

Lesson III.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH January 17, 1909

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—The Lesson follows immediately upon that of last Sabbath.

GOLDEN TEXT—They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.—Acts 2: 42.

Memorize vs. 32, 33. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Acts 2: 32-42. Study Acts 2: 22-47.

32 This Jesus¹ hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33² Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath³ shed forth this which ye⁴ now see and hear.

34 For David⁵ is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35⁶ Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36⁷ Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made⁸ that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and⁹ to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Revised Version—¹did God raise up; ²Being therefore; ³poured; ⁴Omit now; ⁵ascended not; ⁶till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet; ⁷Put therefore after Israel; ⁸him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified; ⁹Omit to; ¹⁰Omit Men and; ¹¹And Peter; ¹²ye; ¹³unto; ¹⁴your; ¹⁵to you is the promise; ¹⁶unto him; ¹⁷he testified, and exhorted them; ¹⁸crooked; ¹⁹They then; ²⁰Omit gladly; ²¹there were added unto them in that day; ²²teaching; ²³in the breaking; ²⁴and the prayers.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—Beginning of the Christian church, Acts 2: 22-36. T.—Beginning of the Christian church, Acts 2: 37-47. W.—David's psalm, Ps. 16. Th.—Christ exalted, Heb. 1. F.—Repentance and pardon, Isa. 55: 6-13. S.—Confession and faith, Rom. 10: 1-13. S.—Christian unity, Eph. 4: 1-15.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

In to-day's Lesson, Peter continues his sermon. First, he points to Jesus as a man proved to have come from God, by the wonderful works which He wrought. Then the brave preacher brings home to the Jews before him their awful crime of crucifying Jesus, even though in so doing they had been unknowingly carrying out God's purpose. But Jesus had risen, thus fulfilling David's prophecy in Ps. 16: 8-10. (See vs. 22-31.)

I. THE CHRIST EXALTED.—32, 33. This Jesus. David had spoken the words of Ps. 16: 8-10, not of himself, but of the coming Messiah. Hath God raised up. Peter boldly proclaims in the very city outside whose walls Jesus had been crucified and buried, that Jesus had been raised from the dead. He thus challenges denial of the fact. We all are witnesses; that is, the twelve apostles, who had seen Him, and who were now seen to be filled with His Spirit. By the right hand of God. It was by the power of God that Jesus was raised up. Exalted. From Joseph's tomb, Jesus had gone to the Father's throne (see ch. 1: 9; Heb. 1: 3, 4). Having received, the promise of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' word in John 14: 16, 17, was now made good. He hath poured forth this (Rev. Ver.). In v. 17 it is God who "pours forth" the Spirit; here it is Christ: so completely one are the Father and the Son. Ye now see. Likely the appearances as of fire (v. 3) still rested on the disciples. Hear; the languages spoken (v. 4) and what was spoken in those languages.

34-36. For David is not ascended. He went down to the grave: "slept with his fathers", 1 Kgs. 2: 10. He saith himself, etc. The Jews admitted that the Hundred and Tenth Psalm here quoted referred to the Christ or Messiah, Matt. 22: 44-46. Let all the house (race) of Israel know; even those who,



EATING BREAD OUT OF A COMMON DISH

seven weeks before, had shouted, "Crucify Him!" (John 19: 6), many of whom must have been among Peter's hearers. That same Jesus... ye... crucified. Like a sharp arrow, Peter leaves the terrible accusation to rankle in his hearers' hearts and make them realize their awful guilt. Lord; showing the divine nature and authority. Christ; the Anointed One, the promised Messiah.

II. MULTITUDES SAVED.—37-41. Pricked in their hearts; stung with remorse at the sight of their wickedness. What shall we do? To escape the consequences of our fearful guilt. Repent; turn from sin to God—a change of heart. Be baptized; the outward profession of the change. In the name of Jesus Christ; recognizing and trusting in Him as Lord and Saviour. For the remission of sins; the forgiveness of sins (see Matt. 26: 28). (Compare Luke 24: 47; Matt. 28: 19; Acts 16: 29-33.) Ye shall receive, the Holy Ghost. Compare ch. 8: 17; 10: 47. Peter (in v. 40) assures his hearers that the promise of pardon and of the