E. W. Farnsworth

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY

SENIOR DIVISION
Fourth Quarter, 1926

The Acts of the Apostles

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, December 25, 1926
CHINA
Overflow: Medical Training Center

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INTRODUCTION

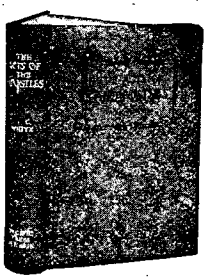
We have just completed an extended study of the life and teachings of Jesus, and have felt afresh the spiritual uplift of that life and instruction. "The Acts of the Apostles" is the simple title given the book we shall now study. It has been suggested that this book might appropriately be named, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." In it, as in no other book in the Bible, is found the manifestation of the mighty power, the wonderful working, of the third Person of the Godhead.

Christ declared, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come," "He shall not speak of Himself." John 16: 13.

"Luke, the beloved physician," is the writer of the book of Acts. Acts 1: 1; Luke 1: 1-4; Col. 4: 14.

It is supposed to have been written about A. D. 65. We should constantly keep in mind that the events recorded in the book of Acts took place in the years immediately following Pentecost, the time of the "former rain." Then the gospel was carried to all the world in one short generation (Col. 1: 23). Under the ministration of the Spirit, the gospel of the last message will likewise be carried to all the world in one generation.

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON HELP



THE Sabbath school lesson help for this quarter and for the first six months of 1927 is "Acts of the Apostles," by Mrs. E. G. White. The book will be indispensable for the full period of the lessons,—nine months. Practically every lesson note refers to this book. Quite a full history of the early church and the apostolic dispensation is set forth in this remarkably interesting work. It is a most encouraging account of the church at work, and a very strong help to every believer.

The thorough student of these lessons will wish to secure a copy of the lesson help prior to the time this interesting series begins, and study it closely in connection with each lesson.

The book contains 58 chapters, 630 pages, printed on Bible paper. Cloth, $2.25; limp leather, $3.25.

Order of your

BOOK AND BIBLE HOUSE

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

LESSON 1

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS; TARRYING AT JERUSALEM

October 2, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 1.

MEMORY VERSE: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

LESSON HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 25-34; "Testimonies," vol. 8, pp. 19-23; "Early Writings," pp. 190-192.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

Jesus remained on earth for forty days after His resurrection. During the time He spent with His disciples, He explained the Scriptures to them more fully, and also set before them the work He would leave them to do.

The place of the ascension was the Mount of Olives, near Bethany.

The meeting place of the one hundred and twenty disciples was an upper room in a house in Jerusalem.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and note. Children may read paragraphs 1-3 of the primary lesson. Read pages 25-30 of "The Acts of the Apostles."
3. Study Questions 5-9, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 4-6 of the primary lesson. Read pages 31-34 of "The Acts of the Apostles."
4. Study Questions 10-13, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 7 and 8 of the primary lesson. Read selections from "Testimonies," vol. 8, pp. 19-23.
5. Study Questions 14-17, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 9 and 10 of the primary lesson. Read pages 190-192 of "Early Writings."
6. Tell the story of the lesson, each member of the family taking part. Note the questions under "Personal Application." Study questions under the heading, "For Thoughtful Pupils," in junior lesson.
7. Review the lesson by asking questions from senior, youth's, junior, or primary lesson.

THE LESSON

1. What special theme is the basis of every chapter of this book?

NOTE.—It is not the dreams, the theories, the speculations, the prophecies, or the doctrines of men, but the acts of the apostles,—their deeds,—which more than all else, are the subject of every chapter of this book.

The most wonderful fact that will face us all through the book of Acts is that Jesus intrusted to converted sinners the mission of carrying on to completion the work He had begun. The entire book is a record of what He accomplished through fallible man by the preaching of the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit in the early rain, and is an example of what He can and will do in the time of the latter rain.

2. What had the author formerly written? Acts 1:1.

3. What "treatise" is here referred to?—Answer: The Gospel of Luke. Luke 1:1-4.

4. Of what did Luke say he had written? Acts 1: 1, 2.

5. What are the principal topics of the first chapter of the book of Acts?—Answer: The five chief topics are as follows:

a. The introduction. Verses 1-5.
b. The ascension. Verses 6-11.
c. The upper chamber. Verses 12-14.
d. Peter speaks of Judas. Verses 15-20.
e. The election of Matthias. Verses 21-26.

6. How long did Christ remain with His disciples after His resurrection? What kind of proofs did He give to demonstrate that He was truly the Son of God? Acts 1: 3.

7. As He met with the disciples, what special command did Jesus give? What was the promise of the Father? Verses 4, 5.

8. What hope was still lingering in the hearts of the disciples? How did Jesus reply to their questions? Verses 6, 7.

NOTE.—"Let all our brethren and sisters beware of anyone who would set a time for the Lord to fulfill His word in regard to His coming, or in regard to any other promise He has made of special significance. . . . False teachers may appear to be very zealous for the work of God, and may expend means to bring their theories before the world and the church; but as they mingle error with truth, their message is one of deception, and will lead souls into false paths. They are to be met, and opposed, not because they are bad men, but because they are teachers of falsehood, and are endeavoring to put upon falsehood the stamp of truth.

"What a pity it is that men will go to such pains to discover some theory of error, when there is a whole storehouse of precious gems of truth by which the people might be enriched in the most holy faith. Instead of teaching truth, they let their imagination dwell upon that which is new and strange, and throw themselves out of harmony with those whom God is using to bring the people up upon the platform of truth."—"Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers," p. 55.

9. What promise was given? What were the disciples to become when clothed with power? Verse 8.

NOTE.—The promise of the Holy Spirit is also recorded in John 16:7; 15:26. In His words of farewell Jesus said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem [at home], and in all Judea [neighborhood], and in Samaria [near-by countries], and unto the uttermost part of the earth [foreign mission fields]." The object of the book of Acts is to record how this promise was fulfilled.

10. What is a witness expected to do? How extensive was the apostles' commission? Mark 16:15. How far had the gospel been preached before Paul died? Col. 1:23.

NOTE.—"The gospel commission is the great missionary charter of Christ's kingdom. The disciples were to work earnestly for souls, giving to all the invitation of mercy. They were not to wait for the people to come to them; they were to go to the people with their mes-

sage. . . . When Christ said to the disciples, Go forth in My name to gather into the church all who believe, He plainly set before them the necessity of maintaining simplicity. The less ostentation and show, the greater would be their influence for good. The disciples were to speak with the same simplicity with which Christ had spoken. They were to impress upon their hearers the lessons He had taught them." —"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 28, 29.

"Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 347.

11. Describe the manner of Christ's ascension. What assurance did the angels give the believers? Acts 1:9-11.

12. Where did this event take place? Luke 24: 50, 51.

13. How many times is the second coming of Christ said to be spoken of in the New Testament?

NOTE.—"The second coming of Christ is said to be mentioned 318 times in the 260 chapters of the New Testament, and it occurs once in every twenty-five verses from Matthew to Revelation."—"Studies in the Book of Acts," Grace Saxe, p. 7.

14. After the ascension of Jesus, to what place did the disciples return? Who are mentioned as being together in the upper room? What prayer season then began? What was the spirit of the occasion? Acts 1: 12-14.

NOTE.—This is the last time that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is mentioned in the Scriptures.

"As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance, and confessed their unbelief. . . .

"The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men, and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this, they realized what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ. Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.

"These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need, and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world; and they claimed the power that Christ had promised."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 36, 37.

15. What did Peter do? To what scripture did Peter refer? What reference did he make to Judas? Verses 15-20.

16. What business was necessary at that time? By what method was the choice made? Verses 21-26.

NOTE.—"From these scriptures we learn that the Lord has certain men to fill certain positions. God will teach His people to move carefully, and to make wise choice of men who will not betray sacred trusts. If in Christ's day the believers needed to be guarded in their choice of men for positions of responsibility, we who are living in this time certainly need to move with great discretion. We are to present every case before God, and in earnest prayer ask Him to choose for us."—"Testimonies," vol. 9, p. 264.

17. How many attended this prayer meeting and also the business meeting? Verse 15.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Did you attend the last prayer meeting or business meeting in your church? If not, why not?

What instruction given in this chapter applies to me?

What errors should I avoid?

What promises may I claim?

For what should I pray?

LESSON 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN

October 9, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 2: 1-21.

MEMORY VERSE: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2: 21.

LESSON HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 35-41, 47-56; "Testimonies," vol. 7, pp. 31-33; "The Great Controversy," pp. 611, 612.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples returned to Jerusalem and sought earnestly to prepare their hearts for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For ten days they prayed, confessing their sins, and making every wrong right, seeking the promised blessing. The Feast of the Harvest, or the Feast of Weeks, was celebrated each year by the Jews. It occurred on the fiftieth day from the offering of the first fruits. The first fruits were offered on the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or the Passover, and inasmuch as the Feast of the Harvest occurred fifty days later, it was called the day of Pentecost, as "Pentecost" means fiftieth. The resurrection of Jesus took place on the day the first fruits were offered. Pentecost therefore came fifty days from the resurrection of Jesus, and ten days after His ascension.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.

2. Study Questions 1-5, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1-4 of the primary lesson. Read selected portions from the Lesson Helps.

3. Study Questions 6-9. Children may read paragraphs 5 and 6 of the primary lesson. Read selected portions from the Lesson Helps.

4. Study Questions 10-12, and notes. Make Acts 2: 9-11 the basis of a map study, children taking part. Read "Testimonies," vol. 7, pp. 31-33.

5. Study Questions 13-17, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 7 and 8 of the primary lesson. Read of an experience similar to that of Pentecost, yet to come, in "The Great Controversy," pp. 611, 612.

6. Let the story of the lesson be told, each member of the family taking part. Discuss the personal application of the lesson.

