon its third stage. Watch for the beginning of the fourth.

4. In the light of Paul's testimony to Timothy, it is fitting that we consider these two questions: Are we living "godly in Christ Jesus" to the fullness that we ought? Will it require persecution to scatter us abroad to preach the gospel everywhere as it must be preached before the end will come? Of the early church it is said, "To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them." ("The Acts of the Apostles," page 105.)

5. The word "they" in this verse does not include the apostles. (See verse 1.) It must therefore refer largely to the lay members of the church, and includes at least part of the deacons, of whom Philip was one. What a modern miracle it would seem for the entire church membership to go out and make a business of giving the gospel! Will such an experience come to Seventh-day Adventists? How? When?

Lesson 2—Philip and the Eunuch

OCTOBER 14, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Philip goes down toward Gaza .....Ques. 1, 2
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 107.
Monday .....Philip preaches to the eunuch .....Ques. 3-5
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 108.
Tuesday .....Philip baptizes the eunuch .....Ques. 6-9
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 108.
Wednesday ..Philip preaches in the coast cities ....Ques. 10, 11
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 109-111.
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 8: 26-40

MEMORY VERSE: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts 8: 37.

The Narrative

1. After Philip's work in Samaria, what direction did the angel of the Lord give him? Acts 8: 26.

2. Whom did Philip find in the way? Verses 27, 28. Note 1.

3. Relate Philip's experience in meeting the Ethiopian officer. Verses 29-31.

4. What passage in Isaiah was the officer reading? Verses 32, 33.

5. What question did he ask Philip? Verse 34.

6. How did Philip answer him? Verse 35.

7. As they went on their way, what did the officer say? Verse 36.

8. Relate how he was examined for baptism. Verse 37.

9. What did they then do? Verse 38.

10. What took place after the baptism? Verse 39.

11. Where did Philip continue his preaching? Verse 40. Note 2.

Lessons for Us

1. The Lord's guidance of His messengers. Verses 26, 29. Note 3.

2. Philip as a type of missionaries. Verses 27, 30, 40. Note 4.

3. The true mode of baptism is illustrated,— both Philip and the eunuch went *"into"* and came up *"out of"* the water. Verses 38, 39.

4. Rapid spread of the gospel when missionaries are Spirit-filled and Spirit-led. Note 5.

Notes

1. Gaza was near the border of Palestine and Egypt. Ethiopia lay south of Egypt, in the region of modern Nubia and Abyssinia. Candace is said to be a common name for the queens of Ethiopa, as Pharaoh was a title for the kings of Egypt.

2. Azotus is the Greek name of the city which in Hebrew was called Ashdod, in the land of the ancient Philistines. It was about thirty miles from Gaza, near the coast of the Mediterranean. Philip probably worked along the coast, passing

through such towns as Joppa, Lydda, Ashkelon, Arimathea, etc., till he reached Cæsarea, about sixty miles from Azotus.

3. "An angel guided Philip to the one who was seeking for light, and who was ready to receive the gospel; and to-day angels will guide the footsteps of those workers who will allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify their tongues and refine and ennoble their hearts. The angel sent to Philip could himself have done the work for the Ethiopian, but this is not God's way of working. It is His plan that men are to work for their fellow men."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 109.

The Spirit directed Philip what to do when he met the eunuch, and where to go when his work for him was done.

4. Philip is spoken of in "The Acts of the Apostles" as a type of missionaries "who will hear the voice of God, and go where He sends them." (Page 109.) When the angel directed him to go on the way toward Gaza, he did not tell him how far he should go, nor what he was going for; but Philip "arose and went." The Spirit bade him join himself to the Ethiopian's chariot, "and Philip *ran* thither." He found the work to do as soon as he came within hearing distance. After the Spirit separated him from the Ethiopian officer, "Philip was found at Azotus," whither he was *led* of the Spirit. What wonder that so aggressive a missionary was intrusted with carrying the gospel into new fields, even ahead of the apostles! From Acts 21: 8 we learn that he became known as "Philip the evangelist."

5. Consider the work accomplished by one man. Then consider what might be accomplished if all church members were active missionaries.

"It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul saving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble, consecrated believer upon whom the Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls, is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities. Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour's commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands."

"Hundreds, yea, thousands, who have heard the message of salvation, are still idlers in the market place, when they might be engaged in some line of active service. To these Christ is saying, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' and He adds, 'Go ye also into the vineyard.' Why is it that many more do not respond to the call? Is it because they think themselves excused in that they do not stand in the pulpit? Let them understand that there is a large work to be done outside the pulpit, by thousands of consecrated lay members.

"Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church, so that every one shall be

working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned, and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory. 'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.' " —*Id.*, pages 110, 111.

Lesson 3—The Conversion of Saul

OCTOBER 21, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Saul continues his persecution .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 112-114.
Monday .....Saul's vision of Jesus .....Ques. 4, 5
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 114-120.
Tuesday .....Vision of Ananias .....Ques. 6-8
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 121.
Wednesday ..Saul restored and baptized, and preaches Christ .....Ques. 9-12
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 122-125.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 9: 1-22.

MEMORY VERSE: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Acts 9: 6.

The Narrative

1. After the death of Stephen, how had Saul been occupied? Acts 8: 3; 9: 1. Note 1.

2. What new step did his zeal now lead him to take? Verse 2. Note 2.

3. What took place on his way to Damascus? Verse 3. Note 3.

4. Relate the conversation between Jesus and Saul. Verses 4-6.

5. How did the vision affect Saul and the men with him? Verses 7-9. Note 4.

6. What direction did the Lord give Ananias in a vision? Verses 10-12.

7. What objection did Ananias make? Verses 13, 14.

8. Meditate upon the Lord's answer, and memorize it. Verses 15, 16.

9. What did Ananias then do for Saul? Verses 17-19.

10. What did Saul do while tarrying in Damascus? Verse 20.

11. What opposition did he meet? Verse 21.

12. With what success did he meet the opposition? Verse 22.

Lessons for Us

1. Be "zealous of good works." Verses 1, 2; Titus 2: 14. Note 5.

2. "What wilt Thou have me to do?" Acts 9: 6. Note 6.

3. "Behold, he prayeth." Verse 11. Note 7.

4. "He must suffer for My name's sake." Verse 16. Note 8.

Notes

1. Saul had been a leader in the persecution that scattered the believers from Jerusalem. "Among the cities to which they went was Damascus, where the new faith gained many converts." ("The Acts of the Apostles," page 113.)

2. For the expression, "of this way," the marginal reading, "of the way," is better, and is used in the text of the Revised Version, "of the Way." This expression, "the Way," came to be commonly used to designate the Christian religion. Jesus had said, "I am the Way," that is, the way into truth, the way into life, the only way to salvation from sin. It was therefore very fitting to speak of the faith and practice of His followers as the "Way." For other examples of its use, see Acts 19: 9, 23; 22: 4; 24: 14, 22.

