

The first thought here suggested is, that it came *in fulfilment of prophecy*. Scripture is always the safest interpreter of Scripture, consequently in Peter's address to the assembled multitudes we find the key to the interpretation of this event. The prophet Joel 800 years before, had foretold it in the second chapter and twenty-eighth verse of his book, and now Peter under the direct influence of the Spirit quotes and applies the words of the prophet.

Again the Pentecostal effusion was given *to meet a profound need of the world*. The world at this time would seem to have reached its highest possible attainment. The three great civilizations—the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Roman, each one developing in its own distinct sphere, had, at last to a certain extent, mingled with and modified one another; the various schools of philosophy with almost superhuman exertion had bent their highest energies to unravel the tangled thread of the present life, and lift the veil from the future, yet over Greece, Rome, and even Judea, at the Christian era might be written the word failure. This failure however was not absolute. There was at least a negative progress visible in the cold formalism of the Jew, as also in the fatalistic speculations of the Gentile. Man's utter inability to redeem himself was clearly demonstrated. The necessity and possibility of an extra-mundane help was also dimly conjectured; nay there was a longing not only in Judea, but throughout the world—there was a longing and expectancy of relief which in itself was truly prophetic. Like the valley of dry bones in the prophet's vision, there was a noise, and a shaking discernable throughout the nations, the bones had “come together, bone to his bone, the sinews and the flesh were upon them, and the skin covered them above *but there was no breath in them.*” The world waited inactive, yet instinctively expectant—the disciples prayed, and these are always the conditions for omnipotent activity and life-giving power. The breath of God like a “rushing mighty wind” fills the chamber at Jerusalem, and the suppliant disciples stand up, no more nerveless and doubting, but though a very handful they had strength given them to carry salvation to a perishing world. Men may cavil at miracles of Scripture, and close their eyes to the evidences of the supernatural, but the humble Christian bowing his head in adoration—the noblest act of the creature—exclaims, “even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

In fulfilment of prophecy—in answer to prayer—to meet a world-need—it was a supernatural event, and, yet, in a sense, what more natural? The results next claim our attention.

It was as we said the great feast of the Jews, and the nations *as if* by mutual arrangement had sent up their representatives to Jerusalem. Of these, the converts during the first few days were numbered by thousands, and these again returning to their homes served as messengers in the wilderness of the nations, crying “prepare ye the way of the Spirit of God, make straight paths for the heralds of the cross,” and when the disciples were eventually driven forth from Jerusalem they found a resting place in the homes of those whom they had previously met at Pentecost, and a hallowed place by more than one “river side where prayers were wont to be made.” Joseph was sent down to Egypt before the time of famine came to provide for father and brethren; so these first fruits of the