7. Review the lesson by using questions in the various lesson papers.

THE LESSON

1. What is the meaning of the word "Pentecost"?—Answer: Literally, "fiftieth," that is, the fiftieth day from the second day of unleavened bread. Lev. 23: 15, 16.

2. At what time of year did this feast come? How many days were there between the Passover and Pentecost? Lev. 23: 9-16; Deut. 16: 9, 10.

3. How many disciples were gathered together in Jerusalem after the resurrection of Jesus? Acts 1: 15.

NOTE.—"For forty days Christ remained on the earth, preparing the disciples for the work before them, and explaining that which heretofore they had been unable to comprehend. . . . During these days that Christ spent with His disciples, they gained a new experience. . . . They began to realize the nature and extent of their work, to see that they were to proclaim to the world the truths intrusted to them." —"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 26, 27.

"As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance, and confessed their unbelief. . . . They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour. Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them. As they meditated upon His pure, holy life, they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great, if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ's character." —Id., p. 36.

4. Where were the believers on the day of Pentecost? What suddenly took place? Acts 2: 1-3.

NOTE.—"Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 38, 39.

5. How were the disciples affected? As soon as they were filled with the Spirit, what did they do? Verse 4.

6. Of what promise was this experience a fulfillment? Luke 24: 49; Acts 1: 4.

7. What had Jesus said of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit? John 14: 16, 17.

8. Where is God's earthly dwelling place now? 2 Cor. 6: 16; Isa. 57: 15.

9. What is said of the man in whom the Spirit of God dwells? What of one in whom the Spirit does not dwell? Rom. 8: 9, 10.

10. How long should the Spirit thus abide in us, according to the promise? John 14: 16.

11. Who dwelt at Jerusalem at the time spoken of in this lesson? How did all these hear what was spoken? Acts 2: 5-8.

NOTE.—"During the dispersion, the Jews had been scattered to almost every part of the inhabited world, and in their exile they had learned to speak various languages. Many of these Jews were on this occasion in Jerusalem, attending the religious festivals then in progress. Every known tongue was represented by those assembled. This diversity of languages would have been a great hindrance to the proclamation of the gospel; God therefore in a miraculous manner supplied the deficiency of the apostles. The Holy Spirit did for them that which they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime." —"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 39, 40.

12. How many nationalities are mentioned as hearing the message in their own tongue? From this experience at Pentecost, what may we decide is the purpose of God in bestowing the gift of tongues? Verses 9-11.

NOTE.—"The gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost was the gift of sane, sensible, connected, convincing, and converting speech. Men and women of all lands,—and they were there from everywhere,—heard the gospel of Christ in their own tongues, and three thousand people were swept into the kingdom. The gift of tongues to-day is more like the confusion of tongues at the building of the tower of Babel, and like the Babelites these modern-tongue apostles are going everywhere trying to find some use for their so-called gift. The greatest miracle of the ages, and the miracle before which all outward manifestations and demonstration sink into absolute insignificance, is the miracle of 'reborn' men and women."—J. E. Brown, in "The Spirit-Filled Life."

13. While some were amazed, how did others derisively pretend to account for what they saw and heard? Verses 12, 13.

NOTE.—"The priests, determined to account for the miraculous power of the disciples in some natural way, declared that they were drunken from partaking largely of the new wine prepared for the feast. Some of the most ignorant of the people present seized upon this suggestion as the truth, but the more intelligent knew it to be false; and those who understood the different languages testified to the accuracy with which these languages were used by the disciples." —"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 40.

14. What did Peter say in reply to this accusation? Verses 14, 15.

NOTE.—The "third hour of the day" was 9 a. m., according to Jewish reckoning. This was the hour of morning prayer. Before this hour, the Jews did not partake of food, and on festal days, such as Pentecost, they abstained from food and drink till the sixth hour, noon. Peter refers to the early hour as proof that the charge of drunkenness was contrary to all probability. (Compare 1 Thess. 5: 7.)

When the Lord is working in power, there are those who make light of His presence, and mock when they should pray. In the most solemn meetings, some will laugh, whisper, and in other ways show their contempt and indifference. It was so at Pentecost. There were those who said with a sneer, "It is nothing; these men are drunken."

15. To what prophecy did Peter refer? What did he say of its fulfillment? Acts 2: 16-18.

NOTE.—"Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power. Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 55.

16. Where did Peter say the signs mentioned by Joel would appear? How many of these signs were seen at Pentecost? Verses 19, 20.

17. What glorious promise is given? Verse 21.

NOTE.—"Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be 'laborers together with God.' "—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 56.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Am I filled with the Holy Spirit?

What fruit of the Spirit is lacking in my Christian life?

LESSON 3

PETER PREACHES; A MULTITUDE CONVERTED

October 16, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 2: 22-47.

MEMORY VERSE: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, . . . and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38.

LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 41-46.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

Every known tongue was represented in the multitude that had come to Jerusalem to the yearly feast. This confusion might have been a great hindrance to the spread of the gospel, but the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples so to speak that every man heard what was said "in his own tongue." The priests and rulers tried to bring the apostles into disfavor by accusing them of being drunken, but Peter began to speak to the people very earnestly, showing them the meaning of what had taken place. This lesson is a continuation of Peter's sermon.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1-4 of the primary lesson. Read pages 41 and 42 of the Lesson Help.
3. Study Questions 5-7, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 5-7 of the primary lesson. Read pages 43 and 44 of the Lesson Help.
4. Study Questions 8-12, and notes. Children may answer the questions in paragraphs 1-7 of the primary lesson. Read pages 45 and 46 of the Lesson Help.
5. Study Questions 13-17, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 8-10 of the primary lesson.
6. Note the teaching of the lesson on the state of the dead, the resurrection, conviction, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Spirit. See that the children comprehend the essential points.
7. Review the lesson by using questions. Discuss the questions under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. In speaking to the Jews, what does Peter say of the way God showed approval of Jesus of Nazareth? Acts 2: 22.

2. What did he charge them with doing? Verse 23.

NOTE.—This text is rendered in the American Revised Version: "Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay."

3. What does Peter declare God had done? Why was it not possible for death to hold Christ captive? Verse 24.

NOTE.—"Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed. Christ bowed His head and died, but He held fast His faith and His submission to God."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 761.

4. Will death be able to hold the righteous dead? If you should die, would it be able to hold you? John 5: 24, 25; 1 Thess. 4: 14.

5. How had David foretold the resurrection? Acts 2: 25-28; Ps. 16: 8-11.

NOTE.—David here voices beautifully the hope of every one who dies fully trusting the Lord. It was written beforehand of Christ, "My flesh also shall rest in hope," because it was impossible that He, the Life-giver, should be holden of death. He passed through the portals of the tomb, and "tasted death for every man." But He "arose triumphant" over the foe of all mankind, death; and "at the last trump," He will call forth the sleeping saints, who shall arise from their dusty beds "with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads," and "sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

6. **How did Peter apply this prophecy? Of whom was David writing? Acts 2: 29-32.**

NOTE.—To show that this prophecy did not refer to David himself, but to Christ, the "Holy One," Peter appealed to the fact that David was still dead and in his tomb. Jesus had been raised without seeing corruption, and was now exalted at the right hand of God, shedding forth the Pentecostal blessing promised when He ascended.

"Peter did not refer to the teachings of Christ to prove his position, because he knew that the prejudice of his hearers was so great that his words on this subject would be of no effect. Instead, he spoke to them of David, who was regarded by the Jews as one of the patriarchs of their nation."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 41.

7. **When Christ ascended, where did He go? For how long a time? How did Peter connect Him with the gracious outpouring of the Spirit? Verses 33-35.**

8. **Where was Jesus when He was revealed to Stephen? What significance do you attach to the expression so often used in the Scriptures, "at His right hand"? Acts 7: 55, 56.**

9. **Did David go to heaven when he died? What became of him at his death? Acts 2: 34, 29.**

10. **In closing his sermon, what assuring conclusion did Peter draw? Verse 36.**

11. **What effect did Peter's sermon have on the people? What inquiry did they make? Verse 37.**

NOTE.—"Some of those who listened to the apostles had taken an active part in the condemnation and death of Christ. Their voices had mingled with the rabble in calling for His crucifixion. . . . Now they heard the disciples declaring that it was the Son of God who had been crucified. Priests and rulers trembled. Conviction and anguish seized the people. . . . Among those who listened to the disciples were devout Jews, who were sincere in their belief. The power that accompanied the words of the speaker convinced them that Jesus was indeed the Messiah."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 42, 43.

12. **What reply did Peter make? Will this answer apply to all who are convicted of sin? In whose name are all to be baptized? For what purpose? What gift is promised? Verse 38. (See also Matt. 28: 19.)**

NOTE.—Cicero says the words of Pericles left stings in the minds of his hearers. Luke says that when the multitude heard the words of Peter, they were pricked in their heart. The words in the American Revised Version of the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the fifty-first psalm are these:

"Thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:
Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering.
The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

"Contrite" comes from the Latin word "contritus," and means literally crushed, bruised, ground to powder. A mind that is stung, a

heart that is pricked, or broken, or bruised, are expressions denoting *contrition, an awakened conscience.*

13. How inclusive is the promise of the gift of the Spirit? From what did Peter exhort them to save themselves? Acts 2: 39, 40.

NOTE.—"The disciples were to begin their work where they were. The hardest and most unpromising field was not to be passed by. So every one of Christ's workers is to begin where he is. In our own families may be souls hungry for sympathy, starving for the bread of life. There may be children to be trained for Christ. There are heathen at our very doors. Let us do faithfully the work that is nearest. Then let our efforts be extended as far as God's hand may lead the way. The work of many may appear to be restricted by circumstances; but wherever it is, if performed with faith and diligence it will be felt to the uttermost parts of the earth. Christ's work when upon earth appeared to be confined to a narrow field, but multitudes from all lands heard His message. God often uses the simplest means to accomplish the greatest results. It is His plan that every part of His work shall depend on every other part, as a wheel within a wheel, all acting in harmony. The humblest worker, moved by the Holy Spirit, will touch invisible chords, whose vibrations will ring to the ends of the earth, and make melody through eternal ages."—"The Desire of Ages," pp. 822, 823.

