

resume their labors, until at length Jerusalem was filled with their doctrine, and many of the priests, themselves convinced of the apostolic ministry and miracles, were obedient to the faith.

When it is said, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost," it is not understood as being confined to the apostles only, but to the entire body of believers. The whole assembly received that spiritual baptism which they had been taught by John to expect, and confirmed by the promise of Christ. Being filled with the Spirit, they were of course emptied of every thing opposed to his mind and nature. It was not now a religion of opinion, speculation, ceremony, and form; but of inward light and purity, of happiness and of holy, active zeal. They dwelt in God by constant acts of faith and love, and he dwelt in them in all the fulness of the Spirit's power.

There was a time when the disciples proposed to punish the people who refused them a night's lodging, by calling for fire from heaven to consume them, but when the Saviour rebuked them by saying, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." Now that the meekness and gentleness of Christ had been exhibited in connection with his death, and the Holy Ghost was given in all his sanctifying influences, they become examples of meekness and devotion to the Church in all time to come. It may be asked who were they, and what had been their former character and conduct, that they should now present examples of piety and heavenly-mindedness so extraordinary? The greater part of them were Jews who had but recently embraced the truth. Such had been the blindness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, that they had neither been convinced by the testimony of John, nor the preaching and miracles of the Lord Jesus. They had not only treated Christ with indifference, but had clamored for his blood. Yes! these very people, who had been little less than fiends in wickedness, no sooner believe in Jesus, and are brought under the full power of the Holy Ghost, than they become like angels in meekness, and giants in devotion. See how they bear insults, scorn, sarcasm, and every form of brutal persecution with gentleness and forbearance, and every affliction with cheerfulness and resignation,—noble models for imitation.

What a blessed state of society does the historian bring before us when he says: "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." How different to the assembly of ungodly men when met for some worldly object,—such as mentioned in Acts xix. 32. No angry controversies agitated them,—they were perfectly of the same mind and of the same judgment. Grace had overcome all the vanity and selfishness of their fallen nature, so that none of them aspired to be the greatest, but every one was willing to be the least of all and the servant of all. There was in them such an identity of feeling, and tenderness of sympathy and affection, as the world had never before seen. The joy of one was the joy of all, and the sorrow of one was the sorrow of all. Such was their heavenly-mindedness and brotherly love, that for a season they even disregarded the rights of property, and none of them called the earthly things which he possessed his own, but they had all things common. Neither did they live under a low degree of Divine influence, nor was that influence confined to a few individuals, but "great grace was upon