

through disciples, in building up the kingdom of God. The door of faith is here opened successively to Hebrew, Roman, and Greek believers as in the order of the Gospel narratives. Pentecost links Old Testament prophecy to New Testament history. This book is the book of *witness*, first of man to God and secondly of God to man. It is the sequel to the Gospels, the basis of the Epistles; the Acts, not so much of the apostles as of the Holy Spirit and of the risen Redeemer in the person of the promised Paraclete. The Holy Spirit first applies the truth and the blood to penitent believers, then anoints those believers for service, and sends them forth as messengers and witnesses to preach the kingdom, to make disciples and organize disciples into churches. And the fact is full of meaning that the period of time covered by this book is about thirty-four years, about the length of our Lord's human life, or the average lifetime of one generation; as though to teach us what can be done and ought to be done in every successive generation until the end of the age. This fact, often referred to in these pages, we once more emphasize by repetition, as it deserves to be written in letters of gold on the very banners of all true missionary enterprise.

The introduction to this book refers to that forty days of communion between the Risen Lord and His disciples whose object and result was fourfold: 1. To put beyond doubt the fact of His resurrection. 2. To give them instruction as to the kingdom of God. 3. To prepare them for His unseen guidance in their work. 4. To inspire them with the true spirit of missions.

Then follow the outlines of early church history:

1. The witnessing Church in *Jerusalem* (1:13-vii.), including the ten days of prayer, Pentecost, and the enduement for service, persecution by Pharisees and Sadducees, and the dispersion of disciples, voluntary community of goods, division of labor and the institution of the diaconate, and the first martyrdom. All missions must begin at home, as a stream at its spring; but, like the stream, is not to stay at the source and fountain, but flow forth.

2. The witnessing Church in *Judea and Samaria* (viii.-ix.). A new Pentecost in Samaria under Philip the Evangelist, the sin of simony, the conversion of the eunuch, representing Ethiopia, and of Saul of Tarsus, the chosen apostle to the Gentiles.

3. The witnessing Church moving toward *the Regions Beyond* (x.-xxviii.). A new Pentecost among Roman Gentiles at Caesarea and among Greeks as well at Antioch, the first centre of the Gentile Church, and the starting-point of foreign missions; and Paul's three missionary tours, the book closing with Paul at Rome, the third great centre of Christianity. In the latter part of the Acts Paul is more conspicuous than Peter, because Peter went to the dispersion or scattered tribes of Israel, and the main object of the book is to trace the beginnings of missions to the Gentiles (compare Gal. 2:9).