3. By caravan road Damascus was about 136 miles from Jerusalem, and six days were required to make the journey. The vision did not take place till Saul and his company were approaching Damascus.

4. In Acts 26: 13, Paul himself says that the vision occurred "at midday." In the clear atmosphere of the East, the sun itself is exceedingly bright, but Paul says in the same connection that the light was "above the brightness of the sun." Saul understood the voice, and "to him was clearly revealed the One who spoke — even the Son of God. . . . When the glory was withdrawn, and Saul arose from the ground, he found himself totally deprived of sight. The brightness of Christ's glory had been too intense for his mortal eyes; and when it was removed, the blackness of night settled upon his vision. He believed that this blindness was a punishment from God for his cruel persecution of the followers of Jesus. In terrible darkness he groped about, and his companions, in fear and amazement, 'led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.'" (*Id.*, pages 115, 117.)

In the same book it is said that Saul spent the three days of blindness in "soul-agony," recalling with anguish his part in the martyrdom of Stephen and others, "shut away from all human sympathy," sensing that "his only hope of help was in a merciful God," and that "to Him he appealed in brokenness of heart."

5. Saul was "fired with mistaken zeal" when he persecuted the church, but after he had a vision of Jesus as his only Saviour, and "yielded himself fully to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit," he became equally "zealous of good works." The Lord wants His people to *work*, to do *good* work, and to be zealous in its doing.

6. It is as much the privilege of the believer to know what the Lord would have him do, as it was Saul's. The Lord does

not always tell us in a vision, or in prayer, but as with Saul, His will may be revealed to us through leaders and counselors of His own choosing.

7. At the very time while Saul was praying in blind seclusion, in brokenness of heart, with intense desire for pardon and acceptance, the Lord was preparing the answer through another.

8. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"—that is, "suffer for My name's sake."

Lesson 4—Ministry of Saul and Peter

OCTOBER 28, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Saul escapes from Damascus .....Ques. 1, 2
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 125-128.
Monday .....Saul in Jerusalem .....Ques. 3, 4
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 129, 130.
Tuesday .....Peter at Lydda .....Ques. 5, 6
Wednesday ..Peter's work at Joppa .....Ques. 7-11
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 131, 132.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 9: 23-43.

MEMORY VERSE: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord." Prov. 19: 17.

The Narrative

1. As Saul continued preaching Christ at Damascus, what measures did the Jews take against him? Acts 9: 23, 24. Note 1.

2. How did Saul escape? Verse 25. Note 2.

3. Relate the experience of Saul on his return to Jerusalem. Verses 26-30. Note 3.

4. Describe the period of peace and prosperity that now came to the churches. Verse 31.

5. Where was Peter now active in labor? Verse 32. Note 4.

6. Relate Peter's experience in Lydda. Verses 33-35.

7. What circumstances drew Peter to Joppa? Verses 36-38.

8. What did Peter find on reaching the house of Dorcas? Verse 39.

9. Relate the restoring of Dorcas to life. Verses 40, 41.

10. What was the effect of this miracle on the people of Joppa? Verse 42.

11. Where did Peter now spend "many days"? Verse 43.

Lessons for Us

1. Seek periods of retirement from the stress of daily work, for communion with God. Gal. 1:17. Note 5.

2. Let every convert begin witnessing for Jesus at home and to his own people. Acts 9:20, 28, 29.

3. "Jesus Christ maketh thee whole"— in soul and in body.

4. Jesus rewards a life "full of good works," even though these works may seem humble in the eyes of some. It is the spirit of loving service rather than the mere deeds done, that wins the approval of Heaven — even if it be expressed only in the giving of a cup of cold water.

Notes

1. What a marvelous change in the experience of Saul — from persecutor to preacher, from preacher to persecuted, from haling men and women into prison to being lain in wait for, from consenting to the death of Stephen to being watched for day and night to be killed! How soon did Saul the "chosen vessel" begin to "suffer for My name's sake"!

2. According to Paul's testimony in Gal. 1: 13-17, the extreme measures taken by the Jews against his life, and his subsequent escape, did not take place during his first period of preaching Christ in Damascus (Acts 9: 20-22), but after he went for a season into retirement in Arabia, then returned to Damascus. See also "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 125-128.

3. In Gal. 1: 18, 19, Paul states that his purpose in going up to Jerusalem was "to see Peter," but that he saw none of the other apostles "save James the Lord's brother." This would make it appear that "the apostles" to whom Barnabas brought him were these two, the others probably being absent in evangelistic work during the "fifteen days" Paul remained with Peter. Barnabas is doubtless the same as the one mentioned in Acts 4: 36, who accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 13: 2), and is often mentioned by Luke. The "Grecians" are the same Greek Jews who, with Saul's consent, were instrumental in putting Stephen to death. Now they turn upon Saul for the same purpose — a remarkable change in affairs.

4. It is probable that these "saints which dwelt at Lydda" were the fruit of Philip's labor in his evangelistic tour up the coast. Peter would naturally follow up Philip's work as he did in Samaria.

5. Periods of retirement for communion with God were frequent in the life of Jesus, of Daniel, of Elijah, of Moses, of Enoch, as well as in that of Paul and Peter and John and Luther and Müller, and of every man of prevailing power in leadership in God's work. No less vital are such periods for every man or woman who will live a triumphant Christian life.

Lesson 5—Vision of Cornelius; Vision of Peter

NOVEMBER 4, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Cornelius and his vision .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 132-134.
Monday .....Peter is given a vision while praying..Ques. 4-6
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 135, 136.
Tuesday .....Messengers of Cornelius arrive .....Ques. 7, 8
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 136, 137.
Wednesday ..Peter retains them over night .....Ques. 9-11
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 10: 1-23.

MEMORY VERSE: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." Acts 10: 4.

The Narrative

1. Who was Cornelius, and what kind of man was he? Acts 10: 1, 2. Note 1.

2. Relate the vision given to Cornelius. Verses 3-6. Note 2.

3. Following the vision, what did Cornelius do? Verses 7, 8.

4. While the messengers of Cornelius were nearing Simon's house, what experience was Peter having? Verses 9-12. Note 3.

5. Give the conversation between Peter and the Lord. Verses 13-15. Note 4.

6. What then took place? Verse 16.

7. While Peter was considering the vision, what was going on below? Verses 17, 18.

8. What did the Spirit then say to Peter? Verses 19, 20.

9. When Peter met the men from Cornelius, what did he say to them? Verse 21.

10. What was their answer? Verse 22.

11. How did Peter comply with their request? Verse 23.

Lessons for Us

1. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Verses 1-6; 2 Tim. 2: 19. Note 5.