14. Who, and how many, were added to the Lord that day? Verse 41.

NOTE.—When a person is converted, he is joined, "added," to the Lord. Acts 5: 14. "I am the vine, ye are the branches," Jesus said. The converted one also unites with God's people, and in this sense may be said to be "added unto them."

15. What were the results of the day's experience? Acts 2: 42, 43.

16. *How were the believers affected with reference to their earthly* possessions? Verses 44, 45.

17. What did the believers do daily? What did the Lord do daily? Verses 46, 47.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Have I repented? Have I received remission of sins?

Have I been baptized? Have I received the gift of the Holy Ghost?

What personal lesson may I learn from the experience of Christ on the cross?

What comfort in death may I receive from this lesson?

How many souls have been "added to the Lord" through my instrumentality?

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

CHINA

OVERFLOW—MEDICAL TRAINING CENTER

December 25, 1926

LESSON 4

THE LAME MAN HEALED

October 23, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 3.
MEMORY VERSE: "Faith in His name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know." Acts 3: 16.
LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 57-60.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

"A short time after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and immediately after a season of earnest prayer, Peter and John, going up to the temple to worship, saw at the gate Beautiful a cripple, forty years of age, whose life, from his birth, had been one of pain and infirmity. This unfortunate man had long desired to see Jesus, that he might be healed; but he was almost helpless, and was far removed from the scene of the great Physician's labors. His pleadings at last induced some friends to bear him to the gate of the temple, but upon arriving there, he found that the One upon whom his hopes were centered, had been put to a cruel death.

"His disappointment excited the sympathy of those who knew for how long he had eagerly hoped to be healed by Jesus, and daily they brought him to the temple, in order that passers-by might be induced by pity to give him a trifle to relieve his wants."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 57, 58.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson," and Acts 2: 44-47; 3: 1-26. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-5, as a review, and notes. Children may tell what they remember of the closing part of last week's lesson.
3. Study Questions 6-8, and note. Children may read paragraphs 1-3 of the primary lesson. Read pages 57 and 58 of the Lesson Help.
4. Study Questions 9-12. Children may read paragraphs 4-6 of the primary lesson. Read page 59 of the Lesson Help.
5. Study Questions 13-18, and note. Children may read paragraphs 7-9 of the primary lesson. Read page 60 of the Lesson Help.
6. Note the teaching of the lesson on the care of the needy, daily prayer, the spirit of rejoicing, the inefficacy of money, repentance, blotting out sins, and the fate of unbelievers. See that the children comprehend the essential points.
7. Review the lesson by using questions. Discuss the questions under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. How did the believers spend much of their time after Pentecost? What was the result of this continued labor for souls? Acts 2: 46, 47.

NOTE.—New members were added to the church "daily." To what, think you, was this increase due?

2. How did they provide for the physical needs of believers? Verses 44, 45.

NOTE.—"'Had all things common.' They were members of one family and held things in common as members of a family do. Everything was for the good of all. No one said that anything 'was his own.' Some sold of their possessions, and distributed the money as

every man had need, whether citizens or strangers. Some were poor, some may have suffered loss by being driven from their homes on account of their religion. Some were strangers without employment. Great numbers had come from distant countries, and were remaining to know more about the new religion. There was no compulsion to sell their property, but the impulse of their own loving generous hearts. 'Parted them to all,' not to friends only, but 'as every man had need.'" —Peloubet.

3. With what were their hearts filled? What gave them favor with all the people? Verse 46, last part; 47, first part.

4. What is the second named fruit of the Holy Spirit? Gal. 5: 22.

5. With what was Jesus anointed? Heb. 1: 9.

NOTE.—"We need to praise God more 'for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.' Ps. 107: 8. Our devotional exercises should not consist wholly in asking and receiving. Let us not be always thinking of our wants, and never of the benefits we receive. We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We are the constant recipients of God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us."—"Steps to Christ," pp. 107, 108.

6. Who saw Peter and John going into the temple one day to pray? Why was this man there? For what did he ask? How did Peter arouse expectation in the heart of this poor man? Acts 3: 1-5.

7. What shows the pecuniary poverty of Peter and John? What shows their spiritual wealth? How was the lame man healed? Which is greater, that which the man asked for, or that which was imparted to him? Verses 6, 7.

NOTE.—"Peter gave the lame man two things, each of which was worth far more than silver and gold. He gave him the power to earn his own living. . . . Then Peter bestowed a far greater gift than this,—he brought him to the Lord Jesus, into the Christian life. Jesus in all His healings gave the higher blessing with the lower. He always did more than heal the body. That was the lesser part of the cure." —Peloubet.

8. What was the man's conduct after his healing? How did this miracle affect the people? Verses 8-11.

9. What shows that a wonderful change had been wrought in Peter since the trial and condemnation of Christ? Verse 12. (Compare Matt. 26: 69-75.)

10. In what words did Peter disclaim all credit for this miracle? To whom did he direct the attention of the people? Acts 3: 12, 13, first part.

11. What awful charge did he make against the Jews standing by? What endearing names did he use in referring to Jesus? Who was the murderer referred to in verse 14? Verses 13-15.

12. Through what channel did he say healing power came to the cripple? How did he seem to soften the charge against the priests?

What reference does he again make to the prophecy concerning Jesus? Verses 16-18.

13. What did Peter then exhort the people to do? What would be the result if they would repent? Verse 19.

14. Do men need to repent of sin committed ignorantly? Lev. 4: 27, 28.

NOTE.—"I saw that none could share the 'refreshing,' unless they obtain the victory over every besetment, over pride, selfishness, love of the world, and over every wrong word and action. We should, therefore, be drawing nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be earnestly seeking that preparation necessary to enable us to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. Let all remember that God is holy, and that none but holy beings can ever dwell in His presence."—"Early Writings," p. 71.

15. Who does Peter say will be sent to His people? How long will Christ remain in heaven? Who has spoken of the time when all things will be restored? Acts 3: 20, 21.

16. What scripture did Peter then quote? Where is it found? What does he say will be the fate of the man who does not accept Christ? Verses 22, 23.

17. How many of the prophets spoke of these things? What was the relation of Peter's hearers to the prophets? Verses 24, 25.

18. How had God specially favored the Jews of Peter's day? Verse 26.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What did Peter have to give that made the cripple whole? Do I have that power to give to others? If not, why not?

What do I need to-day in my Christian experience more than anything else?

Which do I regard of greater value—the power of Christ in my life, or much silver and gold?

What does preparation for the Lord's coming involve? Acts 3: 19.

LESSON 5

THE TRIAL OF PETER AND JOHN

October 30, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 4: 1-31.

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

LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 61-69.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

The lame man at the gate of the temple was healed about three o'clock in the afternoon. In this lesson the story is continued, telling what took place later in the afternoon, and the next morning.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Note the "Setting of the Lesson" and read the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-3, and note. Children may read paragraphs 1-3 of the primary lesson. Read pages 61 and 62 of the Lesson Help.
3. Study Questions 4-7, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 4 and 5 of the primary lesson. Read pages 63 and 64 of the Lesson Help.
4. Study Questions 8-11, and note. Children may read paragraphs 6-9 of the primary lesson. Read pages 65 and 66 of the Lesson Help.
5. Study Questions 12-18. Children may read paragraphs 10 and 11 of the primary lesson. Read pages 67-69 of the Lesson Help.
6. Tell the story of the lesson, each member of the family taking part. Study the prophetic words referred to by Peter, and their application to the lesson. What is the teaching of the lesson on the efficacy of the name of Jesus, the duty of obedience to God, and the power of prayer?
7. Review the lesson by using questions. Discuss topics under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. To whom was the first part of Peter's address given? Acts 3: 12, first clause; 4: 1, first clause.

2. How was it abruptly terminated? Acts 4: 1.

NOTE.—"Inside the sacred area [of the temple] the Jewish law was supreme, and Jewish penalties were enacted. In order, therefore, that the temple might be duly protected the priests watched in three places, and the Levites in twenty-one places, in addition to all their other duties connected with the offering of sacrifices and the details of public worship. These guards discharged the duties of a sacred or temple police, and their captain was called the captain of the temple."—"The Expositor's Bible," vol. 1, p. 175.

The Sadducees were not only a religious, but a political party. They formed a part of the Jewish Sanhedrin. They were the free thinkers of the day. They stood in direct opposition to the Pharisees. They believed that the Scriptures did not teach a future life, and that angels and spirits did not exist. They possessed wealth, influence, and power, and lived a life of ease and luxury. The humble, self-denying life of Jesus did not appeal to them, and they despised Him and His followers.

3. What truth did the apostles preach? What was done with them after Peter had spoken to the people in Solomon's Porch? What fruit was borne by Peter's sermon? Verses 2-4.

4. Name the men and the different classes that assembled at the trial of the apostles. Verses 5, 6.

NOTE.—Rulers, elders, scribes, temple police, high priest, John and Alexander, not mentioned elsewhere, were present to try the apostles on this occasion. The Sanhedrin, when complete, consisted of seventy-one members; but twenty-three constituted a quorum competent to transact business. The trial of the followers of Jesus was conducted by the same men who had condemned their Lord. John 11: 49; 18: 12-14.

5. What question was first asked the disciples? Acts 4: 7.

NOTE.—"The Sanhedrin were sitting as a board of inquisitors. They did not deny the miracle which had been wrought. We are scarcely fit judges of the attitude of mind occupied by an Easterner, specially by an Eastern Jew of those earlier ages, when confronted

with a miracle. He did not deny the facts brought under his notice. He was too well acquainted with magic and the strange performances of its professors to do so. He merely inquired as to the sources of the power, whether they were divine or diabolical."—"The Expositor's Bible," vol. 1, p. 188.

