

Central Study Hour – Sabbath School Lesson Notes

“Book of Acts”: Lesson 1, “You Will Be my Witnesses”

QUARTERLY INTRODUCTION & SABBATH AFTERNOON

Quarterly Introduction: Share highlights from the intro, “The Victory of the Gospel” as desired.

Sabbath Afternoon: Read the title and memory text. Jesus was planning to send the Holy Spirit to enable them to be powerful witnesses to their world.

Why was it necessary for Jesus to return to heaven in order for the Spirit to come? One reason was that if Jesus stayed with them, they would have clung to Him and not seen their need of the Holy Spirit.

Read the 2nd paragraph (Until Jesus’ resurrection....) - another reason Jesus had to be removed.

SUNDAY: “The Restoration of Israel”

Read the 1st paragraph. In the OT it was not easy to see the separation in time between the 1st and 2nd coming. That became clear in the NT because of Jesus’ teachings and His ascension.

Read the 2nd paragraph. Share highlights from the 3rd paragraph. The death of Jesus was a fatal blow to their hopes.

Share highlights from Acts 1:2-5. Comment as needed on the resurrection, the 40 days, and Jesus’ instructions about the Holy Spirit to come.

Read Acts 1:6. *What does this question say about what they still didn’t understand?* They were still expecting Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom (see paragraph, “If Jesus’ death....”).

Read Acts 1:7. How did Jesus answer them? It wasn’t for them to know. “The timing of God’s actions belongs to God Himself.”

Ask the questions in the box at the bottom. *Real problem?* People (not just the disciples) tend to believe what they want to be true and the mind is largely closed to contrary ideas. *Why do people tend to be that way?* We don’t grasp the power of preconceived ideas and often don’t recognize them in ourselves. *How to avoid this trap?* Be humble. Ask God to open our eyes.

Optional: Share concepts from “**Bible Commentary**” in the Teacher’s Comments on page 15 to “**Consider this**” on the top half of page 16.

MONDAY: “The Disciples’ Mission”

Read Acts 1:8. *Instead of indulging in prophetic speculations, what were the disciples expected to do?* Share the story of Jesus to the whole world with Holy Spirit power to be God’s witnesses.

Briefly share the four important elements of the disciples’ mission from the narrative.

Read Luke 24:44-48. *What was the core message that the disciples were to preach?*

1.) the death and resurrection of Christ, and 2.) Repentance and remission of sin.

Optional: Share “**Consider This**” from the bottom of the Teacher’s Comments on page 16.

TUESDAY: “He Will Come Again”

Read Acts 1:9-11. *What impresses you most about this event?* Jesus simply rising up before them and going up into the clouds. *What is the significance of the two angels that spoke to*

them? They promised that Jesus would return the same way they saw Him go. Only in the book of Acts is it explained that Jesus ascended “**before their very eyes.**”

Read the last paragraph.

Has there been a tendency to lose the sense of the realness of the second coming?

Ask the questions from the box at the bottom of the page.

Do Friday Discussion Question #1.

WEDNESDAY: “Preparing for Pentecost”

Share highlights of the 1st paragraph.

Jesus told them to wait for the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Read or share highlights from Acts 1:12-14. *Who else was in the upper room?* All the disciples were there, women followers, and Jesus’ mother and brothers (see following paragraph).

How did they prepare themselves for the coming of the Spirit? They continued in one accord in prayer. Last paragraph includes confession, repentance, putting away sin, and praising God. Clearly, they made things right with one another. It must have been something to be in that room. What would Jesus’ brothers have said?

Ask the question from the box at the bottom of the page. Besides praying and reading the Bible, don’t we also need to make things right one with another, put away sins from our lives, and give our lives for His service?

THURSDAY: “The Twelfth Apostle”

Read the title and the opening paragraph.

Read Acts 1:21-22. *What qualifications was the successor to Judas expected to have? Why was this so important?* They had to have been in the company of Jesus from the time of John the Baptist through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

Read the 2nd paragraph. Note how Paul was also an apostle from the 3rd paragraph.

Read or share highlights from Acts 1:23-26. *How was Matthias chosen?* First, they only selected qualified men (two), they prayed, and then they put forth lots and Matthias was chosen. Note: Casting lots was a common practice in OT times for various purposes. In this case, since both men were good choices, the casting of lots may have been primarily a way of assuring that no human favoritism had a part. Whatever the case may be, “After Pentecost, the casting of lots became no longer necessary due to the direct guidance of the Spirit.”

Ask the question in the box at the bottom of the page. First, the willingness to obey God is the condition for knowing the will of God. See **5T 511-512** for the three great ways that God reveals His will today.

Optional: 1.) “**Discussion Question**” from the middle of page 17 of the Teacher’s Comments.

2.) Share the quotation from **DA 251** and discuss questions in the “**Create**” section at the bottom of p. 17.

Close of the lesson: Read **DA 822** from Friday’s page (2nd paragraph).