2. The Lord reveals Himself in time of prayer. Acts 10:2, 3, 9. Note 6.

3. The home a place of prayer. Verses 2, 9. Note 7.

4. Obedience under trial. Verses 13-16, 20, 21, 23, 29. Note 8.

Notes

1. "Cornelius was a Roman centurion. He was a man of wealth and noble birth, and his position was one of trust and honor. A heathen by birth, training, and education, through contact with the Jews he had gained a knowledge of God, and he worshiped Him with a true heart, showing the sincerity of his faith by compassion to the poor. He was known far and near for his beneficence, and his righteous life made him of good repute among both Jews and gentiles."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 132.

2. "Though Cornelius believed the prophecies, and was looking for the Messiah to come, he had not a knowledge of the gospel as revealed in the life and death of Christ. He was not a member of the Jewish church, and would have been looked upon by the rabbis as a heathen and unclean. But the same Holy Watcher who said of Abraham, 'I know him,' knew Cornelius also, and sent a message direct from heaven to him."—*Id.*, page 133.

3. "It was not for physical food alone that Peter hungered. As from the housetop he viewed the city of Joppa and the surrounding country, he hungered for the salvation of his countrymen. He had an intense desire to point out to them from the Scriptures the prophecies relating to the sufferings and death of Christ."—*Id.*, page 135.

4. "This vision conveyed to Peter both reproof and instruction. It revealed to him the purpose of God,—that by the death of Christ the gentiles should be made fellow heirs with the Jews to the blessings of salvation. As yet none of the disciples had preached the gospel to the gentiles. In their minds, the middle wall of partition, broken down by the death of Christ, still existed, and their labors had been confined to the Jews; for they had looked upon the gentiles as excluded from the blessings of the gospel. Now the Lord was seeking to teach Peter the world-wide extent of the divine plan."—*Id.*, pages 135, 136.

5. The first six verses of this chapter reveal the intimate knowledge that Heaven has of the names, abode, occupation, and heart longings of men. From the Roman officer in the chief Roman city of Palestine to the humble tanner in Joppa, the Lord took knowledge of all their circumstances, and gave specific directions to each, even to the location of Simon's house. Truly "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous," and "the Lord knoweth them that are His."

6. How often in the book of Acts so far has it been made evident that the Lord comes near to His children and reveals Himself to them in wisdom and power, when their hearts are bowed in humility and supplication at the throne of grace! It is when the soul feels its helplessness and dependence most that God can fill the aching void with His presence.

7. It was not Cornelius alone who "feared God" and "prayed to God alway," but also "all his house." This evidently included his servants and some of the soldiers (verse 7), for his relations were such with them in spiritual matters that he could relate the details of his vision to them and send them on the important mission to Peter. Like Abraham, he commanded his household *after* him, as it is the privilege of every father to do who fears God and trains his children for Him.

8. That this experience was a severe test for Peter, with his strong Jewish training and prejudices, is evident from his conversation with the Lord, and from the fact that the vision was presented three times, leaving him still in doubt of its meaning. Yet he obeyed the voice of the Spirit in going to "keep company" with a gentile for perhaps the first time in his life. But what a rich experience followed this act of obedience!

Lesson 6—The Gospel to the Gentiles

NOVEMBER 11, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Cornelius receives Peter .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 137.
Monday .....Peter and Cornelius rehearse their experiences .....Ques. 4, 5
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 138.
Tuesday .....Peter preaches to the gentiles .....Ques. 6-10
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 138, 139.
Wednesday ..*The Holy Spirit falls upon them all* ..Ques. 11-13
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 139, 140.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 10: 24-48.

MEMORY VERSE: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10: 34.

The Narrative

1. What preparation did Cornelius make for Peter's coming? Acts 10: 24.

2. How did Cornelius receive Peter? Verse 25.

3. What did Peter do and say? Verse 26. Note 1.

4. Give Peter's explanation of his coming to the house of a gentile. Verses 27-29.

5. What explanation of sending for Peter did Cornelius make? Verses 30-32.

6. How did he express the purpose of the gathering at his house? Verse 33. Note 2.

7. To what far-reaching truth did Peter first give utterance? Verses 34, 35. Note 3. Memorize these two verses.

8. What progress had the gospel already made? Verses 36-38.

9. Of what were the apostles to be witnesses? Verses 39-41.

10. What were they commanded to preach? Verses 42, 43.

11. What took place while Peter was speaking? Verse 44.

12. What impression was made on the brethren from Joppa? Verses 45, 46.

13. What additional step brought the gentile hearers within the full privileges of the gospel? Verses 47, 48.

Lessons for Us

1. Hold more cottage meetings. Verse 24; Heb. 10:25. Note 4.

2. Fasting and prayer open channels for God's blessing to flow in. Acts 10:30.

3. Prompt and willing obedience to the leadings of the Spirit. Verses 20, 21, 29, 33.

4. "God is no respecter of persons." Verse 34. Note 5.

Notes

1. "As Peter entered the house of the gentile, Cornelius did not salute him as an ordinary visitor, but as one honored of Heaven, and sent to him by God. It is an Eastern custom to bow before a prince or other high dignitary, and for children to bow before their parents; but Cornelius, overwhelmed with reverence for the one sent by God to teach him, fell at the apostle's feet, and worshiped him. Peter was horror-stricken, and he lifted the centurion up, saying, 'Stand up; I myself also am a man.' "—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 137.

2. The situation at this point is very interesting, almost dramatic. Peter and his brethren from Joppa have assembled for the first time, perhaps, in company with gentiles, in the house of a gentile, in response to the definite call of a gentile and to the direct bidding of the Lord. This marks a new era in the spread of the gospel. Jesus had said to the disciples before His ascension that they should be witnesses to Him "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The first three steps have been taken, and now the fourth is about to begin. It is true that Saul had preached in Damascus of Syria already, and was now doing likewise in Cilicia, and that Cæsarea is still in Samaria; but Saul had preached to the Jews largely, and so had Peter and others till this hour. (Chapter 11: 19.) Peter is now about to preach the first Christian sermon to a gentile audience, the beginning of a distinctive world-wide movement. What wonder that he felt it a matter of expediency to take six Jewish brethren with him for witnesses!

3. Peter's first statement was as much a confession on his part as it was instruction to his hearers. The truth was as new to him as to those who listened. It had just been sent fresh from heaven, but it is still as fresh and forceful and applicable to-day as then.

4. The gathering at the house of Cornelius was really a "cottage meeting," for he had invited in his friends and relatives and neighbors to hear the message sent of God. The results were wonderful, and suggest that we "upon whom the ends of the world are come" ought to do far more of this kind of work.

5. Many scriptures teach this same truth. Read especially, Deut. 10: 17; 2 Chron. 19: 7; Rom. 2: 6-11; James 2: 1-9. How much respect of persons really lingers in the hearts of most of us! The picture drawn by James is not an ancient one alone. When we can look upon every man in the light of Calvary, we shall pay less attention to the artificial distinctions of society and pay due respect to all we meet. The missionary who goes abroad should be "all things to all men," that he "may win some."