6. By what spirit was Peter controlled when he made courteous and respectful reply? Verse 8.

7. What are the principal points in Peter's reply? Verses 8-12.

NOTE.—"Than Christ, 'there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' Through faith we receive the grace of God; but faith is not our Saviour. It earns nothing. It is the hand by which we lay hold upon Christ, and appropriate His merits, the remedy for sin. And we can not even repent without the aid of the Spirit of God."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 175.

8. What caused the persecutors to marvel? What further helped the apostles? Verses 13, 14.

9. What question did the Sanhedrin discuss among themselves? What did they decide? In accordance with this decision, what command was given the apostles? Verses 15-18.

10. When Peter and John heard their command, what reply did they make? Verses 19, 20.

NOTE.—"We are to recognize human government as as ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God's word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A 'Thus saith the Lord' is not to be set aside for a 'Thus saith the church' or a 'Thus saith the state.' The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 69.

"Conscientious men are not the enemies, but the friends, of any government but a tyranny. They are its strength, and not its weakness. Daniel, in Babylon, praying contrary to the law, was the true friend and supporter of the government while those who, in their pretended zeal for the law and the constitution, would strike down the good man, were its real enemies. It is only when government transcends its sphere, that it comes in conflict with the consciences of men." —"Moral Science," James H. Fairchild, p. 179.

11. What course did the council then take? Why did they not punish the apostles? In what state of mind were the people? How old was the man who was healed? Verses 21, 22.

12. Where did the apostles go when released? In the united prayer of the believers which followed, with what language did they approach God? Verses 23, 24.

13. What prophetic scripture did they quote? What application of this prophecy is made in the prayer? Verses 25-28.

14. How many did they charge with being involved in the death of Christ? Verse 27.

15. How are all concerned in it? Heb. 2: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 6.

16. How do some nowadays become partakers of the guilt of those who put Him to death? Heb. 6: 4-6.

17. What special entreaty did the believers then make of the Lord? Acts 4: 29, 30.

18. How did God answer? What did they do? Verse 31.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Why should I pray for more of God's power?

What preparation do I need to enable me to witness for Christ when persecuted?

Am I ready now to give a reason for my hope with meekness and fear? I Peter 3: 15.

What steps must I take to be "ready always"?

What does this lesson teach me of the power of united prayer?

LESSON 6

THE EXPERIENCE OF ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA

November 6, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: *Acts 4: 32 to 5: 11.*
MEMORY VERSE: "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are His delight." Prov. 12: 22.
LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 70-76.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

"As the disciples proclaimed the truths of the gospel in Jerusalem, God bore witness to their word, and a multitude believed. Many of these early believers were immediately cut off from family and friends by the zealous bigotry of the Jews, and it was necessary to provide them with food and shelter. . . . Those among the believers who had money and possessions, cheerfully sacrificed them to meet the emergency."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 70.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1-4 of the primary lesson. Read pages 70 and 71 of the Lesson Help.
3. Study Questions 5-7, and note. Children may read paragraphs 5-9 of the primary lesson. Read page 72 of the Lesson Help.
4. Study Questions 8-12, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 10-12 of the primary lesson. Read pages 73 and 74 of the Lesson Help.
5. Study Questions 13-16, and note. Children may answer questions in the primary lesson. Read pages 75 and 76 of the Lesson Help.
6. What is the teaching of this lesson on our duty to others? on hypocrisy, lying, and covetousness? Discuss topics under heading "Some Things to Think About" in the "Youth's Instructor."
7. Review the lesson by using questions. Discuss the questions under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. What is said of the spirit of unity and benevolence of the early Christians? Acts 4: 32.

NOTE.—"Those who are destitute of sympathy, tenderness, and love, can not do Christ's work. . . . Christian benevolence and brotherly love must be far more abundantly shown. The words are ringing in my ears, 'Draw together, draw together.' The solemn, sacred truth for this time is to unify the people of God. The desire for preëminence must die. One subject of emulation must swallow up all others,—who will most nearly resemble Christ in character? Who will most entirely hide self in Jesus?"—"Testimonies," vol. 6, p. 42.

2. How did the experience of being filled with the Spirit affect the preaching of the apostles? What theme did they continue to present? Verse 33.

3. What plan of support was voluntarily entered upon? What was the effect on the believers? Verses 34, 35.

NOTE.—"This liberality on the part of the believers was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. The converts to the gospel were 'of one heart and of one soul.' One common interest controlled them,—the success of the mission intrusted to them; and covetousness had no place in their lives. Their love for their brethren and the cause they had espoused, was greater than their love of money and possessions. Their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of higher value than earthly wealth.

"Thus it will ever be when the Spirit of God takes possession of the life. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Christ, will follow the example of Him who for our sake became poor, that through His poverty we might be made rich. Money, time, influence,—all the gifts they have received from God's hand,—they will value only as a means of advancing the work of the gospel. Thus it was in the early church; and when in the church of to-day it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 70, 71.

4. Who is named as one who sold his land? Where was his home? Verses 36, 37.

NOTE.—With your concordance trace the history of this man in the New Testament, noting the lessons we may learn from him.

The chapter division just here is unfortunate. The mean, covetous, hypocritical act of Ananias is so sharply contrasted with the noble, generous act of Barnabas, that it should not be separated from it in the narrative.

5. What case of deception occurred in the community of believers? Acts 5: 1, 2.

6. What evidently was the motive of Ananias and Sapphira in thus doing? How did Peter reason with Ananias about his act? What right did he have concerning his possessions? Verses 3, 4.

NOTE.—"In sharp contrast to the example of benevolence shown by the believers, was the conduct of Ananias and Sapphira. . . . They had been present with other believers when, after the apostles had

prayed, 'the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' Deep conviction had rested upon all present, and under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, Ananias and Sapphira had made a pledge to give to the Lord the proceeds from the sale of certain property.

"Afterward, Ananias and Sapphira grieved the Holy Spirit by yielding to feelings of covetousness. They began to regret their promise. . . . They thought they had been too hasty, that they ought to reconsider their decision. They talked the matter over, and decided not to fulfill their pledge. They saw, however, that those who parted with their possessions to supply the needs of their poorer brethren, were held in high esteem among the believers; and ashamed to have their brethren know that their selfish souls grudged that which they had solemnly dedicated to God, they deliberately decided to sell their property, and pretend to give all the proceeds into the general fund, but really to keep a large share for themselves. Thus they would secure their living from the common store, and at the same time gain the high esteem of their brethren.

"But God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. Ananias and Sapphira practiced fraud in their dealing with God; they lied to the Holy Spirit, and their sin was visited with swift and terrible judgment."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 71, 72.

7. As Ananias heard the words of Peter, what judgment of God came upon him? How were those present and those who heard what had happened, affected by these things? What disposal was made of the body of Ananias? Verses 5, 6.

8. Not long after, who came in where the apostles were? Of what did she have no knowledge? Verse 7.

9. What did Peter ask her? What was her reply? Verse 8.

10. In the power of the Spirit, what solemn words did Peter then address to her? Against whom had Ananias and Sapphira sinned? Verse 9.

11. What followed Peter's words? Verse 10.

NOTE.—"Infinite Wisdom saw that this signal manifestation of the wrath of God was necessary to guard the young church from becoming demoralized. Their numbers were rapidly increasing. The church would have been endangered if, in the rapid increase of converts, men and women had been added who, while professing to serve God, were worshiping mammon. This judgment testified that men can not deceive God, that He detects the hidden sin of the heart, and that He will not be mocked. It was designed as a warning to the church, to lead them to avoid pretense and hypocrisy, and to beware of robbing God.

"Not to the early church only, but to all future generations, this example of God's hatred of covetousness, fraud, and hypocrisy, was given as a danger signal. It was covetousness that Ananias and Sapphira had first cherished. The desire to retain for themselves a part of that which they had promised to the Lord, led them into fraud and hypocrisy."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 73, 74.

12. **What resulted from this awful visitation? Verse 11.**

NOTE.—The case of Ananias was a clear case of hypocrisy. He was not compelled to contribute his property to the common cause. He might have kept his possessions, or he might have sold them and kept the money. Under the influence of the Spirit, he pledged his property, but did not have the courage to keep his pledge. Yet he loved the appearance of paying it, and the esteem of men that would follow. So he adopted a course of hypocrisy—attempted to serve God and mammon.

13. **What is a root of all kinds of evil? What is the result of cherishing this love? 1 Tim. 6: 10.** Answer: The American Revised Version reads: "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

14. **How may we secure "great gain"? What is the danger to those who "will be rich"? 1 Tim. 6: 6-9.**

15. **What is the believer urged to do? Verse 11.**

16. **What does the apostle Paul exhort us to do with a covetous disposition, in common with other evil things? What definition does he give to covetousness? Col. 3: 5.**

NOTE.—"In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, the sin of fraud against God was speedily punished. The same sin was often repeated in the after history of the church, and is committed by many in our time. But though it may not be attended by the visible manifestation of God's displeasure, it is no less heinous in His sight now than in the apostles' time. The warning has been given; God has clearly manifested His abhorrence of this sin; and all who give themselves up to hypocrisy and covetousness may be sure that they are destroying their own souls."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 76.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Am I like Ananias and Sapphira in any way?

Am I guilty of not strictly speaking the truth?

Am I guilty of any of the sins coupled with covetousness in the Scriptures?

LESSON 7

PRISON DOORS OPENED; GAMALIEL GIVES COUNSEL

November 13, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 5: 12-42.
MEMORY VERSE: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5: 29.
LESSON HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 77-86; "Early Writings," pp. 192-197.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

The disciples continued to tell the story of Jesus in the city of Jerusalem. Priests and rulers were greatly surprised to hear the clear,

bold preaching of the apostles. "The power of the risen Saviour had indeed fallen on the disciples, and their work was accompanied by signs and miracles that daily increased the number of believers."

"Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul;
Love is the only angel who can bid the gates unroll."

