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The Sabbath School. INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Second Quarter Lesson 5, May 26 1901

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN.—Acts 2: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.—John 16: 13

LEARN BY HEART. Vs. 14, 16-18, 46-47

HISTORICAL SETTING. Time.—The morning of Sunday, May 28, A. D. 30. Ten days after the last lesson, Pentecost Whitsunday.

Place.—Jerusalem, in the upper room where the disciples met for prayer. Not in the temple, for in v. 2 the room is spoken of as part of a house.

The event studied in this lesson was a visible expression of Christ's return and abiding presence with all power and authority in heaven and on earth. It was the beginning of the new dispensation which Jesus came to inaugurate.

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER.—V. 1. This is described in v. 1, and in Acts 1: 13-26.

The Place. The upper room in Jerusalem, referred to before as their accustomed place of meeting. The Company Present. The one hundred and twenty (1: 14, 15), including apostles and laymen from different parts of the country, and women who had been faithful to Jesus, including Mary his mother.

Character of the Meeting. (1) It was a meeting for prayer and supplication, as a preparation for the blessing which was to come. (2) It was a meeting for conference, as we see in 1: 15-22. (3) It was a meeting for the transaction of necessary church business, conducted in a devotional spirit (1: 23-26). (4) It was a protracted meeting, lasting ten days, from the ascension to Pentecost, Sunday, May 18. (5) They were in expectation of a great blessing, but what or when or how they did not know. Thus they were best led to watch and pray, to open their minds to the truth, to be bound together in love, to purify their hearts for the coming gift.

And when the day of Pentecost. "The fiftieth" day after the Passover. It was one of the three great feasts of the Jews—the "feast of harvest." The wheat fields were then white with the harvest. It was the day on which especially the Jew was to remember his deliverance from the bondage of Egypt (Leut. 16: 12). At this feast greater numbers were present in Jerusalem than at any other season, from all parts of the world. From a census taken in the time of Nero, more than 2,700,000 were gathered at the Passover, and still greater numbers came to Pentecost. From this centre the power would radiate to all parts of the world. Was fully come. The full time had elapsed. With one accord. Of one spirit, filled with one desire.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED; THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN.—Vs. 2-4. And suddenly, as they were praying, A sound... as of a rushing mighty wind. It is not said that there was any wind, but only a sound as of a wind. The audible sign filling the room announced the power represented by it as doing the same. And it filled all the house, not merely the upper room. This was a token that the Spirit would fill the whole church, which is the house of God every part and faculty of the soul, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost. And there appeared, i. e., to the entire assembly. After the audible sign immediately follows the visible. Cloven tongues like as of fire. Not fire, but with the appearance of fire, as the burning bush which Moses saw. Parted as from a central flame. The idea is not that each tongue of fire was divided or forked, but that the fiery appearance, at first presenting itself as a single body, soon divided into separate tongues of flame, one for each person in the assembly. And it, the appearance of flame, one tongue, sat upon each of them. Apostles, laymen, and women. Sat denotes that the influence, which it symbolized, was to be permanent. The Spirit henceforth was to abide in the church. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Filled can mean nothing less than that the whole capacity of each man was occupied. That the Holy Spirit was now for the first time bestowed upon men is plain, from the fact that the same language here employed is used respecting Elizabeth (Luke 1: 41), Zacharias (Luke 1: 67), and John the Baptist (Luke 1: 15); and the Old Testament repeatedly makes mention of the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of the prophets and others. One thing which was peculiar in this event is, that (1) now, for the first time, all were filled with the Holy Ghost, not merely the apostles; and (2) the influence was not occasional and transient, but abiding. But the chief difference is the abundance

and power with which the Holy Spirit is now given, thus characterizing the gospel times as the dispensation of the Spirit. It was endowment for service. Began to speak with other tongues. Other than their mother tongue. This fulfilled Christ's promise (Mark 16: 17) that they should "speak with new tongues." They spoke, among them, the various languages enumerated below, perhaps others. It is not said that each one spoke all the languages. As the spirit gave them utterances. The Spirit decided for them what language each one should speak. Apparently as they went among the crowd and found any stranger, they spoke the glad tidings to him in his own language.

The Symbol of the Wind. The Greek word for spirit is used in both senses,—wind and spirit. 1. It is an invisible power of which no one knows "whence it cometh or whither it goeth."

2. It is powerful. 3. Yet it is very gentle and delicate. 4. It came pure from heaven. 5. The air is all-pervasive. 6. It is the breath of life.

The Symbol of Flame. John the Baptist had said that "Jesus shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Fire is one of the most expressive symbols of the Holy Spirit.