Lesson 7—Peter's Experience Retold; The Gospel in Antioch

NOVEMBER 18, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Peter reports to the church at Jerusalem .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp, 141, 142.

Monday .....Work for Cornelius a type of work needed to-day .....Ques. 4-6
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 139, 140.
Tuesday .....Spread of the gospel .....Ques. 7, 8
Wednesday ..Work of Barnabas and Saul .....Ques. 9-13
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 11: 1-30.

MEMORY VERSE: "And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." Acts 11: 21.

The Narrative

1. When the Jewish believers heard that the gentiles had received the gospel, what contention did some of them raise with Peter? Acts 11: 1-3. Note 1.

2. Give the substance of Peter's report to the brethren at Jerusalem. Verses 4-15.

3. Of what saying of Jesus did Peter's experience at Cæsarea remind him? Verse 16.

4. After giving his report, what pointed question by Peter put the contention to silence? Verse 17.

5. How did the believers receive his report? Verse 18.

6. Of what needed work to-day is the conversion of Cornelius and his household a type? See note 2.

7. What work meanwhile had those "scattered abroad" been carrying on? Verses 19, 20. Note 3.

8. What success had crowned their labors? Verse 21.

9. What work was Barnabas sent forth to do? Verses 22, 23.

10. What kind of man was Barnabas? Verse 24.

11. What work did Barnabas and Saul do at Antioch? Verses 25, 26.

12. By what general name for believers in Christ were the disciples at Antioch first called? Verse 26, last part. Note 4.

13. On what mission were Saul and Barnabas sent to the brethren in Judea? Verses 27-30.

Lessons for Us

1. Cherish a spirit of unity among workers. Verses 1-18. Note 5.

2. The Spirit of God can quickly and effectively break down prejudices of long standing. Verse 18. Note 6.

3. Preach the Lord Jesus. Verse 20. Note 7.

4. Every man "according to his ability" sent relief. Verse 29. Note 8.

Notes

1. Peter had foreseen that such a contention would be raised by those who were "of the circumcision" when they heard that he, like his Master, had consorted with "men uncircumcised," and had "eaten with publicans and sinners." For this reason, he took the precaution of taking with him to Cæsarea six of the Joppa brethren, whom he had evidently brought with him to Jerusalem as witnesses of the work done at the house of Cornelius.

It is interesting to note how careful the leading apostles were to keep harmony between the field and the church at Jerusalem. After his experience at Damascus, Saul went up to Jerusalem "to see Peter" and to acquaint him and others with his work. Peter went back and forth from Jerusalem to various places where work was going on, and now, on this special occasion of extending the gospel to the gentiles, he goes up with witnesses and makes his report.

2. "To-day God is seeking for souls among the high as well as the lowly. There are many like Cornelius, men whom the Lord desires to connect with His work in the world. Their sympathies are with the Lord's people, but the ties that bind them to the world hold them firmly. It requires moral courage for them to take their position for Christ. Special efforts should be made for these souls, who are in so great danger, because of their responsibilities and associations."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pages 139, 140.

3. Phenice is Phœnicia, the country of Tyre and Sidon; Cyprus is a large island off the coast of Syria; Antioch was the capital of Syria, next in importance to Jerusalem as a church center, and the starting point of Paul's three missionary journeys; Cyrene is far to the west on the north coast of Africa. The "Grecians," or "Hellenists," were either Jews born abroad and speaking Greek, or proselytes. Since there were many Greek-speaking Jews at Jerusalem among the believers (see chapter 6: 1), the fact that Grecians are specially mentioned at Antioch suggests that they *may* have been gentiles preached to by Cyprian and Cyrenian brethren, who did not share the strong prejudices of the Jews at Jerusalem. It will be recalled here that Barnabas was a Cyprian.

4. "It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians. The name was given them because Christ was the main theme of their preaching, their teaching, and their conversation. Continually they were recounting the inci-

dents that had occurred during the days of His earthly ministry, when His disciples were blessed with His personal presence. Untiringly they dwelt upon His teachings and His miracles of healing. With quivering lips and tearful eyes they spoke of His agony in the garden, His betrayal, trial, and execution, the forbearance and humility with which He had endured the contumely and torture imposed upon Him by His enemies, and the Godlike pity with which He had prayed for those who persecuted Him. His resurrection and ascension, and His work in heaven as the Mediator for fallen man, were topics on which they rejoiced to dwell. Well might the heathen call them Christians, since they preached Christ, and addressed their prayers to God through Him.

"It was God who gave to them the name of Christian. This is a royal name, given to all who join themselves to Christ."—*Id.*, page 157. See James 2: 6, 7; 1 Peter 4: 16, 14.

5. It is the Lord's plan to carry on His work through human agencies, and He therefore desires a spirit of harmony and unity to prevail among His workers. He sent Peter to Cornelius, and Philip to the eunuch, though angels were already on the ground and might have done the work. He specially guided Philip, but led Peter down from Jerusalem to bind off his work. Saul went up to counsel with Peter. With such experiences as Saul and Peter had in being specially called of the Lord to lead out in giving the gospel to the gentiles, they, if any one, would seem justified in going their own way, without counsel. But here is Peter carrying out a deliberate plan to maintain unity between workers and believers. Those who profess nowadays a special call to lead off from the body into some way of their own, may well take heed to the lesson. God is not the author of confusion.

6. The power of the Spirit working with Peter among the gentiles, and accompanying his rehearsal of this work to the church, broke down prejudices cherished by the Jews for centuries. Can we not depend on the same power to break down the strongest and most deep-seated prejudices, as we give the last message of warning to the world?

7. How many times we read in these chapters that the early apostles "preached Christ," or preached the Lord Jesus, or preached the Word, or similar expressions! Their preaching was simple and direct, and often resulted in many conversions from a single sermon or in a single day. In these days of much learning, we may well beware of departing from the simplicity of Christ and of preaching Christ.

8. If *every* man who believes the third angel's message would give according to his *ability*, how quickly the work could be finished! *Some* do, but not *every* one. Some give money, some give their children, some give themselves. Let *all* be sure they give according to their *ability*

Lesson 8—Peter Delivered from Prison

NOVEMBER 25, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Persecution by Herod .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 143-145.
Monday .....An angel delivers Peter .....Ques. 4-6
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 145-148.
Tuesday .....Peter tells the believers of his deliverance ..... Ques. 7, 8
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 148, 149.
Wednesday ..Herod kills the prison guard, goes to Cæsarea, glorifies himself, and is smitten by an angel; Barnabas and Saul return from Jerusalem ....Ques. 9-12
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 149-152.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 152-154.
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 12: 1-25.

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Heb. 13: 6.