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1 and 2 of the primary lesson. Read "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 77-80.
3. Study Questions 5-9, and note. Children may read paragraphs 3-7 of the primary lesson. Read "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 81 and 82.
4. Study Questions 10-12, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 8-10 of the primary lesson. Read "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 83-86.
5. Study Questions 13-16, and notes. Children may answer questions in the primary lesson. Read "Early Writings," pp. 192-197.
6. Tell the story of the lesson in detail, each person taking part. Topics for discussion:
   Does the memory verse apply under all circumstances?
   What two illustrations are given of Peter's courageous spirit?
   Was Gamaliel's counsel wise or unwise?
7. Review the lesson by using questions. Discuss questions under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. For what had the apostles prayed? Acts 4: 29, 30.

2. How was the prayer that signs and wonders be wrought answered? Where, and in what spirit, did they meet? Acts 5: 12.

3. What did those dare not do who were not in accord with the believers? How were the believers regarded? Verse 13.

NOTE.—Great fear came upon all the church,—the fear of doing wrong. No doubt those who were not Christians were afraid to join a people where sin was swiftly uncovered even though done in secret, and where punishment speedily followed. Only those who were honest in heart asked for admittance to church fellowship.

4. What shows that the punishment of sin did not keep people from being "added to the Lord"? What were some of the "signs and wonders"? How many were healed? Verses 14-16.

NOTE.—"The crowds gathered round them, and those who were healed shouted the praises of God, and glorified the name of the Redeemer. The priests and rulers saw that Christ was extolled above them."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 78.

5. How did the members of the Sanhedrin feel about these manifestations of God's power? What did they do? Verses 17, 18.

6. What experience did the apostles have that night? What command did the angel give? Verses 19, 20.

NOTE.—"There was to be no attempt made to conceal their escape. They were to go back to the same place where their most frequent teachings had been given before, and they were to continue the same teaching. They are not directed to appeal to the multitude for sympathy, nor to try and excite any feeling against those who had arrested them."—"Cambridge Bible," p. 63.

7. Relate the events of the next morning. Verses 21-23.

8. What effect did these things have upon the Jewish officials? What disquieting message came to them? Verses 24, 25.

9. What did they then do? Of what did the high priest accuse the apostles? Were his charges in a measure true? Verses 26-28.

10. What reason did Peter give for disregarding the command of the council? In what stirring way did Peter again set forth the truth concerning Jesus? Verses 29-32.

NOTE.—"Although the apostles were miraculously delivered from prison, they were not saved from examination and punishment. . . . By sending an angel to deliver them, God had given them a token of His love, and an assurance of His presence. It was now their part to suffer for the sake of the One whose gospel they were preaching. In the history of prophets and apostles, are many noble examples of loyalty to God. Christ's witnesses have endured imprisonment, torture, and death itself, rather than break God's commands."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 81.

11. What did Peter say Christ had been exalted to give? Verse 31.

12. Who did he say were witnesses of those things? To whom did he say God had given the Holy Spirit? Verse 32.

NOTE.—"Let any humble disciple submit wholly to the Spirit's sovereign control, and He becomes to that disciple all and more than all that nature's forces become to humanity when guided by scientific intelligence,—his artist to delineate for him things divine and celestial, his refiner and purifier to purge away the dross from character, his giant helper to subdue all foes before him, his pilot over life's unknown sea, his motive power in holy enterprise, his messenger between earth and heaven, and his illuminator in the darkness of midnight and mystery. . . . And therefore it is that our Saviour bade His disciples wait, tarrying until endued, for up to that point power was not theirs." —Pierson, in "The New Acts of the Apostles," pp. 194, 195.

13. How did Peter's words affect the council? How did God provide for the defense of His servants? Verses 33, 34.

NOTE.—"In the council there was one man who recognized the voice of God in the words spoken by the disciples. This was Gamaliel, a Pharisee of good reputation, and a man of learning and high position. His clear intellect saw that the violent step contemplated by the priests would lead to terrible consequences. Before addressing those present, he requested that the prisoners be removed. He well knew the elements he had to deal with; he knew that the murderers of Christ would hesitate at nothing in order to carry out their purpose. He then spoke with great deliberation and calmness."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 82, 83.

14. What did Gamaliel admonish the council to do? What two illustrations did he give? Verses 34-37.

15. What was Gamaliel's final conclusion? What effect did this address have on the council? What did they do before letting the apostles go? Verses 38-40.

NOTE.—Paul tells us, in 2 Corinthians 11: 24, that he "was five times flogged by the Jews. When the Jews inflicted this punishment the culprit was tied to a pillar in the synagogue; the executioner, armed with a scourge of three distinct lashes, inflicted the punishishment; while an official standing by read selected portions of the law between each stroke. Thirteen strokes of the threefold scourge was equivalent to the thirty-nine stripes. This was the flogging the apostles suffered on this occasion."—"The Expositor's Bible," vol. 1, pp. 244, 245.

16. *How did this affect the labor of the apostles?* Verses 41, 42.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Am I ready to suffer shame for Christ's sake?

If not, how shall I prepare myself for that time?

What would I do if the answers to my prayers brought hardship?

Do I rejoice when I am "counted worthy to suffer shame for His name"?

LESSON 8

DEACONS APPOINTED; ARREST OF STEPHEN

November 20, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 6.

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

LESSON HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 87-102; "Early Writings," pp. 197-199.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

The early Christian church was made up of people of various nationalities. Among these were Grecian Jews between whom and the Jews of Palestine there had long existed a feeling of distrust and dislike. Complaint was made that the widows of the foreign Jews did not receive a just share of the support given to needy believers. Naturally they would need it even more than the widows who were among acquaintances and friends.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.

2. Study Questions 1-3, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1-3 of the primary lesson. Read "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 87 and 88.

3. Study Questions 4-7, and note. Children may read paragraphs 4-7 of the primary lesson. Read "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 89-92.

4. Study Questions 8-12, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 8-10 of the primary lesson. Read "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 96-99.

5. Study Questions 13-16. Children may answer questions in the primary lesson. Read "Early Writings," pp. 197-199.

6. Tell the story of the lesson, each member taking part. Discuss the following topics introduced in the lesson:

The author of suspicion and murmuring among believers.

Are qualifications for deacons higher than is required of laymen?

Division of responsibility and labor.

7. Review the lesson by using questions in the various lesson sheets. Discuss questions under "Personal Application."

1. When the number of disciples had multiplied, what arose among them? Why did they murmur? Acts 6: 1.

NOTE.—"The early church was made up of many classes of people, of various nationalities. . . . Among those of the Hebrew faith who were gathered at Jerusalem, were some commonly known as Grecians, between whom and the Jews of Palestine there had long existed distrust and even antagonism."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 87.

2. What is meant by the terms "Hebrews" and "Grecians"?

NOTE.—"A Hebrew, according to the description of the time, was a Jew born in Palestine who spoke the Hebrew tongue, or the dialect of it called Aramaic, and read the Scriptures in their original language, Hebrew. A Hellenist (Grecian Jew) was a Jew of the Dispersion or a converted foreigner, who used, not the sacred language of the race, but Greek, and read his Bible in the Septuagint (i. e., Greek) version." —Luckock.

3. What steps did the apostles take to settle the difficulty? Verse 2.

NOTE.—Up to this time, the apostles themselves had looked after the distribution of assistance to the needy. But the number of believers had now increased to such extent that if the apostles continued to give personal attention to this work, it would virtually mean that they should "leave the word of God," and give all their time to business matters. This it did not seem right to them to do.

4. What plan did they lay before the brethren? What were regarded as essential qualifications in the men to be selected? Verse 3.

NOTE.—Notice the qualifications needed by the men to be appointed over "this business." First, they were to be men known to be honest, and of good reputation in the community. Second, though they were to look after temporal matters, they must be "full of the Holy Ghost." Third, they were to be wise men, those having an understanding of the responsibilities to be placed upon them.

5. What would the apostles themselves do? Verse 4.

6. How did the believers receive the plan? Who was the first man chosen? What is said of him? Verse 5.

7. After the men had been chosen, how were they set apart for the special work which they were to do? Verse 6.

8. What was the result of electing these deacons? Who are especially mentioned as accepting the faith? Verse 7.

NOTE.—"That this step was in the order of God, is revealed in the immediate results for good that were seen. . . . This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles, and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons. The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 89, 90.

9. Who of the seven was especially blessed in his ministration? Verse 8.

10. What opposition did Stephen encounter? Verse 9.

NOTE.—The Libertines were "freedmen" who had bought their liberty from Roman slavery. They had a synagogue in which they met. The Cyrenians were Jews from Cyrene, in North Africa. The Alexandrians came from Egypt, and others were present from Cilicia and different parts of Asia. These all disputed Stephen's claim that Jesus was the Son of God—the Saviour of the world.

11. What were Stephen's opponents not able to resist? Verse 10.

NOTE.—"Stephen, the foremost of the seven deacons, was a man of deep piety and broad faith. Though a Jew by birth, he spoke the Greek language, and was familiar with the customs and manners of the Greeks. He therefore found opportunity to preach the gospel in the synagogues of the Greek Jews. He was very active in the cause of Christ, and boldly proclaimed his faith. Learned rabbis and doctors of the law engaged in public discussion with him, confidently expecting an easy victory. But 'they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.' Not only did he speak in the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was plain that he was a student of the prophecies, and learned in all matters of the law. He ably defended the truths that he advocated, and utterly defeated his opponents."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 97.

12. What measures did they then take against him? Verses 11, 12.

NOTE.—"As the priests and rulers saw the power that attended the preaching of Stephen, they were filled with bitter hatred. Instead of yielding to the evidence that he presented, they determined to silence his voice by putting him to death. On several occasions, they had bribed the Roman authorities to pass over without comment instances where the Jews had taken the law into their own hands, and had tried, condemned, and executed prisoners in accordance with their national custom. The enemies of Stephen did not doubt that they could again pursue such a course without danger to themselves. They determined to risk the consequences, and therefore seized Stephen, and brought him before the Sanhedrin council for trial."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 98.

