

of harvest, was celebrated fifty days after the Passover. Our Lord remained forty days on earth after His resurrection; and ten days after His ascension He sent down His Holy Spirit with Divine power, on the fiftieth day.

On this feast of harvest, or of the Seven Weeks, (see Exodus 23: 16; 34: 22; and Lev. 23: 15, 16), God was pleased to grant the first glorious ingathering of a ripe harvest of souls to the Infant Christian Church; by the descent of the Spirit, in answer to united, fervent and believing prayer; all being with one accord in one place, waiting in expectation of the promise being literally fulfilled.

Suddenly with startling signs, audible and visible, as of a rushing mighty wind, with cloven tongues like as of fire sitting upon each present, all were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The sound from heaven was perhaps by thunder, as the harbinger of the Divine presence. The passage of a large portion of electrical fluid would not only occasion the sound, or thunder; but also the strong wind. In 1 Kings xix. 11: 12 there is some similarity, in the appearance of God to Elijah, when he heard the still small voice. Thus also the Apostles were prepared to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In both cases the sound, wind and fire, although natural agents, were supernaturally employed,—the cloven tongues, like as of fire (cloven meaning parted or distributed,) being the emblem of the diversity of gifts and the different languages they were to speak, as the tongue of fire rested upon each of them.

This pentecostal feast would necessarily bring a great multitude of different nationalities to the Holy City, whereby the tidings of the Spirit's descent would be widely spread abroad. The day was the Lord's day, the Christian Sabbath, set apart for worship, and the Apostles preached to every man in his own language; that is, to the Romans in Latin; to the Grecians in Greek; to the Arabs in Arabic; and so on, to each in his own tongue; and on hearing this, all were amazed and marvelled, some doubting and others mocking. Even so it is in the present day. This phase of human history is oft repeated. Still some continue unbelieving, and even deriding the truth as it is in JESUS!

Peter in his sermon repelled the accusation of the mockers; and ultimately three thousand souls were added to the Infant Church.

To God be given all the praise and the glory!

"May from Heaven a mighty sound
Suddenly come rushing down;
Cloven tongues, like as of fire,

May they sit on all around;
On the soul of each believer
May the Holy Ghost come down;
He is coming—He is coming,
Glory, glory, to the Lamb!"

(4.) PETER'S FIRST SERMON: Acts 2: 15-41.

So soon as Peter heard the cavillers, with his usual impetuosity he stood up and confounded them by showing that these signs were truly the work of God, and that thereby a most important prophecy was fulfilled—that these were not drunken with new wine, as they supposed, as it was only the third hour of the day, or nine o'clock in the morning. And they knew that the Jews scarcely ever ate or drank so early, but usually spent that hour in prayer. Then he refers to the prophecy by Joel, in chapter 2: 28, 29, delivered 600 years before, and now fulfilled, as another proof that Jesus, whom they rejected, is truly the Messiah. Having thus given his exordium, Peter then seized the opportunity to preach Christ and Him crucified as the risen Saviour, as the ascended Lord, and as the only Messiah; and that in times of direful calamity and predicted ruin then pending and soon to take place, only such as receive the Gospel of the Son of God shall be saved. He then quotes a portion of the 16th Psalm of David, containing a most remarkable prophecy concerning Christ, every word of which applies to Him as the Antitype exclusively. The passages in verses 27 and 31 speak of His resurrection, "that neither was His soul left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption." This is the correct interpretation. See Revised Version.

Then Peter strongly appeals to them as men and brethren, and freely and plainly tells them (by way of application) of the necessity of their giving up all for Christ; as the House of Israel must know assuredly that God hath made Jesus both LORD and CHRIST.

On hearing this the people are pricked in their heart, and, becoming alarmed and convinced, they enquire, "What shall we do?" Peter immediately exhorts them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, that they may find pardon for their sins, and even receive the gift of the Holy Spirit of Jesus, whom they crucified!

They gladly received these glorious tidings, and about three thousand precious souls were baptized and added to the one hundred and twenty faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ then present. These converts were baptized in the name of Jesus (see verse 38), for this was the criterion of a Jew's conversion from Judaism to Christianity; as he was then