The Narrative

1. What measures did Herod now take against the church? Acts 12: 1-3. Note 1.

2. For what purpose did he place a special guard about Peter? Verse 4. Note 2.

3. While Peter was in prison, what did the church do? Verse 5.

4. How securely was Peter guarded in prison? Verse 6. Note 3.

5. Tell the story of Peter's deliverance by the angel on the night before Herod purposed to kill him. Verses 7-10. Note 4.

6. What did Peter say of the deliverance when he had come to himself? Verse 11.

7. Relate Peter's experience in gaining an entrance into the house where the believers were praying for his deliverance. Verses 12-16.

8. What did Peter then do and say? Verse 17. Note 5.

9. What took place at the prison in the morning? Verses 18, 19.

10. Give an account of Herod's terrible end after his return to Cæsarea. Verses 20-23.

11. How did the word of God prosper at this time? Verse 24.

12. Who now came from Jerusalem to Antioch? Verse 25.

Lessons for Us

1. The church should pray for its leaders. Verses 5, 12. Note 6.

2. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Verses 12-17; Mark 11:24. Note 7.

3. The ministry of angels brings a closeness of connection between heaven and earth. Acts 12:7-11, 23. Note 8.

Notes

1. "The government of Judea was then in the hands of Herod Agrippa, subject to Claudius, the Roman emperor. Herod also held the position of tetrarch of Galilee. He was professedly a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and apparently very zealous in carrying out the ceremonies of the Jewish law. Desirous of obtaining the favor of the Jews, hoping thus to make secure his offices and honors, he proceeded to carry out their desires by persecuting the church of Christ, spoiling the houses and goods of the believers, and imprisoning the leading members of the church. He cast James, the brother of John, into prison, and sent an executioner to kill him with the sword, as another Herod had caused the prophet John to be beheaded. Seeing that the Jews were well pleased with these efforts, he imprisoned Peter also."—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 143.

2. A quaternion was composed of four soldiers. Four quaternions would make sixteen. One quaternion was on duty at a time, the four being provided to cover the four watches of the day and night.

The word "Easter" is a mistranslation. The Revised Version renders it "Passover."

3. When each quaternion was on duty, two of the soldiers were fastened to Peter with chains, while the other two kept guard, one immediately before the door, and the other farther on. These two are mentioned in verse 10 as "the first and the second ward," or guard.

"Peter was confined in a rock-hewn cell, the doors of which were strongly bolted and barred; and the soldiers on guard were made answerable for the safe-keeping of the prisoner. But the bolts and bars and the Roman guard, which effectually

cut off all possibility of human aid, were but to make more complete the triumph of God in the deliverance of Peter. Herod was lifting his hand against Omnipotence, and he was to be utterly defeated. By the putting forth of His might, God was about to save the precious life that the Jews were plotting to destroy."—*Id.*, page 146.

4. The coming of the angel into the prison is thus described in "Acts of the Apostles," page 146: "It is the last night before the proposed execution. A mighty angel is sent from heaven to rescue Peter. The strong gates that shut in the saint of God open without the aid of human hands. The angel of the Most High passes through, and the gates close noiselessly behind him. He enters the cell, and there lies Peter, sleeping the peaceful sleep of perfect trust."

5. According to Col. 4: 10, the Mary to whose house Peter went, was a sister of Barnabas. Here Mark is spoken of as "sister's son to Barnabas," that is, nephew of Barnabas. The James mentioned by Peter is doubtless the one spoken of in Acts 15: 13 as presiding over the council at Jerusalem. He is supposed to have been "the Lord's brother" mentioned by Paul in Gal. 1: 19.

6. Peter and James and John, the most privileged of the twelve disciples, were also among the most active leaders of the church. Herod had put James to death with the sword in the effort to ingratiate himself into the favor of the Jews. Now he seized the "veteran apostle" for the same purpose. It is at this point that it is said "the entire church engaged in fasting and prayer. . . . They prayed without ceasing for Peter, for they felt that he could not be spared from the cause. . . . While all their energies and sympathies were called out in fervent appeals for help, angels of God were watching over the imprisoned apostle." (*Id.*, pages 144, 145.)

7. Pray *believing*. Praying should not be merely the performance of a religious duty, or the means merely of easing the conscience or of attaining certain relief of mind. The Lord is pleased to have us pray *believing* that we shall receive what we ask for when we pray according to His will. While the believers at Mary's house were fasting and praying for Peter's deliverance, they evidently expected deliverance, for it came doubtless as an answer to their prayers. Yet they seemed hardly to expect it in the way it came; for when Peter appeared at the door delivered, they were "astonished" at the answer to their prayers, and could not believe the word of Rhoda till they saw Peter themselves. It is our part to pray believing, and let the Lord answer in His own way.

8. "The experience of Philip, directed by an angel from heaven to go to the place where he met one seeking for truth; of Cornelius, visited by an angel with a message from God;

of Peter, in prison and condemned to death, led by an angel forth to safety,— all show the closeness of the connection between heaven and earth.

"To the worker for God, the record of these angel visits should bring strength and courage. To-day, as verily as in the days of the apostles, heavenly messengers are passing through the length and breadth of the land, seeking to comfort the sorrowing, to protect the impenitent, to win the hearts of men to Christ. We cannot see them personally; nevertheless they are with us, guiding, directing, and protecting."— *Id.*, pages 152, 153.

Lesson 9—Paul Begins His First Missionary Journey; Paul's Sermon at Antioch in Pisidia

DECEMBER 2, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Ordination of Barnabas and Saul ....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 155-165.
Monday .....Work of the apostles in Cyprus .....Ques. 4-7
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 166-169.
Tuesday .....Labors in Perga and Antioch of Pisidia .....Ques. 8
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 169, 170.
Wednesday ..Paul preaches Christ in the synagogue at Antioch .....Ques. 9-11
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 170, 171.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 13: 1-24.

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Ps. 1: 6.

The Narrative

1. Mention the prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch. Acts 13: 1. Note 1.

2. What message came to them from the Holy Spirit as they ministered to the Lord and fasted? Verse 2.

3. How was this message heeded? Verses 3, 4. Note 2.

4. What did they do at Salamis? Verse 5. Who was with Barnabas and Saul? Note 3.

5. When they went to Paphos, how was their work for the deputy of the country resisted? Verses 6-8. Note 4.

6. How did Paul through the power of the Spirit overcome this resistance? Verses 9-11. Note 5.

7. What did these workers accomplish for the deputy? Verse 12.

8. What were their next movements? Verses 13, 14.

9. What opportunity for witnessing came to Paul in the synagogue? Verses 15, 16.

10. In what way does Paul say that Israel was delivered from Egypt and settled in Canaan? Verses 17-19.

11. Sketch their history from Samuel to David. Verses 20-22.

Lessons for Us

1. The Lord works through appointed agencies in His organized church. Verses 1, 2. Note 6.

2. The spirit of individual independence in a worker or church member, places him in grave peril. Verse 3. Note 7.

3. We must expect to encounter strong opposition to the work of God. Verse 8. Note 8.

4. The worker is to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Verses 5, 13. Note 9.

Notes

1. "After the disciples had been driven from Jerusalem by persecution, the gospel message spread rapidly through the regions lying beyond the limits of Palestine; and many small companies of believers were formed in important centers. . . . Among the places mentioned where the gospel was gladly received, is Antioch, at that time the metropolis of Syria. The extensive commerce carried on from that populous center brought to the city many people of various nationalities. Besides, Antioch was favorably known as a resort for lovers of ease and pleasure, because of its healthful situation, its beautiful surroundings, and the wealth, culture, and refinement to be found there. In the days of the apostles, it had become a city of luxury and vice."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pages 155, 156.

