

Lesson I.

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

January 3, 1909

A Foreword—The six months' Lessons from John's Gospel which ended last June, closed with the appearance of the risen Jesus at the Sea of Galilee, John 21 : 12-23. For the whole of 1909, the Lessons will be from the Acts of the Apostles. The four Gospels give the story of Jesus' life upon earth, His death on the cross, His resurrection and ascension. Before His ascension He commissioned His disciples to preach the gospel throughout the whole world, Matt. 28 : 19 ; Mark 16 : 15 ; Luke 24 : 47. The Book of Acts tells how this commission was carried out.

GOLDEN TEXT—It came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.—Luke 24 : 51.

*Memorize vs. 8, 9. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Acts 1 : 1-11. Study Acts 1 : 1-14.

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

2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he was through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen :
3 To whom also he shewed 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 :

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

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

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

Revised Version—1 Omit have; 2 concerning; 3 to; 4 was received up; 5 had given commandment through the Holy Ghost; 6 he also; 7 many proofs; 8 appearing unto them by the space of forty days; 9 he charged them not to depart; 10 said he, ye heard from me; 11 indeed baptized; 12 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him; 13 dost; 14 Omit again; 15 know times or seasons; 16 set within his own authority; 17 when; 18 my witnesses both, etc.; 19 Omit in; 20 said; 21 as they were looking; 22 were looking stedfastly into; 23 Omit up; 24 looking into; 25 Omit same; 26 beheld him going.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—The ascending Lord, Acts 1 : 1-14. T—Parting blessing, Luke 24 : 36-53. W.—The last command, Mk. 16 : 14-20. Th.—Victorious! Eph. 4 : 1-10. F.—New Year's song, Ps. 96. S.—Head over all, Eph. 1 : 15-23. S.—Highly exalted, Phil. 2 : 1-11.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. THE LORD'S PROMISE.

—1. The former treatise; story or narrative. The author of the Acts was Luke, a physician and a close friend of Paul, Col. 4 : 14. "Former" points back to Luke's Gospel. O Theophilus. Both Luke's Gospel (see Luke 1 : 3) and the Acts were addressed to this man, probably a Roman officer. All that Jesus began. In the Gospels we see Jesus beginning His work upon earth. In the Acts, He is still working in the world through His Spirit in His church. To do and teach; the two ways in which Jesus showed God to men. His life and acts spoke, as well as His words.

2. Until... taken up; to heaven. (Compare Luke 24 : 50, 51.) Through the Holy Ghost; in the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, Luke 4 : 1; John 3 : 34. Given commandments; as to what they were to



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do and teach. Unto the apostles; literally "sent ones", "missionaries".

3-5. Shewed himself alive; eleven times in all. After his passion; His sufferings and death on the cross. By many proofs (Rev. Ver.); such as walking (Luke 24 : 15), talking (v. 32), eating (v. 43) with them, and permitting them to touch Him, John 20 : 27. Forty days; the period between our Lord's resurrection and ascension. Speaking... concerning the kingdom of God (Rev. Ver.); the kingdom made up of those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus as a personal living Saviour. Not to depart... but wait; because, without the Holy Spirit it was useless to begin their work. Besides, when they were afterwards scattered abroad, it would thus be seen that their message and power were from the same Source. The promise of the Father; the

*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Leaflets are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. Their recitation leads to the obtaining of a beautiful Certificate or Diploma.