

came tumultuous appeals, "What shall we do?" O wonderful first-fruits of pentecost, three thousand going forward to baptism in a day! It was a growing flock, a steadfast flock, a worshipful flock, a joyful flock. I see little groups bowing in the temple, or breaking bread in some house. I come upon one cluster singing some sweet Messianic psalm, while others talk of the Saviour's love that bought them and the Spirit's presence that

comforts them. And everywhere these clusters, like those of the vine, are growing clusters. Everywhere flash out marvellous "signs;" but more wonderful than this is the love that reigned. I see men selling their goods, giving away to the needy, holding "all things common." The broken bones of one man healed are not so great a sign as the pockets of "three thousand" broken open and their contents scattered for God.

A. D. 30.

## LESSON IV.—THE HEALING POWER.

January 28.

Acts 3. 1-11.

1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, *a* to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

*a* John 9. 8.

3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, *b* Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: *c* In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

*b* 1 Pet. 4. 10.—*c* Chap. 4. 10.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he *d* leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

*d* Isa 35. 6.

9 And *e* all the people saw him walking and praising God.

*e* Chap. 4. 21.

10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch *f* that is called Solomon's porch, greatly wondering.

*f* John 10. 23; chap. 5. 12.

## GENERAL STATEMENT.

A few weeks have passed since the events of Pentecost, and the Church is daily advancing in its growth. The disciples attend as ever upon the services of the temple, and see in the offered lamb a new meaning, and feel in the choral psalms a new power. One day as Peter and John, the two leaders among the twelve, one the ardent, the other the thoughtful, are entering into the temple with the throng at the afternoon worship, they see at the foot of the steps in the Gentiles' Court, leading upward to the Beautiful Gate, a poor cripple, who looks wistfully at the worshippers

entering where he is forbidden on account of his deformity. Both apostles, with the same inward prompting of the Spirit, pause and gaze a moment. Then Peter speaks the words in which John unites his faith and power, "Look on us!" As the lame man looks up with eager expectation, for the first time the walls of the temple echo with the utterance that Jesus, the despised Nazarene, the condemned and crucified, is the Messiah of Israel's hope, with power to heal the body and save the soul! The apostles extend helping hands, and a new life thrills through the feeble limbs of the lame man, and in an instant, exerting his faith, he leaps up, stands upon his feet for the first time in forty years. A moment, and he is leaping, running up the marble steps, with the praise of God upon his lips, while all around the multitude wonder at the transformation. Soon a throng gathers; and the two apostles, to whom the healed man still clings in grateful love, lead the people out of the Women's Court into the open precincts of the Gentiles' Court and under the arches of Solomon's Porch. The divine purpose of the miracle has been gained in the eager attention of a multitude, to whom Peter now proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 1. Now.** The time is not given, but it was probably soon after the day of Pentecost. **Peter and John.** The two leaders of the apostolic company, one impetuous, the other quiet, warmly attached to each other, as is evident from many allusions, both in the Gospels and Acts. 1. See how Christians should love each other. **Into the temple.** The house of God on Mount Moriah. They crossed the bridge from Zion into the court of the Gentiles, and were passing into the court of the women when these events took place. **Hour of prayer.** Twice each day every pious Jew prayed either in the temple, or turning his face toward it; and the disciples still observed the Jewish usages, though with enlightened minds as to their meaning. 2. God's people have need of both private and public worship.