"In the populous city of Antioch, Paul found an excellent field of labor. His learning, wisdom, and zeal exerted a powerful influence over the inhabitants and frequenters of that city of culture; and he proved just the help that Barnabas needed. For a year the two disciples labored unitedly in faith-

ful ministry, bringing to many a saving knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth, the world's Redeemer."—*Id.*, pages 156, 157.

2. "God had abundantly blessed the labors of Paul and Barnabas during the year they remained with the believers in Antioch. But neither of them had as yet been formally ordained to the gospel ministry. They had now reached a point in their Christian experience when God was about to intrust them with the carrying forward of a difficult missionary enterprise, in the prosecution of which they would need every

advantage that could be obtained through the agency of the church."—*Id.*, page 160.

"Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office, and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God.

"To the Jew, this form was a significant one. When a Jewish father blessed his children, he laid his hands reverently upon their heads. When an animal was devoted to sacrifice, the hand of the one invested with priestly authority was laid upon the head of the victim. And when the ministers

of the church of believers in Antioch laid their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, they, by that action, asked God to bestow His blessing upon the chosen apostles, in their devotion to the specific work to which they had been appointed."—*Id.*, pages 161, 162.

3. Salamis was the chief city of Cyprus, situated on the eastern coast. Cyprus was a large island about eighty miles southwest of Seleucia, the seaport of Antioch, the latter being the capital of Syria. We are now beginning to follow the labors of Paul on his first missionary journey.

4. Paphos was the capital city of Cyprus, on the west coast.

5. "The sorcerer had closed his eyes to the evidences of gospel truth; and the Lord, in righteous anger, caused his natural eyes to be closed, shutting out from him the light of day. This blindness was not permanent, but only for a season, that he might be warned to repent, and seek pardon of the God whom he had so grievously offended. The confusion into which he was thus brought, made of no effect his subtle arts against the doctrine of Christ. The fact that he was obliged to grope about in blindness, proved to all that the miracles which the apostles had performed, and which Elymas had denounced as sleight of hand, were wrought by the power of God. The deputy, convinced of the truth of the doctrine taught by the apostles, accepted the gospel."—*Id.*, page 168.

6. "God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church, while the church — Christ's body — is left in darkness. In His providence, He places His servants in close connection with His church, in order that they may have less confidence in themselves, and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work."—*Id.*, page 163.

7. "There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself, and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power, which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising; for he who does this despises the voice of God.

"Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme, are in grave peril. It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light,

through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lord's cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy, and overthrown. The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian, and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to coöperate with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an organized and well directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God."—*Id.*, pages 163, 164.

8. "The fallen foe ever works to keep in his ranks men of influence who, if converted, might render effective service in God's cause. But the faithful gospel worker need not fear defeat at the hand of the enemy; for it is his privilege to be endued with power from above to withstand every satanic influence."—*Id.*, pages 167, 168.

9. "Mark's mother was a convert to the Christian religion, and her home at Jerusalem was an asylum for the disciples. There they were always sure of a welcome and a season of rest. It was during one of these visits of the apostles to his mother's home, that Mark proposed to Paul and Barnabas that he should accompany them on their missionary tour. He felt the favor of God in his heart, and longed to devote himself entirely to the work of the gospel ministry."—*Id.*, pages 166, 167.

"It was here [at Perga] that Mark, overwhelmed with fear and discouragement, wavered for a time in his purpose to give himself whole-heartedly to the Lord's work. Unused to hardships, he was disheartened by the perils and privations of the way. He had labored with success under favorable circumstances; but now, amidst the opposition and perils that so often beset the pioneer worker, he failed to endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross. He had yet to learn to face danger and persecution and adversity with a brave heart. As the apostles advanced, and still greater difficulties were apprehended, Mark was intimidated, and losing all courage, refused to go farther, and returned to Jerusalem.

"This desertion caused Paul to judge Mark unfavorably, and even severely, for a time. Barnabas, on the other hand, was inclined to excuse him because of his inexperience. He felt anxious that Mark should not abandon the ministry, for he saw in him qualifications that would fit him to be a useful

worker for Christ. In after years his solicitude in Mark's behalf was richly rewarded; for the young man gave himself unreservedly to the Lord and to the work of proclaiming the gospel message in difficult fields. Under the blessing of God, and the wise training of Barnabas, he developed into a valuable worker.

"Paul was afterward reconciled to Mark, and received him as a fellow laborer."— *Id.*, pages 169, 170.

Lesson 10—Paul's Sermon at Antioch

(CONCLUDED)

DECEMBER 9, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....The word of salvation sent .....Ques. 1, 2
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 171.
Monday ....."Glad tidings" declared .....Ques. 3-6
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 172.
Tuesday .....Forgiveness and justification ..... Ques. 7-9
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 172.
Wednesday ..Warning and persuasion .....Ques. 10-12
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 172, 173.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-3
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 13: 25-43.

MEMORY VERSE: "Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Acts 13: 38.

The Narrative

1. In his discourse in the synagogue at Antioch, how did Paul introduce the coming of Jesus the Saviour? Acts 13: 23-25.

2. To whom did Paul say the word of salvation is sent? Verse 26. Note 1.

3. How had the Jews at Jerusalem fulfilled the prophecies concerning Christ? Verses 27-29. Note 2.

4. How did God undo their work of putting Jesus to death? Verse 30.

5. What evidence of His resurrection did Jesus give? Verse 31.

6. What glad tidings did Paul declare to his hearers? Verses 32, 33. Note 3.

7. Give Paul's proof of the fulfillment of prophecy that Jesus should not see corruption. Verses 34-37.

8. What comforting message did Paul preach through Christ? Verse 38. Note 4.

9. From what are all believers justified through Him? Verse 39.

10. What solemn warning did Paul give his hearers? Verses 40, 41.

11. At the close of the preaching, what request did the gentiles make of Paul? Verse 42.

12. What further work did Paul and Barnabas do for those who were interested? Verse 43.

Lessons for Us

1. It is our privilege to receive the message of salvation as *personal.* Verse 26. Note 5.

2. Religious formalism is one of our greatest spiritual dangers. Verses 27-29. Note 6.

3. The risen Christ is our only hope. Verses 32, 33.

Notes

1. Observe how Paul, in making this declaration, appeals to both the Jews and the gentiles in his audience: "Children of the stock of Abraham" (Jews), and "whosoever among you feareth God" (including gentiles).

