

# Business Directory

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## SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson for January 1  
Golden Text—Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Acts 1:8

### Approach to the Lesson

The Book which we are now to study might more properly be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit than the Acts of the Apostles. Actually it tells us very little about the work of the Twelve, with the exception of Peter and John, the former occupying the chief place in the first half of the Book. In the latter half the Twelve practically disappear from the historical record with the exception of the account of the council at Jerusalem and Paul's interview with James on his last visit to that city. It is Paul himself who occupies the chief place in these later chapters. Throughout the entire Book, however, we see the mighty working of the Holy Spirit of God, energizing the servants of the Lord and enabling them to carry out the commission given them by the risen Christ. It was not until after Pentecost that He, the promised Comforter, came to continue the work which Jesus had begun. During the forty days between our Saviour's resurrection and His ascension, He appeared to His disciples on many different occasions, instructing them regarding His own program of world evangelization and the part they were to have in proclaiming the Kingdom of God soon to be set up in power and in glory. This, of course, will be at our Lord's second advent. Until that time, the world, as such, will continue to refuse to acknowledge the divine authority; but those who realize their lost condition and their need of a Saviour become children of the Kingdom by new birth when they believe the Gospel (John 3:3, 5; 1 Peter 1:23, 25).

The little group which comes before us in this first chapter was composed entirely of those who had thus been begotten of God, but they were not prepared to go forth as proclaimers of the Gospel message until empowered by the Holy Spirit, for whose advent they were bidden to tarry in Jerusalem until the day of Pentecost, which God had ordained of old as the time when the new dispensation would begin.

**The Historical Setting.**  
Luke, who wrote the third Gospel, was the instrument chosen of God to give us this great historical book of the New Testament. He summarizes the events of the fifty days that elapsed between Christ's resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit in this first chapter. These were days of instruction and preparation as the disciples waited for the promised Comforter.

**Verse by Verse**  
Acts 1:1—"The former treatise," This refers to the Gospel of Luke, which was inscribed to Theophilus, to whom the later book was addressed. Theophilus, "himself evidently a close friend of 'the beloved physician' (Col. 4:14), was a Roman governor, as we gather from the title given him in Luke 1:3, 'most excellent.' Having written to him concerning the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, Luke now continues his

narrative, showing how the Holy Spirit carried on the work which the Saviour had begun.  
Verse 2—"He was taken up." Four times in this chapter these words are found. See also verses 9, 11, 22. It was the Father's expression of delight in the work of His Son, which resulted in His being taken up bodily into Heaven, where He now sits as the glorified Man at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Before His ascension He revealed to His disciples the divine plan for carrying the Gospel into all the world.

Verse 3—"Many infallible proofs." It has been well said that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact of ancient history. God gave to the disciples such positive proof of our Saviour's triumph over death that every possibility of doubt was removed, as Jesus met and conversed with them during the forty days preceding His ascension.

Verses 4, 5—"Wait for the promise of the Father." Our Lord referred to the declaration given through John the Baptist that the Lord Jesus should baptize His followers with the Holy Spirit. Until this promise was fulfilled they were not to begin their public testimony. They had, however, the definite assurance that before many days should elapse, that which had thus been prophesied should be fulfilled.

Verse 6—"Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" The question was a natural one. They realized that because of their failure to receive Christ as king, the people of Israel had forfeited all title to the kingdom (Matt. 21:43), but they also knew that the prophets of old predicted the restoration of the kingdom in the latter days (Hos. 3:4, 5). Therefore the question of the disciples was a reasonable one, inasmuch as the revelation of the mystery of the Church had not yet been made known.

Verse 7—"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons." These words should forever put a stop to all date setting in regard to unfulfilled prophecy. It has not pleased God to reveal the time of the second advent or of the setting up of the Kingdom. These things form part of the Father's secret counsels, to be fulfilled in accordance with His own will.

Verse 8—"Ye shall receive power...ye shall be witnesses." In this verse our Lord outlines the entire program for world evangelization during this age of grace, which covers all the centuries between His return to Heaven and His coming to claim His Church at the end of its testimony here. Witnessing, to be effective, must be in the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the true vicar of Christ and who came on Pentecost to convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Verse 9—"While they beheld, he was taken up." The forty days of instruction having expired, the Lord ascended visibly into the heavens until the divine chariot of cloud hid Him from the view of His astonished disciples.

Verse 10—"Two men stood by them in white apparel." While spoken of as men, these two were undoubtedly angelic messengers who came from Heaven to reassure the hearts of the perplexed apostles and remind them again of Christ's promised return.

Verse 11—"This same Jesus... shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." How precious the word, "this same Jesus!" Nearly twenty centuries have elapsed since the words were spoken, but He remains still the same unchanging Jesus who once walked this earth, manifesting God to those whose eyes were opened to see in Him ("...the only begotten of the Father") full of grace and truth.

Verse 12—"Then returned they unto Jerusalem." They returned to Jerusalem, there to await the promise He had made concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower them for service.

Verse 13—"They went up into an upper room." We are not told whose house was thus placed at their disposal but tradition says it was the home of Mary, the moth of John Mark, where the early Jerusalem church later met for prayer (Acts 12:12). The eleven apostles were thus gathered together to wait upon God in prayer until the promise was fulfilled.

Verse 14—"And Mary the mother of Jesus." Other friends of Jesus besides the Eleven were there, among them several of the godly women who, during our Lord's life upon earth, had ministered to Him of their substance. His own mother, Mary, in specially named, and it is interesting and instructive to observe that this is the last time her name is mentioned in Scripture, and we do not find the disciples praying to her as Roman tradition might have it. On the contrary, she joins with the rest in their intercessions.

**The Heart of the Lesson**  
The Lord never asks any line of service from His disciples without adequately preparing them for it. Augustine wrote, "God's commandings are God's enablings." Before the apostles launched forth upon their great task of giving the Gospel to a lost world, they were instructed by the Lord Himself and were commanded to tarry at Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit as the power for testimony. While they waited for His

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coming, they were cheered by the promise of Christ's second advent and fortified by prayer and the joy of fellowship one with another. Their experiences illustrate for us the manner in which our risen Lord prepares all of His servants to do the work which He asks of them.

## ALMIRA

We wish all our readers a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Mr. and Mrs. Mansell Timbers spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Bert Paisley of Stouffville. Miss Mabel Shank of Markham visited Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Allan Wideman. Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Conner had supper Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. John Timbers.

## NICKEL CHOCOLATE BAR WILL BE SMALLER

Chocolate bars will go back to a nickel at the beginning of the year, according to daily newspaper reports, but that doesn't mean you will buy more chocolate for your money. The bar will be made smaller in order to dispose of it at the popular nickel price. Many people think too much is spent on expensive wrappings, and this means too little chocolate for the money. Attractive wrappers may sell the first bar, and the chocolate inside will sell the next. If there is not enough in there to make a taste, then the customer will avoid the bar next time.

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This is the time of the year when people all over the world rejoice with their family and friends. May this holiday season prove to be a joyous one and the New Year bring an abundance of good health and prosperity to all our friends and customers.

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