1. It represents the revealing power of the Holy Spirit, shining into each soul and illuminating it. 2. It expresses the purifying, cleansing power of the Spirit. Fire and light are the great disease killers.

3. It symbolized the comfort, warmth, cheer, fresh life, joy, peace, which the Holy Spirit imparts. 4. The far-reaching power of light expressed the light which the disciples should impart to the world. Light cannot be hidden. If it ceases to shine, it ceases to exist.

5. Light convicts the worst of dust, of dirt, of a thousand evil things unknown in the darkness. 6. Fire is the symbol of intense energy and zeal. The Holy Spirit fills the soul with glowing enthusiasms and unconquerable energy and zeal.

The Symbol of the Tongue. 1. It represented the means by which they were to spread the gospel. 2. It was the symbol that the gospel was for all nations, all kinds of people. 3. It was the symbol of the unity of the church,—one spirit, but many tongues. 4. Those who are filled with the Spirit speak to all hearts, all needs, all characters.

THE BIRTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.—Vs. 5-11, 12-20. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem. Both residents and pilgrims who had come up to the Pentecost feast. Devout men. Truly religious men, waiting for the appearing of the promised Messiah. Out of every nation under heaven. Only a very small portion of the Jewish people lived in Palestine during the times of our Lord and his apostles; by far the largest number were natives of other lands. Now when this was noised abroad. Better as in R. V., "And when this sound was heard." The sound was heard outside of the house and drew the attention of the passing crowds. And were confounded. The whole assembly were perplexed and confused as to the meaning of this. Every man heard them (was hearing) speak in his own language. The word is dialect. They heard even the different dialects. All amazed, with sudden surprise. And marvelled, with a questioning wonder. All... Galileans. All the disciples (except Judas) were from Galilee. It was impossible for them to have acquired all these languages. In our own tongue. Language, dialect, Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, in the Persian Empire beyond the Tigris, and including Turkistan and Afghanistan to the border of India. Here some of the ten tribes were settled. Mesopotamia, i. e., "between the rivers" Tigris and Euphrates. It includes Assyria and Babylonia, now belonging to the Turkish Empire. The language was some form of Chaldee. Judaea. Speaking Aramaic in a different dialect from Galilee. Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia. Not our Asia, but a small Roman province in what is now Asia Minor. Phrygia, and Pamphylia. Here Greek, a different dialect in each, was spoken by the educated, but the common people had their own dialects. Egypt, where the language was Coptic. Libya, in northern Africa, the portion referred to being Cyrene, on the Mediterranean. Their language is not certainly known, but they must have spoken also Greek. Rome, with the Latin language. Jews and proselytes, i. e., heathen who had accepted the Jewish religion. Crete, from the island of Crete in the Mediterranean, now called Candia. They may have spoken Greek. Arabians, from the great peninsula which stretches between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. They spoke Arabic. The wonderful works of God. The disciples told the

people, in their own languages, about God's love in sending his Son Jesus, the Messiah, to save men from sin, and bring in the glorious days foretold by the prophets.

Peter the Instrument of the Spirit. The effect of this gift of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles was a wonderful change in them. It was almost a transfiguration experience.

Peter, as the representative of the apostles, made an address to the assembled multitudes. The application (vs. 38, 39) was very pointed. The people were convicted of their sin. He bade them repent, and believe, and confess Jesus Christ, and save themselves.

The result was that three thousand accepted of Jesus, and were joined to the number of believers. The church had begun its triumphant career.

A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH.—Vs. 42-47. 1. They were intelligent, continuing steadfastly under the instruction of the apostles.

2. They were united in fellowship, like one loving family. 3. They joined in the ordinances of the church, baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

4. They went to the prayer meeting. They were a praying church. 5. They were reverent and devout. 6. They were a very benevolent church. 7. They were a church-going people. 8. They were full of joy and gladness and praise. 9. They were a fruitful church, growing rapidly, with daily conversions. 10. They so lived as to gain the respect of the people in general.

A Home Heathen.