2. The result of formalism in worship is easily seen from this passage. The very prophecies which the Jews read or heard read "every Sabbath day" in their assemblies for worship, they themselves became the instruments for fulfilling.

3. Here Paul turns to the cheering side of the picture, that God had fulfilled to the children His promise made to their fathers, "in that He hath *raised up Jesus again.*" To those who were listening to these burning words, there was still hope of salvation through the risen Christ.

4. And now, Paul declares, be it known unto you that we are here to-day as His witnesses to testify that through this same Jesus ye are offered "the forgiveness of sins." All this terrible record of sin against Christ, He stands ready to wipe away if you will only repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Truly this was exceedingly "glad tidings" that Paul brought the Jews of Antioch. What wonder that "the gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath," and that some of the Jews and proselytes were persuaded to "continue in the grace of God"!

5. "To *you* is the word of this salvation sent," declares Paul. It is easy to read the promises of God in an impersonal way, but it is far more helpful to receive them as addressed to us *personally;* for verily they are so addressed. We can never know their blessedness and their power till we apply and appropriate them to ourselves.

6. It is necessary to have form and order in our religious services. This implies a set time and a set place to hold them, and a more or less regular way of conducting them. Yet in this very uniformity lurks great danger. The Jews could read the prophecies of the Messiah with great regularity and faithfulness for centuries, yet when it came up to the crisis, they "knew Him not, nor yet the voices [meaning] of the prophets." We are secure from the same fatal result only as we find the words of God and eat them, as Jeremiah expresses it, and this, too, in our daily walk.

Lesson 11—The Gospel Rejected at Pisidia; Preaching at Iconium

DECEMBER 16, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....Read the lesson scripture.
Sunday .....Second Sabbath in Antioch .....Ques. 1-3
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 173.
Monday .....Course of gentiles and Jews .....Ques. 4-6
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 173-176.
Tuesday .....In the synagogue at Iconium .....Ques. 7-9
"Acts of the Apostles," p. 177.
Wednesday ..Division and persecution .....Ques. 10-12
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 178, 179.
Thursday ...Lessons for us .....Ques. 1-4
Friday .....Review the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 13: 44 to 14: 7.

MEMORY VERSE: "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." John 5: 24.

The Narrative

1. When the people came together on the second Sabbath in Antioch, how did the Jews relate themselves to the preaching? Acts 13: 44, 45. Note 1.

2. What bold step did Paul and Barnabas now take? Verse 46. Note 2.

3. How did they justify this step? Verse 47.

4. How were the gentiles affected by this declaration? Verses 48, 49. Note 3.

5. What strong measures did the Jews finally take? Verse 50.

6. In what state of mind were the apostles and the disciples left? Verses 51, 52.

7. What was the result of the first work of Paul and Barnabas in Iconium? Acts 14: 1. Note 4.

8. What did the unbelieving Jews do? Verse 2.

9. How did the Lord prosper the work of the apostles? Verse 3.

10. What was the effect upon the multitude of the city? Verse 4. Note 5.

11. What was the outcome of this division? Verses 5, 6.

12. What did the apostles do in Lystra and Derbe? Verse 7.

Lessons for Us

1. There is great danger of our not valuing Heaven-sent privileges as we ought. Acts 13: 46.

2. As the gentiles "were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord" when the gospel messengers turned to them, so do the heathen to-day receive with joy the gospel message intrusted to this people. Verse 48. Note 6.

3. The Lord witnesses with bold, courageous labor in His name. Acts 14: 3. Note 7.

4. The straight word of testimony will bring division. Verse 4; Luke 12: 51-53.

Notes

1. It may be recalled from last week's lesson that the Jews did not invite Paul and Barnabas to preach again the next Sabbath. This was the first step toward the open hostility that finally drove the apostles away from Antioch. The gentiles, however, warmed and cheered with the first preaching of Paul, desired to hear more of the word of God, and invited the apostles to speak again the following Sabbath. This was their first step toward the larger blessing that awaited them in becoming the special subjects of Paul's labor.

2. The bold announcement, "Lo, we turn to the gentiles," ushers in a new era in the history of God's people. For centuries the Jews had been the special recipients of God's favors, and His chosen people to preserve a knowledge of Him in the earth. But now they had forfeited all title to these favors by

openly rejecting Christ and the glad tidings of forgiveness and salvation brought to them by the apostles. So now Paul enters definitely upon that special mission committed to him of revealing the mystery that had been hidden for ages — complete salvation to all mankind through Christ.

3. The response of the gentiles to their new privileges was very marked. They received the tidings with gladness, and joined with the apostles in publishing the word of the Lord "throughout all the region."

4. In this verse is the first use of the terms "Jews" and "Greeks," as distinguishing Jews and gentiles, which we shall find frequently hereafter, and which are often used throughout Paul's epistles.

5. Here is a marked instance of the division that Jesus said His coming and teaching would create, even to the dividing of members of the same family.

6. "The hearts of Paul and his associate workers were drawn out in behalf of those who were 'without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.' Through the untiring ministrations of the apostles to the gentiles, the 'strangers and foreigners,' who 'sometimes were far off,' learned that they had been 'made nigh by the blood of Christ,' and that through faith in His atoning sacrifice, they might become 'fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.' "—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 175.

7. As we may come boldly to the throne of grace in our intercessions, that is, with courage and confidence born of faith, so would the Lord have us labor for Him, so can He manifest His power through us for the winning of souls.

Lesson 12—Preaching at Lystra and Derbe; Paul's First Missionary Journey Ended

DECEMBER 23, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath .....**Read the lesson scripture.**
Sunday .....**Healing of the cripple** .....**Ques. 1-3**
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 179-181.
Monday .....**Apostles regarded as gods** .....**Ques. 4-7**
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 181-183.
Tuesday .....**Persecution and establishing of believers** .....**Ques. 8-12**
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 183-186.
Wednesday ..**The return to Antioch of Syria** .....**Ques. 13, 14**
"Acts of the Apostles," pp. 186, 187.
Thursday ...**Lessons for us** .....**Ques. 1-4**
Friday .....**Review the lesson.**

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 14: 8-28.

MEMORY VERSE: "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14: 22.