13. What charge was brought against Stephen? Verse 13.

14. What did false witnesses testify they had heard him say? Verse 14.

15. How did Stephen appear to the members of the council? Verse 15.

16. What similarity is there in the accusation against Stephen and the charge against Jesus? Matt. 26: 61.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What lesson may I learn from what was required of the persons chosen to serve as deacons?

Am I willing to begin working for God in a humble way, as did Stephen?

LESSON 9

STEPHEN'S SERMON BEFORE THE COUNCIL; HIS DEATH

November 27, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 7.
MEMORY VERSE: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2: 10.
LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 99-102.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

Witnesses had been hired to swear that they had heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against the temple and the law.

"When Stephen was questioned as to the truth of the charges against him, he began his defense in a clear, thrilling voice, which rang through the council hall. In words that held the assembly spellbound, he proceeded to rehearse the history of the chosen people of God."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 99.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and note. Children may read paragraphs 1 and 2 of the primary lesson.
3. Study Questions 5-12, and note. Children may read paragraphs 3-6 of the primary lesson.
4. Study Questions 13-16. Children may read paragraphs 7-9 of the primary lesson.
5. Study Questions 17-22, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 10-12 of the primary lesson.
6. Read the pages cited in the Lesson Help. Children may answer questions in the primary lesson.
7. Review the various points in Stephen's sermon before the council, each member of the family taking part. Tell the story of Stephen's death. Discuss the questions under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. What was the formal charge brought against Stephen? Acts 6: 11, 13, 14.

NOTE.—"Learned Jews from the surrounding countries were summoned for the purpose of refuting the arguments of the prisoner. Saul of Tarsus was present, and took a leading part against Stephen. He brought the weight of eloquence and the logic of the rabbis to bear upon the case, to convince the people that Stephen was preaching delusive and dangerous doctrines; but in Stephen he met one who had a full understanding of the purpose of God in the spreading of the gospel to other nations."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 98.

2. In what ways did Stephen's trial resemble that of Jesus?—Answer: Stephen's trial was similar to that of Jesus in these particulars:

a. He was hated by priests and rulers.

b. They were determined that he should die, thus making him an example to intimidate other Christians.

c. False witnesses were hired to testify against him.

d. His last words were similar to those of Christ on the cross, as he prayed for forgiveness for his murderers.

3. What question did the high priest ask at the beginning of the trial? In reply, what line of history did Stephen rehearse? Why did he choose this method? What experiences of Abraham were first outlined? Acts 7: 1-4.

4. How much of the land promised to him did Abraham himself inherit? What experience did his descendants have in Egypt? What promise of deliverance was given them? Verses 5-8.

5. What motive caused Jacob's sons to sell their brother Joseph? How did God overrule Joseph's experience to fulfill His promise? Verses 9, 10.

6. What circumstances brought Joseph's brothers to Egypt? How did they become located there? Verses 11-15.

NOTE.—It will be noticed that in each historical case presented by Stephen, the servant of God was first rejected by his people, as was Jesus, yet God approved His own, and their adversaries were humiliated. This was true of Moses, and the unexpressed inference was that it would be the same in the case of Jesus, whom the Jews had put to death. The gist of Stephen's argument, however, was that a promise had been made to Abraham that had not yet been fulfilled (verse 5), and was therefore still to be fulfilled. This promise was to Abraham and to his seed. Abraham having died, the promise could be fulfilled only by a resurrection from the dead. The one through whom it was to be fulfilled was Christ, the Prophet promised in Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18. His hearers saw the drift of the argument plainly enough, but being determined not to be convinced, they stopped their ears, and condemned Stephen to death.

7. What circumstances surrounded God's people as the time drew near for their deliverance from Egypt? Acts 7: 17-19.

8. What deliverer was born at this time? What were some of his early experiences? Verses 20-29.

9. What call came to Moses after he had spent forty years in Midian? Verses 30-36.

10. After thus rehearsing the history of Israel, what prophecy did Stephen quote? Verse 37; Deut. 18: 15.

11. What did Moses say would be the fate of the man who did not receive that Prophet? Deut. 18: 18, 19.

12. Who did Stephen say was with Moses in the wilderness? To whom did He speak? Acts 7: 38.

13. How did the "fathers" treat the messenger from heaven? What demand did they make? In what way did God turn from them? Verses 39-43.

14. What did Stephen say became of the tabernacle? Afterward what did David and Solomon do? Verses 44-47.

15. Did the tabernacle or the temple keep the people from idolatry? 1 Kings 11: 7, 8; 2 Kings 23: 12-14.

16. How did the Jews regard the temple and the law? 1 Sam. 4: 3; Jer. 7: 4.

17. What did Stephen say of the dwelling place of the Most High? What statement did he then make that brought the crisis in his trial? Acts 7: 48-53.

NOTE.—"When Stephen had reached this point there was a tumult among the people. The prisoner read his fate in the countenances before him. He perceived the resistance that met his words, which were spoken at the dictation of the Holy Ghost. He knew that he was giving his last testimony. Few who read this address of Stephen properly appreciate it. The occasion, the time and place should be borne in mind to make his words convey their full significance. When he connected Jesus Christ with the prophecies, and spoke of the temple as he did, the priest, affecting to be horror-stricken, rent his robe. This act was to Stephen a signal that his voice would soon be silenced forever. Although he was just in the midst of his sermon, he abruptly concluded it by suddenly breaking away from the chain of history, and, turning upon his infuriated judges, said, 'Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye.' "—"The Spirit of Prophecy," vol, 3, pp. 297, 298.

18. Did this statement concerning the temple justify the charge of Stephen's enemies, or was it the unfolding of the same truth taught by Christ in John 4: 21, 24?

19. What did his enemies then do? Acts 7: 54.

NOTE.—"At this, priests and rulers were beside themselves with anger. Acting more like beasts of prey than human beings, they rushed upon Stephen, gnashing their teeth. In the cruel faces about him, the prisoner read his fate; but he did not waver. For him the fear of death was gone. For him the enraged priests and the excited mob had no terror."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 100.

20. What view was given Stephen before his death? Verses 55, 56.

NOTE.—"The scene about him faded from his vision; the gates of heaven were ajar, and Stephen, looking in, saw the glory of the courts of God, and Christ, as if just risen from His throne, standing ready to sustain His servant, who was about to suffer martyrdom for His name. When Stephen proclaimed the glorious scene opened before him, it was more than his persecutors could endure. They stopped their ears, that they might not hear his words, and uttering loud cries ran furiously upon him with one accord. . . . Amid the agonies of this most cruel death, the faithful martyr, like his divine Master, prayed for his murderers."—"The Spirit of Prophecy," vol. 3, pp. 298, 299.

21. Who appears now for the first time in this experience? Verses 57, 58.

NOTE.—"The witnesses who had accused Stephen were required to cast the first stones. These persons laid down their clothes at the feet of Saul, who had taken an active part in the disputation, and had consented to the prisoner's death."—"The Spirit of Prophecy," vol. 3, p. 299.

22. What two petitions were expressed in Stephen's last prayer? Verses 59, 60.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Am I now ready to give an intelligent reason for my hope in Christ, "with meekness and fear"?

If not ready now, how long will it take me to make the needed preparation?

When shall I begin this work?

LESSON 10

PHILIP PREACHING IN SAMARIA

December 4, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 8: 1-25.
MEMORY VERSE: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. 51: 10.
LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 103-107.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

The persecution of the believers in Jerusalem became more bitter after the death of Stephen. Many who had temporarily resided in that city now returned to their distant homes. The means by which the enemies of Christ sought to crush the gospel, were the means of scattering it, and "these holy fugitives were like so many lamps lighted by the fire of the Holy Spirit, spreading everywhere the sacred flame by which they themselves had been illuminated."

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1 and 2 of the primary lesson. Read pages 103-105 of the Lesson Help.
3. Study Questions 5-8, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 3-7 of the primary lesson. Read page 106 of the Lesson Help.
4. Study Questions 9-12, and note. Children may read paragraphs 8-11 of the primary lesson.
5. Study Questions 13-16. Children may answer questions in the primary lesson.
6. Tell the story of the lesson, each member of the family taking part. What is the teaching of the lesson concerning missionary efforts for foreigners, sincerity in experience, who should receive the Holy Spirit, and the great contrast between Philip and Simon in their work?
7. Review the lesson by using questions. Discuss topics under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. Who took part in the martyrdom of Stephen by consenting to his death? Acts 7: 58; 8: 1.

2. What is said of the burial of Stephen? How did Saul manifest his zeal as a persecutor? Acts 8: 2, 3.

3. What did he afterward say as to his motives and experience at that time? Acts 26: 9-11.

NOTE.—"At the scene of Stephen's trial and death, Saul had seemed to be imbued with a frenzied zeal. Afterward he was angered by his own secret conviction that Stephen had been honored by God at the very time when he was dishonored by men. Saul continued to persecute the church of God, hunting them down, seizing them in their houses, and delivering them up to the priests and rulers for imprisonment and death. His zeal in carrying forward this persecution brought terror to the Christians at Jerusalem. The Roman authorities made no special effort to stay the cruel work, and secretly aided the Jews, in order to conciliate them, and to secure their favor.

"After the death of Stephen, Saul was elected a member of the Sanhedrin council, in consideration of the part he had acted on that occasion. For a time he was a mighty instrument in the hands of Satan to carry out his rebellion against the Son of God."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 101, 102.

4. What good result followed the persecution of the church? Where did the members go? What did they do? Who alone remained in Jerusalem? Acts 8: 4, 1, last part; 11: 19-21.

NOTE.—"The persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem resulted in giving a great impetus to the work of the gospel. Success had attended the ministry of the Word in that place, and there was danger that the disciples would linger there too long, unmindful of the Saviour's commission to go to all the world. . . . To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 105.