Oh, mamma! I am so disappointed! cried Emma Estlin, coming dejectedly into her mother's pretty sitting-room, her usually bright face woefully clouded over. Mrs. Estlin looked up sympathizingly from her sewing. What is the matter, darling? Why, you know the entertainment that our mission band is getting up! Well, we meant to have it such a good one in every way. Bessie Allen was to read—and you know she reads just lovely. Elsie Sharpe was to recite, May Stevens to sing, and Elsie Haines was to play an instrumental solo, while Dollie Watson and Willie were to have a piano duet, and I was to sing, too, you know; but now it's all spoiled, and I'm not going to sing. Why not, dear? What has spoiled it all? Why, some one said that we ought not to slight Anna Lewis, and so she has been asked to read—and she reads horribly. She'll just spoil the whole thing! I won't sing if she takes part, and I just told Miss Stanley so; and if I'm not in it, some of the other girls say they won't be, either. I think it's a shame that she had to be asked, and Emma looked ready to cry. Mrs. Estlin felt sad. This did not seem like her usually kind-hearted little girl. What do you want Miss Stanley to do about it? Well, she doesn't want to offend us girls, and we're going to ask her if she won't tell Anna Lewis that she is not to read after all. Won't that hurt Anna's feelings? Yes, I suppose it will, but we can't help that, and what would she look like, anyway, taking part? She wouldn't have anything fit to wear. What is your entertainment for, Emma? Why, for missions, didn't you know, mamma? To convert the heathen? do you mean, daughter? Yes, the heathen in China. I think there is one little heathen in America that needs converting. Mrs. Estlin said these harsh words very gently, for she was one of the mothers who know and value the wonderful power of gentleness. Darling, you came to me for sympathy, and I never like to refuse that; but how can I agree with you in this matter? I feel hurt that you should think that I could, but I feel more hurt that my little daughter can feel and talk the way she does. Come here, dear, and sit down on this stool at my feet; I want to talk to you about this. Emma's face was very red as she obeyed. She hid it in her mother's lap. Dearie, for whose good was the entertainment to be—yours? No, for those who don't know about Jesus, was Emma's low reply. Whose good have you been considering? No answer. For whose glory was it to be—yours? No, God's, in a little lower tone. Whose glory have you been considering? Again no answer. Silence is sometimes more eloquent than words. To think that my little daughter would put herself before those whom she says she wants to help! To

think that she would put herself before God; that she would allow a poor girl's feelings to be hurt; to look down on some one less favored in wealth and talents than herself; that she would so worry a kind teacher in trying to break up an entertainment; and that she should be the means of leading her young companions to do these same things! This is the Master's work, too! Ob, mamma, don't! in a smothered tone. I care more for what you think of me than anyone else except God, she added, not wanting to put God in the background the second time. Then, as she lifted her tearful face from its refuge, she said: I didn't know there were so many wicked thoughts in my heart. What shall I do? Go, see it right with Miss Stanley and the girls—after you have set it right with God; and Miss Estlin left her daughter with a loving kiss—left her alone with One that never refuses to forgive—and the mother's heart rejoiced, knowing that works worthy of repentance would follow.—Children's Missionary Friend.

Gather Out the Stones.

It is such a stony little path between here and Mrs. Harvey's that I can't bear to go over it, said Jim. And Dick Harvey doesn't like it any better when he comes over here, said Frank. I heard him say he had got over so many bruises in that path. He was grumbling about it yesterday. Why don't you clear the way between here and your neighbor's? asked Mr. Morris. Much better do that than keep grumbling about it. Why, we should never get all the stones out of that path, cried Jim. Not all in one day, nor by taking all the stones at once, said the father. But if each of the boys who crosses there would take a stone out of the way every time he goes, the work would be done. Try it. The boys did try it. There were half a dozen young lads who used the path, and each one helped to clear it by doing a little every time he went that way. By this means the stones were cast out and the path was cleared. This is exactly the way to make it easier and pleasanter for others in this world. Let each one make it his business, as he goes through life, to take some little hindrance out of the way whenever he can. Little faults should be cured, and little temptations that cause unwary feet to stumble should be removed. Small unkindnesses should be confessed, and careless ways amended. Trifling slight should be smoothed over, and sharp words, dropped in fits of ill humor, should be taken back, as far as possible. All these things will make the path of life smoother. It is well worth while to clear the way. Go, through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.—Children's Friend.

Being a Good Sunday-School Teacher.

A Sunday-school teacher teaches his pupils more impressively by his example than by his precepts. Bishop Vincent used to say that a teacher's real lesson was what he was seven days in the week, rather than what he said one day in the seven. Paul long ago taught the same truth in his counsel to the Romans, "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? ... thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples?" Example is a lesson all can understand. Not all can understand precept; but when example and precept go together, all know what the lesson is. Consistency is the most effective of preaching. Therefore, be consistent in teaching and setting a good example.—Sunday School Times.

We are told that, when a Roman was sentenced to be scourged for any crime, a bundle of rods bound by a cord with many knots was brought in the presence of the magistrate. The executioner had to loosen the knots one by one, so that the prisoner might have an opportunity to repent. For the same reason God generally delays the infliction of punishment on the guilty.

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