The Narrative

1. What affliction did a certain man at Lystra suffer? Acts 14: 8.

2. What effect did Paul's preaching have upon him? Verse 9.

3. What did Paul say to him? Verse 10. What did the man do? Note 1.

4. What did this miracle move the people to do? Verses 11-13. Note 2.

5. When Paul and Barnabas learned of the people's doings, what did they do? Verse 14.

6. What appeal did Paul make to the people? Verses 15-17.

7. What was the result of his appeal? Verse 18.

8. What persecution did Paul suffer at Lystra? Verse 19.

9. What second miracle of healing was wrought before the people? Verse 20. Note 3.

10. After preaching in Derbe, what cities did the apostles revisit? Verse 21.

11. How did they seek to establish the believers? Verse 22.

12. What work of organization did they do? Verse 23. Note 4.

13. Trace the course of the apostles back to Antioch in Syria. Verses 24-26.

14. What did they do on their return to Antioch? Verses 27, 28.

Lessons for Us

1. The wonderful working of faith and the Spirit. Verses 8-10. Note 5.

2. We are men of like passions with Paul and Elijah and Peter. Verses 14, 15. Note 6.

3. The appeal of God through nature. Verse 17. Note 7.

4. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Verse 22; Rom. 8: 17; 2 Tim. 3: 12.

Notes

1. "At one time, while Paul was telling the people of Christ's work as a healer of the sick and afflicted, he saw among his hearers a cripple, whose eyes were fastened on him, and who received and believed his words. Paul's heart went out in sympathy toward the afflicted man, in whom he discerned one who 'had faith to be healed.' In the presence of the idolatrous assembly, Paul commanded the cripple to stand upright on his feet. Heretofore the sufferer had been able to take a sitting posture only; but now, he instantly obeyed Paul's command, and for the first time in his life stood on his feet. Strength came with this effort of faith, and he who had been a cripple 'leaped and walked.' "—"The Acts of the Apostles," page 181.

2. "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." Verse 11.

"This statement was in harmony with a tradition of theirs that the gods occasionally visited the earth. Barnabas they called Jupiter, the father of gods, because of his venerable appearance, his dignified bearing, and the mildness and benevolence expressed in his countenance. Paul they believed to be Mercury, 'because he was the chief speaker,' earnest and active, and eloquent with words of warning and exhortation."—*Id.*, page 181.

3. "In this dark and trying hour, the company of Lystrian believers, who through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas had been converted to the faith of Jesus, remained loyal and true. The unreasoning opposition and cruel persecution by their enemies served only to confirm the faith of these devoted brethren; and now, in the face of danger and scorn, they showed their loyalty by gathering sorrowfully about the form of him whom they believed to be dead.

"What was their surprise when, in the midst of their lamentations, the apostle suddenly lifted up his head, and rose to his feet, with the praise of God upon his lips. To the believers this unexpected restoration of God's servant was regarded as a miracle of divine power, and seemed to set the signet of Heaven upon their change of belief. They rejoiced with inexpressible gladness, and praised God with renewed faith."—*Id.*, page 184.

4. "As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts, the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and

proper order and system was established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.

"This was in harmony with the gospel plan of uniting in one body all believers in Christ, and this plan Paul was careful to follow throughout his ministry. Those who in any place were by his labor led to accept Christ as the Saviour, were, at the proper time, organized into a church. Even when the believers were but few in number, this was done. The Christians were thus taught to help one another, remembering the promise, 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.' "—*Id.*, pages 185, 186.

5. In His miracles of healing, Jesus often said, "According to thy faith be it unto thee," or words of similar import. Often, too, the power of the Spirit was so present with Him that He discerned the longing of the afflicted one to be healed, and took the first step toward healing him. Paul, in his efforts to have the darkened heathen mind comprehend Jesus, often rehearsed to the people His wonderful deeds of healing. Merely telling the story often called forth in his hearers, through the Spirit, faith and longing to be healed, as with the impotent man. Then through the Spirit, Paul discerned his state of mind, and ministered healing to him. Thus do faith and the Spirit work together upon the hearts of minister and hearer.

6. Apostles and prophets found it necessary, on occasions when the power of God was specially manifested through them, to assure the people that they were only ordinary men, of like passions with other men, and that what the people saw of mighty works was altogether the Lord's doing. Thus did Paul to the Lycaonians. Thus does James testify concerning Elijah where in answer to his prayer rain was withheld for three years and a half. James 5: 17. Thus did Peter assure Cornelius. Acts 10: 26.

On the other hand, we may say that we are men of like passions with the apostles and prophets. God was able to do mighty works through them because they maintained living communion with Heaven. God is as willing and ready to reveal Himself in and through us if only our lives are in harmony with His will.

7. It is significant that on this remarkable occasion Paul should appeal to nature for evidence of the living God to the heathen mind.

"The most effective way to teach the heathen who know not God, is through His works. In this way, far more readily than by any other method, they can be made to realize the difference between their idols, the work of their own hands, and the true God, the maker of heaven and earth. . . . There is

a simplicity and purity in these lessons directly from nature that make them of the highest value to others beside the heathen."—"Special Testimonies on Education," page 60.

Lesson 13—Review

DECEMBER 30, 1916

DAILY STUDY OUTLINE

Sabbath	**Acts 8.**	**Tuesday**	**Acts 11.**
Sunday	**Acts 9.**	**Wednesday**	**Acts 12.**
Monday	**Acts 10.**	**Thursday**	**Acts 13.**
Friday	**Acts 14.**		

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 8: 4 to 14: 28.

REVIEW MEMORY VERSES FOR THE QUARTER.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter 8: Dispersion of the believers from Jerusalem; work of Philip the evangelist.

1. How is Saul introduced into apostolic history?
2. Consider the relation of persecution to the spread of the gospel.
3. Sketch the work of Philip.

Chapter 9: Saul's conversion and preaching; Peter at Lydda; Peter at Joppa.

1. Relate briefly the facts of Saul's conversion and preaching till he returned to Tarsus.
2. What miracle did Peter perform at Lydda?
3. Tell briefly Peter's experience in Joppa.

Chapter 10: Visions of Cornelius and Peter; Peter visits Cornelius; Peter preaches at Cornelius's house.

1. Relate the visions of Cornelius and Peter.
2. Describe the meeting of Peter and Cornelius.
3. What was the result of Peter's preaching?

Chapter 11: Peter reports his experience to the church at Jerusalem; Barnabas and Saul at Antioch.

1. Give the substance of Peter's report of his work among the gentiles. What effect did this have upon the believers?
2. What took Barnabas and Saul to Antioch, then back to Judea?

Chapter 12: Persecution by Herod; Peter's deliverance from prison; death of Herod.

1. Why was Peter cast into prison? How was he delivered?

2. Give the circumstances and manner of Herod's death.

Chapter 13: Barnabas and Saul set apart to the ministry; their first missionary tour.

1. Where and how were Barnabas and Saul ordained?

2. Sketch the experiences of the apostles in Cyprus, and at Antioch of Pisidia.

3. Give the circumstances and declaration of Paul in turning to the gentiles.

Chapter 14: The apostles at Iconium and Lystra; establishing the believers; conclusion of the first missionary tour.

1. Give a brief account of the apostles' experiences at Iconium and Lystra.

2. How did they seek to establish the believers?

3. What report did they make to the church at Antioch in Syria?

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