

the two which we have described as divine favors, is the *Remission of sins*. As repentance is the turning of the man from his sins, and a plea for their pardon, this is the divine response to the changed attitude of man's mind. The repentance and the baptism were by Peter required to be "in the name of Jesus Christ," and so would be in the true divine order. There could, therefore, be no failure on God's part to fulfil His own promise, and honor His own covenant. "He cannot turn away the presence of His Son," and the Son himself had said, "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," and when the inward and the outward—the repentance of the soul, and the baptism of the body—are both of them in the name of Jesus Christ, then the legitimate and indispensable conditions are fulfilled, forgiveness follows as certain as in an unclouded atmosphere the light of day follows the rising of the sun.

This divine favor was not in its substance, a new and unprecedented gift. Psalmists sung of its reality and glory. Prophets had preached of this privilege as a present need and possibility, while they pointed onward to a time when the sweetest and loudest music heard on earth would fill its atmosphere, when happy souls in countless multitudes would sing, "O, Lord I will praise Thee, for though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away and Thou comfortest me." Jesus himself had said to more than one, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace." But now, and from henceforth, there is no more need of slain lamb or smoking altar, or local temple, or robed priest, for it has come to pass "that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." The Publican had to go to the Temple that he might realize the mercy that he sought. But now, the streets of Jerusalem are as holy as the temple, and from the noisome dungeon of Philippi will rise the prayer of believing penitence, and into its melancholy gloom flashes the smile of God's pardoning love. O glad and glorious evangel of mercy. O how since that epochal day, multitudes that no man can number, have "heard the welcome sound and pardon in God's mercy

found," have dropped burdens that no human power could unloose, have cast away fetters that no human ingenuity could break or open, have entered with a hallelujah into the liberty wherewith Christ maketh His people free!"

"Remission of Sins." It is a matter of great joy to every lover of his kind, that in the liturgies of the older churches, in the hymns and spiritual songs of the newer organizations, in the sermons of many ten thousands of pastors and evangelists of the days we live in, this divine offer of pardon to sinners finds a foremost place. On this earth of ours, sinners are everywhere; may the years be few until every sinner hears the same offer of pardon, in God's name, that was made by Peter on the day of Pentecost.

But the second of these divine favors is that which now claims our attention, for the sake of which principally this passage was chosen as text.

"Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Had the world and the Church been without His presence up to this period? Not by any means. For prophets and holy men of God had spoken as the Spirit moved them. John the Baptist had been all his life filled with the Holy Ghost, and his words were, as a consequence, words of power, and his preaching had disturbed the nation. The incarnate Son of God was filled with the Holy Ghost, during the years of His public ministry. He told the seventy disciples that He sent out to preach, that when they should appear before the men of authority and power, the Spirit of their Father would speak through them. But these persons and missions were special, and not universal, and not permanent. What Peter now promises is a gift for *all*, for the preparatory conditions were possible to all, and practicable in every case. It is in order, therefore, at this point in the discussion, to inquire, how are we to ascertain the real thought of Peter, when he uttered these words, "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," or in the dialect of 1889, what it amounts to?

1. It is or was the gift of the Holy Ghost as that gift was predicted by Joel, the inspired prophet. The prediction