

so also is the Holy Ghost, which God hath given to them who obey Him." (Acts v. 32.) Here the expression is (*tō pnēmā. tō hāglōn*) the peculiar expression for the Holy Ghost, and it is said to be given by God to those who are yielding obedience to Him. Does not this teach us that the breathing from God responds to the breathing toward God in our souls? Is there not a holy respiration to and from God in souls that are occupied and filled with the Holy Ghost? Is not this the cause of the truth which is declared in the precept with promise—"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you"?

We draw near to God only in such prayer as is dictated by the Holy Ghost; and the Comforter as the Spirit of grace breathes in our hearts in return from God, who returns to us the ascending breath of the Spirit of supplications. "Behold, he prayeth," announces the uprising of supplication from Saul of Tarsus (Acts ix. 11) when, "not disobedient to the heavenly vision," he first in the name of Jesus lifted up his heart to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, who had lived before God "in all good conscience," notwithstanding his legal blindness, had doubtless prayed before, but not by the Holy Ghost. Now the spirit of Jesus, the Son, breathes from his heart to God, and subsequently Ananias lays his hands on him, that he might be filled with Holy Breathing. (Acts ix. 17.)

(It is remarkable that even St. Paul, an apostle, converted by a miracle and having already received the Holy Ghost, was baptized. [Acts ix. 18.] Baptism symbolizes our need, as sinners, of entrance into the name of Jesus. Even the actual reception and enjoyment of the Holy Ghost cannot supersede the claim on Christians of that Name, through which comes reconciliation, and through which the Holy Breathing is imparted from God. Every bounty comes from God to men through the "one Mediator between God and men," but through Jesus especially comes that real washing away of sins which results from calling on the Name of the Lord, and which is typified and urged by this ordinance. [Acts xxii. 16.]

While the Holy Ghost is the breathing of Jehovah the living God, it is certain that Immanuel dispenses the Spirit to us.

"He that hath the seven spirits of God," is our Jehovah-Jesus. (Revelation iii. 1.) And it was to

Jesus that John the Baptist bore testimony—"He it is that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matthew iii. 11, and Luke iii. 17. The twofold inspired expressions of these two evangelists seem to point to the Saviour's inbreathing of a holy spirit before His ascension, and to His outpouring of the Spirit which was seen as tongues of fire at Pentecost. The revealed words of all the four Gospels are exactly accordant here, being all without the Greek article, and may be translated—"He it is that shall baptize you with holy breathing"—or "with a holy breathing.") And further it is expressly stated in Acts ii. 33—"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (In the Revised Version—"He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear." "This" is in the neuter, and is either this spirit, or this thing.)

Thus it is to Immanuel that direct application is to be made for this gift of the Holy Ghost as a breathing toward God, and a responsive breathing from God in the Spirit of the believer. For it is the reception of this gift that verifies the statement—"He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

There are two, indeed three, promises from the lips of Christ, which have not been realized, because they have not been entirely understood by His people.

When He assured His disciples that from the believing soul should flow rivers of living water, He then predicted that the Holy Ghost, in His power to cleanse and quicken, should pass from Himself through the hearts of His disciples into the hearts of their fellow-men. Until the Holy Ghost is received by the believer himself, how can this promise be realized?

Again, when He promised His believing disciples that they should do the works that He did, and that they should do even greater works than those—that the Father might be glorified in the Son, on their application to the Father in His name—He not only promised the power of the Holy Ghost to His people, but He declared His own name to be the sufficient guarantee that that power would be granted to them, and to be also the channel of communication through which the power should come to them from the Father.