5. To what place did Philip go? What did he preach to the people? What success attended his efforts? How did the Holy Spirit confirm Philip's preaching? How was the city affected? Acts 8: 5-8.

NOTE.—"Philip, one of the seven deacons, was among those driven from Jerusalem. . . . And when His disciples were driven from Jerusalem, some found in Samaria a safe asylum. The Samaritans welcomed these messengers of the gospel, and the Jewish converts gathered a precious harvest from among those who had once been their bitterest enemies.

"Philip's work in Samaria was marked with great success, and thus encouraged, he sent to Jerusalem for help. The apostles now perceived more fully the meaning of the words of Christ, 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.' "—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 106, 107.

6. What noted sorcerer did Philip meet? What had this man done? Verse 9.

7. How was this sorcerer regarded by the people? Verses 10, 11.

8. How did Philip's preaching affect the followers of Simon? How was Simon himself affected? Verses 12, 13.

NOTE.—"In the traditions of the early centuries this Simon Magus occupies a large place as a reputed enemy of the church. So far as the story of the Acts is concerned, he appears as a clever and un-

scrupulous magician, who by his arts and deceptions has played upon the ignorance and credulity of his followers so that they might accept his crude and mystical teachings, and more particularly might enrich him by their gifts. He had so impressed the people of Samaria that they regarded him as an incarnation of divine power. . . . The success of Philip is evidenced, then, by the fact that all the people turned to him from Simon, and that even 'Simon also himself believed; and being baptized, he continued with Philip.' Of course, his belief was quite imperfect; the sequel shows that he experienced neither true repentance nor faith. His influence over the people, however, was destroyed, and he was himself convinced that in the name of Jesus there was a power he himself had never known. He is thus the symbol of the false religious teachers, past and present, mystical, deceiving, selfish, who have opposed the gospel, but have been overcome by its power."—"The Acts," Charles R. Erdman, p. 71.

9. When the apostles at Jerusalem heard of Philip's success, whom did they send to assist him? Verse 14.

10. When these men arrived, what lack did they find in the experience of the believers? How was this lack supplied? Verses 15-17.

11. What proposal did Simon make to the apostles? What object did he have in making such a request? Verses 18, 19.

12. What name has been given to the sin of securing money, place, or position in the church by bribes or by unscrupulous personal influence?

NOTE.—"All traffic in things sacred has been called 'simony' from the name of this ancient sorcerer; and all who are tempted to make gain from holy offices or spiritual gifts do well to ponder the solemn, searching rebuke which fell from the lips of Peter. The words of Peter, however, are not to be regarded as an imprecation or a curse. They contain a call to repentance, but intimate that there is small hope that Simon will or can change his evil course. His reply to Peter expresses fear but no real contrition; it indicates, however, how completely Simon, the popular leader, has been discredited and silenced." —"The Acts," Charles R. Erdman, p. 73.

13. What was Peter's reply to Simon's request? Verses 20-23.

14. After this rebuke, what request did Simon make? Did he repent of his sin, or did he seek only to be sheltered from its punishment? Verse 24.

15. What did the apostles do on their return to Jerusalem? Verse 25.

16. What change had taken place in John's feelings since his visit to Samaria on another occasion? Luke 9: 52-54.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

What am I doing to win souls for Jesus?
What lessons may I learn from Philip's experience with Simon?
What sin manifested in Simon must I especially avoid?

LESSON 11

PHILIP AND THE MAN FROM ETHIOPIA

December 11, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 8: 26-40.
MEMORY VERSE: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts 8: 37.
LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 107-111.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

Philip was in Samaria. A great work had been done there, and many were rejoicing in the gospel. Peter and John, who came to Samaria to assist Philip, had returned to Jerusalem. This lesson sets forth the marvelous way in which Philip was led to leave Samaria, and his further experience.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-4, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1-3 of the primary lesson.
3. Study Questions 5-7, and note. Children may read paragraphs 4 and 5 of the primary lesson. Read pages 107 and 108 of the Lesson Help.
4. Study Questions 8-11. Children may read paragraphs 6-10 of the primary lesson. Read pages 109-111 of the Lesson Help.
5. Study Questions 12 and 13, and note. Children may read paragraph 11 of the primary lesson, and answer the questions in the entire lesson.
6. *Tell the story of the lesson, each member of the family taking part.* What is the teaching of the lesson on divine guidance, on providential openings, on the proper way to "confess Christ," and on the Scriptural method of baptism?
7. Review the lesson by using the questions. Discuss topics under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. While Philip was laboring at Samaria, what instruction was given him by the angel of the Lord? Acts 8: 26.

NOTE.—"In this instance we have an illustration of the care of God for His children. He called Philip from his successful ministry in Samaria, to cross the desert and go to Gaza to labor for a single inquiring soul. The promptness with which the eunuch accepted the gospel and acted upon its belief should be a lesson to us. God designs that we should be prompt in accepting and confessing Christ, prompt in obeying Him, and in answering the call of duty."—"The Spirit of Prophecy," vol. 3, p. 305.

2. How did Philip obey this call? Whom did he meet on his journey? Verse 27.

NOTE.—"From his great work in the city of Samaria Philip was suddenly summoned to the desert hills of southern Judea. Instead of addressing multitudes he was to bring the gospel message to one man; but the task is no less difficult and, to the mind of the Master, it is no less important. . . . The man whom Philip found on the road which led down from Jerusalem to Gaza was none other than the chancellor of the exchequer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He became a

Christian missionary to the continent of Africa."—"The Acts," Charles R. Erdman, p. 74.

"The kingdom of Meroe in Central Africa was ruled for centuries by a line of female sovereigns whose common title was Candace, as Pharaoh was that of the Egyptian monarchs."—"The Expositor's Bible," vol. 1, p. 412.

3. What was the Ethiopian officer doing when Philip saw him? Verse 28.

4. Through what agency was Philip directed in this missionary effort? Verse 26, first part; verse 29.

NOTE.—"To those who are willing to follow divine guidance surprising openings for testimony are certain to appear. These opportunities are fleeting. The Spirit said, 'Go,' and 'Philip ran.' . . . Had the chariot rolled by, as far as the evangelist was concerned, it would have been gone forever. Work for Christ demands immediate obedience to every prompting of His Spirit."—"The Acts," Charles R. Erdman, p. 75.

5. How does this experience show the goodness and love of God, and His desire to save men?

NOTE.—God brings the man who has light in touch with the man who desires light.

"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," p. 109.

6. From what portion of the Bible was the traveler reading? What question did Philip ask him? What reply did the stranger give? What did he request Philip to do? Verses 30, 31.

7. What were the words of prophecy which the officer read? Verses 32, 33; Isa. 53: 7, 8.

8. What question did he ask Philip? How did Philip improve the opportunity thus given? Acts 8: 34, 35.

9. After hearing Philip's message, what request did the officer make? Verse 36.

10. On what condition did Philip consent to baptize him? In what words did the convert confess Jesus as his Saviour? Verse 37.

11. What did Philip then do? Where did he go to baptize? Would he have needed to go down into the water if he had sprinkled him? Verse 38.

12. After the baptism, what became of Philip? How did the Ethiopian feel as he went on his way? Verse 39.

13. At what place was Philip found? Where did he preach? In what city did he have his home? Verse 40; Acts 21: 8.

NOTE.—"Philip was suddenly 'caught away' from the rejoicing convert, and passed on to Cæsarea, which became his home. When next

he appears in the story he is pictured as the host who is entertaining missionaries and training his daughters to testify for Christ; at this time he is called 'the evangelist.' . . . One may be called to preach to thousands as was Philip in Samaria, or to speak to one man as in the desert of Judea; but he may be evangelizing the world quite as truly by the aid he gives to religious workers, and by exerting the abiding influence of a Christian home."—"The Acts," Charles R. Erdman, p. 76.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Am I ready to go wherever God calls me, as was Philip?

Do I study the Scriptures as faithfully as did the Ethiopian when traveling, or when my mind is free to engage in such study?

Am I improving every opportunity to put forth personal effort to save individuals, as did Philip?

How can I become a better home evangelist?

LESSON 12

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

December 18, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 9: 1-22.
MEMORY VERSE: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Acts 9: 6.
LESSON HELP: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 112-122.

SETTING OF THE LESSON

Saul had taken a prominent part in bringing about the death of Stephen. He was deeply impressed with the words and manner of Stephen, and began to fear that he was doing wrong in persecuting the followers of Jesus. "In his perplexity he appealed to those in whose wisdom and judgment he had full confidence. The arguments of the priests and rulers finally convinced him that Stephen was a blasphemer, that the Christ whom the martyred disciple had preached was an impostor, and that those ministering in holy office must be right.

"Not without severe trial did Saul come to this conclusion. But in the end, his education and prejudices, his respect for his former teachers, and his pride of popularity, braced him to rebel against the voice of conscience and the grace of God. And having fully decided that the priests and scribes were right, Saul became very bitter in his opposition to the doctrines taught by the disciples of Jesus."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 113.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Read the "Setting of the Lesson" and the Lesson Scripture. Drill on the memory verse each day.
2. Study Questions 1-3, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 1-3 of the primary lesson. Read pages 112-114 of the Lesson Help.
3. Study Questions 4-10, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 4-6 of the primary lesson. Read pages 115-117 of the Lesson Help.

4. Study Questions 11-14, and notes. Children may read paragraphs 7-11 of the primary lesson. Read pages 118-122 of the Lesson Help.

5. Study Questions 15-18, and note. Children may answer questions in the primary lesson.

6. Tell the story of the lesson, each member of the family taking part. Discuss the following:

What change did conversion make in Saul?

What does this lesson teach concerning the plans of the Lord for individual members?

How might Ananias have hindered or delayed the Lord's plan?

