

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER—STUDIES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

JANUARY, 1883.

NOTE.—The Scripture verses to be committed to memory are indicated by an index [257] at the side.

A. D. 30.

January 7.

LESSON I.—THE ASCENDING LORD.

Acts 1. 1-14.

1 The former treatise have I made, *a* O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

a Luke 1. 3.

2 Until *b* the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.

b 1 Tim. 3. 16; Heb. 1. 3.

3 To *c* whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God :

c 1 Cor. 15. 5.

4 And, *a* being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, *d* which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

a Or, eating together with them; Luke 24. 43.—*d* John 14. 16.

5 For *e* John truly baptized with water ; but *f* ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

e Chap. 11. 16.—*f* Joel 3. 18; chap. 2. 4.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore *g* again the kingdom to Israel ?

g Isa. 1. 26; Dan. 7. 27; Amos 9. 11.

7 And he said unto them, *h* It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

h Deut. 29. 29; 1 Thess. 5. 1.

8 But ye shall receive *b* power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

b Or, the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you.

9 And *i* when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up ; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

i John 6. 62.

10 And, while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in *j* white apparel ;

j Chap. 10. 3.

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, *k* shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

k Dan. 7. 13; John 14. 3; 1 Thess. 3. 10; 4. 16;

2 Thess. 1. 10; Rev. 1. 7.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount *l* called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a *m* sabbath-day's journey.

l Zech. 14. 4.—*m* John 11. 18.

13 And when they were come in, they went up *n* into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and *o* Simon Zelotes, and *p* Judas the brother of James.

n Chap. 9. 37.—*o* Luke 6. 15.—*p* Jude 1.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with *q* the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with *r* his brethren.

q Luke 23. 49.—*r* Matt. 13. 55.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The Church history begins at the point where the Gospel history closes, with the risen Lord among his followers, confirming their faith, enlarging their views, and directing their energies. For forty days the wounded hands of the Crucified are seen, and the pierced feet walked once more the hills of earth. The company of believers talk with their Redeemer, and receive his promise of a baptism of power which shall more than compensate them for the disappointment of their hopes in an earthly kingdom. They are bidden to wait in the city where the Saviour has suffered until the Spirit shall be bestowed, and then to go forth and evangelize the world. The disciples walk with their Master once more through the vale of Kedron, and up the sunny slopes of Olivet, past the garden of the agony, and beyond the brow of the hill where, not many days before, he had wept over the city. The Saviour stands with outstretched hands of blessing, and slowly rises from the earth, while their eyes follow him as if fascinated, until a nearing cloud hides him from their view. A voice breaks the spell, and two white-robed forms are seen by their side. In tender rebuke the disciples are bidden no longer to stand gazing up into the heavens where Christ has gone, but to begin his work in the earth, and to wait for his returning. They turn back to the city of Jerusalem, and in the temple join their praises with the worshipping throng, and in the upper room meet the company of believers. The eleven apostles are there, and with them the hundred or more who have accepted Jesus as the Messiah, and the women who watched around the cross, and were first to gaze within the empty tomb. Together they wait in prayer for the fulfilment of the promise in the descending Spirit.