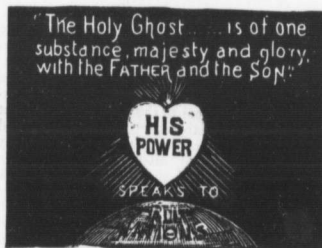


three great annual festivals of the Jews. Houses are filled. Crowds like tides come and go in the streets. It is the eve of the festival. Hark! Those trumpet blasts from the temple echoing far announce the advent of Pentecost. At midnight the heavy temple gates are swung back, and before cock-crowing the people press into the court, bringing offerings. The daily morning service begins. Hear the strong rich voices of the Levites lifting up the Great Hallel! The two loaves of "fine flour," the first-fruits of the wheat harvest, are presented, together with the other offerings. Then comes "the free-will offering" that Pentecost feast brought by every family, and to which the homeless and hungry were welcome. First-fruits according to the Old Dispensation. What of the New? We think of the disciples as hurrying from the temple-service to that "upper room." They bow in prayer, those ten-days petitioners. Some may have been wrestling, like Jacob, the thigh out of joint, discouraged and weak. A week of prayer to-day has its list of lame joints. The disciples pray on, all there, and it is just one prayer pressing against the gates of heaven. Suddenly, a sound, not from below but above, a breathing, a whirr of wings, a blast, and then that "rushing mighty wind" which fills the house. And then all through that gusty atmosphere lights are darting, coruscations, flashes, tongues of fire weirdly tapering above the disciples' heads. And O that miracle of Pentecost-tongues, that strange ecstatic warble, yet definite and precise, each utterance a language! With fire on their heads, Christ in their hearts, the gospel on their tongues, the Lord's anointed stand up. The news quickly spreads. They come from temple, street, home. The visitors leave the temple, the publican his taxes, the merchant his traffic, the scribe his Hebrew points, and they press

into that upper room. They gather about the door. They look over one another's shoulders, hear with one another's ears. Haughty Pharisee and sceptical Sadducee shout, "new wine!" Then it is that the Church of Christ speaks through its first-voice, Peter. The hour of first-fruits, Pentecost, has come. The Holy Ghost has been poured out! The Church of Christ has form and recognition given it.

#### Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. The sentence is taken from the Fourth of the Articles of Religion of our Church. When the disciples had the Holy Ghost in their hearts they had power to speak to all nations. So it is with the Christian Church now. When each follower of Christ feels the flame of power burning in his heart, he speaks through good works, bright example, faith, and prayer, to all nations by helping to spread the Gospel. Who can look at this diagram and, in the fear of God, say, "His power speaks to ME."

NOTE.—[The word *Me* can be written after "speaks to."]

A. D. 39.

### LESSON III.—THE BELIEVING PEOPLE.

January 21.

Acts 2. 37-47.

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

*a* Zech. 12. 10; Luke 3. 10; chap. 9. 6; Acts 16. 30

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, *b* and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

*b* Matt. 3. 2, 8; Luke 22. 47; chap. 3. 19; 17. 30; 26. 20; 2 Cor. 7. 10.

39 For the *c* promise is unto you, and *d* to your children, and *e* to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

*c* Rom. 9. 8.—*d* Joel 2. 28.—*e* Eph. 2. 13.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

42 And *f* they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

*f* Heb. 10. 25.

43 And fear came upon every soul: *g* and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

*g* Mark 16. 17.

44 And all that believed were together, and had *h* all things common;

*h* Chap. 4. 32.

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and *i* parted them to all men, as every man had need.

*i* Isa. 53. 7.