7. Review the lesson by using the questions. Discuss topics under "Personal Application."

THE LESSON

1. Under what circumstances do we first become acquainted with Saul? Acts 7: 58; 8: 1, 3, 4.

NOTE.—"Prominent among the Jewish leaders who became thoroughly aroused by the success attending the proclamation of the gospel, was Saul of Tarsus. A Roman citizen by birth, Saul was nevertheless a Jew by descent, and had been educated in Jerusalem by the most eminent of the rabbis. 'Of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin,' Saul was 'a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.' He was regarded by the rabbis as a young man of great promise, and high hopes were cherished concerning him as an able and zealous defender of the ancient faith. His elevation to membership in the Sanhedrin council placed him in a position of power."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 112.

2. Whose assistance did Saul secure in persecuting God's people? Acts 9: 1, 2.

3. To what city did his zeal now lead him to go? How far did he travel from Jerusalem? Verse 3, first part.

NOTE.—"Those who were driven from Jerusalem by this persecution 'went everywhere preaching the word.' Among the cities to which they went was Damascus, where the new faith gained many converts." —"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 113.

The distance to Damascus from Jerusalem was about 136 miles, and six days were required to make the journey.

"Damascus is perhaps the oldest city in the world, and has now a population of 150,000. It has a fine situation in a plain at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains, on the highway of traffic with the East. The street called Straight still runs through the city from east to west, but it is now called Sultany or Queen Street, and its former spacious width of a hundred feet has been narrowed to almost a lane. Tarsus, the boyhood home of Saul, is in Cilicia, Asia Minor. It was an important Greek city, one of the great university towns of his time."—Adapted from Tarbell.

4. What suddenly stopped Saul on his journey? Verse 3, last part.

NOTE.—"Filled with fear, and almost blinded by the intensity of the light, the companions of Saul heard a voice, but saw no man. But Saul understood the words that were spoken; and to him was clearly revealed the One who spoke—even the Son of God. In the glorious Being who stood before him, he saw the Crucified One. Upon

the soul of the stricken Jew the image of the Saviour's countenance was imprinted forever. The words spoken struck home to his heart with appalling force. Into the darkened chambers of his mind there poured a flood of light, revealing the ignorance and error of his former life, and his present need of the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 115.

5. What time of day was it when this great light shone upon him? How bright was it? Whence came this light which shone brighter than the sun? Acts 26: 13.

6. How did the brightness affect Saul and his companions? What did Saul hear? Acts 9: 4; 26: 14.

7. What question did Saul ask? What answer was given to him? Acts 9: 5.

NOTE.—"Now Christ had spoken to Saul with His own voice, saying, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' And the question, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' was answered by the same voice, 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.' Christ here identifies Himself with His people. In persecuting the followers of Jesus, Saul had struck directly against the Lord of heaven. In falsely accusing and testifying against them, he had falsely accused and testified against the Saviour of the world." —"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 117.

8. What is meant by the expression, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"?

NOTE.—"This is a Greek and Latin as well as Jewish proverb, derived from the use of an oxgoad. The oxgoad is a pole seven to ten feet long, on one end of which is a broad, thin piece of iron used for cleaning the plowshare, and on the other a pointed iron, or 'prick' used on the oxen instead of a whip. . . . An unruly ox that begins to kick finds himself striking against the sharp prick. 'Paul had been lashing out blindly, fiercely, like a restive ox, who fails to realize that the path he is to travel in is laid out before him, and that the One who controls him is both wiser and stronger than he. He feels the sharp prick of the steel-pointed goad, and at first only kicks the harder; till mere brute strength can bear the pain no longer, and the stronger, wiser will prevails.' "—Tarbell.

9. What was the first thought that seemed to come to Saul's mind? What definite reply did Jesus make to his question? Verse 6.

10. How were the men with Saul affected by what had taken place? What was Saul's further experience? Verses 7, 8.

NOTE.—"How unlike his anticipations was his entrance into the city! Stricken with blindness, helpless, tortured by remorse, knowing not what further judgment might be in store for him, he sought out the home of the disciple Judas, where, in solitude, he had ample opportunity for reflection and prayer."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 118.

11. How earnestly did Saul seek the Lord? Verse 9.

NOTE.—"For three days Saul was 'without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.' These days of soul agony were to him as years. Again and again he recalled, with anguish of spirit, the part he had taken in the martyrdom of Stephen. With horror he thought of his guilt in allowing himself to be controlled by the malice and prejudice of the priests and rulers, even when the face of Stephen had been lighted up with the radiance of heaven. In sadness and brokenness of spirit he recounted the many times he had closed his eyes and ears against the most striking evidences, and had relentlessly urged on the persecution of the believers in Jesus of Nazareth. These days of close self-examination and of heart humiliation were spent in lonely seclusion." —"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 118.

12. What provision did the Lord make to enlighten Saul? Verses 10-12.

NOTE.—"In the record of the conversion of Saul, important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. Saul was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be a 'chosen vessel' unto Him; yet the Lord did not at once tell him of the work that had been assigned him. He arrested him in his course and convicted him of sin; but when Saul asked, 'What wilt Thou have me to do?' the Saviour placed the inquiring Jew in connection with His church, there to obtain a knowledge of God's will concerning him."—"The Acts of the Apostles," p. 120.

13. What objection did Ananias make to the Lord's plan? Of what was he fearful? Verses 13, 14.

14. What did the Lord say He had chosen Saul to do? Verses 15, 16.

15. How did Ananias address Saul when he came to him? What blessing did he say he had come to bring? Verse 17.

16. What immediate change took place in Saul's condition? What advanced step in experience did he take? How was this advanced step suggested to him? Verse 18; Acts 22: 16.

17. What steps did he take to prepare for his work? Acts 9: 19, 20.

18. How did he progress in his experience? Verses 21, 22; Gal. 1: 15-17.

NOTE.—"The opposition grew so fierce that Paul was not allowed to continue his labors at Damascus. A messenger from heaven bade him leave for a time; and he 'went into Arabia,' where he found a safe retreat.

"Here, in the solitude of the desert, Paul had ample opportunity for quiet study and meditation. He calmly reviewed his past experience and made sure work of repentance. He sought God with all his heart, resting not until he knew for a certainty that his repentance was accepted and his sin pardoned. He longed for the assurance that Jesus would be with him in his coming ministry. He emptied his soul of the prejudices and traditions that had hitherto shaped his life, and re-

ceived instruction from the Source of truth. Jesus communed with him, and established him in the faith, bestowing upon him a rich measure of wisdom and grace."—"The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 125, 126.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Have I had the thorough conversion that Saul experienced?

Do I daily inquire, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

When I know my duty, am I willing, like Saul, to do it?

LESSON 13

THE REVIEW

December 25, 1926

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Acts 1 to 9: 22.

Suggestions for Daily Family Study

1. Study Questions 1 and 2. Children may tell the story of the ascension of Jesus. In each day's study, review the memory verse.
2. Study Questions 3 and 4. Children may tell the story of the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
3. Study Questions 5 and 6. Children may tell the story of the healing of the lame man.
4. Study Questions 7 and 8. Children may tell the story of Ananias and Sapphira.
5. Study Questions 9 and 10. Children may tell the story of Stephen.
6. Study Questions 11 and 12. Children may tell the story of Philip and the eunuch.
7. Study Question 13, and discuss topics under "Personal Application." Children may tell the story of the conversion of Saul.

QUESTIONS

1. How many chapters are covered by the lessons of the past quarter?

2. How does the writer of the book of Acts reveal his identity? After Jesus had been with the disciples at various times for forty days following His resurrection, what great event took place? How was Jesus taken into heaven? What two promises did He leave with His followers for their comfort and consolation? Acts 1.

3. Where were the disciples on the day of Pentecost? What took place on that day? What particular gift accompanied that of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to teach the multitudes? Acts 2: 1-21.

4. In his discourse, what argument did Peter use to convince his hearers that Jesus is indeed the Christ? What was the result? How did the disciples manifest their love for one another and for God? Acts 2: 22-47.

5. What experience came to the lame man at the temple gate? What happened to Peter and John in connection with his healing? Acts 3.

6. How did the priests and rulers continue their efforts to stop the preaching of the gospel? In what spirit did Peter and John meet this persecution? What great principle did they lay down with regard to obedience? Acts 4: 1-31.

7. What was the experience of Ananias and Sapphira in the matter of offerings? Wherein did they do wrong? What was the effect of this experience upon unbelievers as well as upon the young and rapidly growing church? Acts 4: 32; 5: 11, 13.

8. Following the experience of Ananias and Sapphira, what is said of the spread of the gospel? When the high priests and rulers showed their persistent hostility by putting the apostles in prison, how did God signally vindicate His servants and the gospel message? When the apostles were placed on trial, what member of the Sanhedrin stood up in their behalf, and with what result? What did the apostles do as soon as they were released? Acts 5: 12-42.

9. What led to the appointment of the seven deacons? What were their qualifications? Acts 6.

10. What false charge did the rulers make against Stephen? In defending himself, what historical facts did he use? Why did he present these? In what way did he suddenly terminate his discourse? What assurance did Stephen have that he was beloved of God? Acts 7.

11. As persecution continued, what did the Christian believers do? Which one of the seven deacons preached in Samaria, and with what result? What is said of Simon the sorcerer? What lesson is to be gained from the rebuke Peter gave him? Acts 8: 1-25.

12. What led to the meeting of Philip and the eunuch? In what easy way was Philip able to preach Christ to this man? What was the result? In what manner was the eunuch baptized? Acts 8: 26-40.

13. How did Christ suddenly put a stop to the terrible persecution by Saul? What helpful lessons may we gain from the experience of Saul? Acts 9: 1-22.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

How have I profited by studying the Sabbath school lessons this quarter?

Would I profit more if I should study them more?

Shall I adopt the plan of daily lesson study or not?

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering is to be given to China, the overflow to be applied on the establishment of a medical training center for the training of Chinese workers. Join heartily in this worthy enterprise by a generous offering December 25.

The story is told of a native who walked for six weeks to reach one of our mission schools, only to be refused admission. Our offerings decide whether he, and others like him, shall have a place in the school later on.