

was intended to recall. Their wilderness journey had not been one of trials only. It was full of triumphs and blessings. God himself was with them. In the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, he went before them as their leader. "There was no time in all their history when the Almighty showed more clearly that his favour compassed them as a shield. The feast commemorated not burdens alone, but burdens borne away; not want, but want replaced by marvellous supplies; not sorrow, but sorrow turned into joy." Doubtless the materials of which the booths were made were intended to be reminders of the different stages of the wilderness journey; the "branches of palm-trees" of the valleys and the plains, the "boughs of thick trees" of the bushy mountain-heights, the "willows" of the refreshing water-brooks.

IV. *In every aspect, this festival was an expression of the joyful side of religion.*

It was indeed a "solemn assembly," but it was also a feast. To be solemn is to be in some sense restrained; it is to be earnest, but it is not, of necessity, to be grim. The people were to "rejoice before the Lord their God" (v. 40). Of this same festival it is elsewhere said, "Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast;" "Thou shalt surely rejoice." Deut. 16. 14, 15.

Nor was the rejoicing either selfish or lawless. There was always a bringing and scattering of gifts for the poor, and every seventh year a reading of the law to the assembled people, reminding them that life has no true delight that can be separated from either love or duty.

V. *This feast was a type of a greater feast now preparing for all God's true people.*

It is easy to see in it a prophecy of the latter-day rest and joy of the earthly church; of that day spoken of by the prophet, when the remnants of once hostile nations "shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles," and "there shall be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord." Zech. 14. 16, 20. This is the ideal church; the church that was to be, and that is to be. Not only shall there be rest from anxieties and fears and war-

fare and toil, but, under the more abundant outpourings of the Spirit, closer fellowship with God, and fuller enjoyment of him. This will be the flowing forth of salvation signified by the pouring out of water at the foot of the altar, and that shining of "great light" symbolized by the far-reaching illumination of the temple.

But the full and final "harvest is the end of the world." That will be the time when earth's work shall all be done, its fruits all garnered. At that heavenly feast there will be room for all. It is God's pleasure that all should be there. In its joy there will be no admixture of sin or pain or fear. In service or song none shall grow weary. Their leaf shall not wither. Evermore they shall drink of the river of God's pleasures. They shall be satisfied. What assurance have you that, when that bright day dawns, you will witness its rising beams; that, when that great feast is spread, you will share in its delights?

LESSON VIII.]

[Nov. 20, 1881.]

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

Leviticus 25. 8-28.

One of the most singular of the Hebrew institutions was the year of Jubilee. It is interesting, however, not merely for its singular originality; it claims our regard more especially for the ideas it embodied and the great truths it attested. It was a standing prophecy wrought into the fabric of the Jewish state of those good things to come which the Gospel teaches, and in its progress in the world more and more achieves for the good of mankind.

The Jubilee recurred every fifty years. The language of the Mosaic statute is: "Thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years." "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year" . . . "it shall be a jubilee unto you."

It began on the Day of Atonement, and was ushered in by the blowing of trumpets throughout the land. Probably the "joyful sound was heard in the evening, after the solemn, expiatory services of the day were ended. The gladness it brought was in accord with the truths symbolized in those expiatory services.