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The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

First Quarter—Lesson II. – Jan. 10.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN. —Acts 2 : 1-13.

Study also verses 14-31. Commit verses 1-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.*—Acts 2 : 4.

THE PRAYER MEETING.—V. 1. The Fitting Time. *And when the day of Pentecost.* The fiftieth day after the Passover. It was one of the three great feasts of the Jews. It was, according to Jewish tradition, the anniversary of the giving of the law from Sinai. It was fitting that the new Dispensation begin on the same day. It was the day on which especially the Jew was to remember his deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. At this feast, being in the summer, 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 center the power would radiate to all parts of the world.

The Company Present. The one hundred and twenty, including apostles and laymen from different parts of the country, and women who had been faithful to Jesus, including Mary his mother.

Watching and Waiting. *Was fully come.* They knew a great blessing was coming, but when and how they did not know. They were 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.

The Day and Hour. It was Sunday during the early morning hours.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED. THE SYMBOL OF THE WIND.—V. 2. *And suddenly.* They were expecting the fulfilment of Christ's promise, but in what manner they did not know. *A sound....as of a rushing mighty wind*, r. v., as the rushing of a mighty wind. No whirlwind shook the building. The audible sign filling the room announced the Power. *And it filled all the house.* This was a token that the Spirit would fill the whole church, and every faculty of the soul, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED. THE SYMBOL OF THE FLAME..—V. 3. *And there appeared.* 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. *Cloven.* Parted as from a central flame. The idea is 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, *sat upon each of them*, apostles, laymen and women. *Sat* the appearance was not a momentary flash; the influence, which it symbolized, was to be permanent The Spirit henceforth was to abide in the church.

There is no better visible symbol of the Holy Spirit than fire. The fire expresses the living, conquering energy and enthusiasm of those who were filled with the Spirit. Where God's Spirit is, there will be no coldness. The speech that publishes the glad tidings should be a tongue of fire He who speaks the gospel coldly has not himself felt its power. When the preacher's heart is kindled his words will burn.

It represents the revealing power of the Holy Spirit, shining into each soul, and illuminating it.

It expresses the purifying, cleansing power of the Spirit. Fire and light are the great disease killers. So is the Spirit to moral diseases He always purifies the soul where he dwells. He is the refining fire that cleanses the dross from the pure gold.

Light convinces the world of dust, of dirt, of a thousand evil things unknown in the darkness. So the Spirit convinces of sin, of the evils in the heart. He causes men to feel as well as to see.

It symbolized the comfort, warmth cheer, fresh life, joy, peace, which the Holy Spirit imparts.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED. THE SYMBOL OF THE TONGUE.—VS. 4-11. *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Filled* means that the whole capacity of each man was occupied. The whole nature was influenced. That which was peculiar in this event is, that now, for the first time all were filled with the Holy Ghost, not merely the apostles; and the influence was not occasional and transient, but abiding. *Began to speak with other tongues.* Other than their mother tongue which they had learned. This fulfilled Christ's promise that they should speak with new tongues. They spoke among them, the various languages enumerated below. It is not said that each one spoke all the languages. *As the Spirit gave them utterance.* They were mouthpieces of the Spirit. Apparently as they went among the crowd and found any stranger, they spoke of the glad tidings to him in his own language. *And there were dwelling at 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.* Literally, This sound having taken place. It must mean either the sound of the rushing, mighty wind, or the sound of the disciples talking in the various languages. *And were confounded.* The whole assembly were thrown into excitement, discussing the meaning of the singular phenomenon. *Every man heard them speak in his own language.* They heard not only the different languages but even the different dialects. *All amazed and marvelled*, with a questioning wonder. *All....Galileans.* All the disciples (except Judas) were from Galilee, accustomed only to their native Aramean, with a little Hebrew and Greek. 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 by Shalmanezer. They all spoke Persian, but in different provincial forms and dialects. *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. *Judea.* 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. The above five were all in Asia Minor. *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. *Cretes*, 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 of all these countries, in their own languages, about God's wondrous love in sending the Messiah, to save men from sin, and bring in the glorious days foretold by the prophets.

The Symbol of the Tongues. It represented the means by which they were to spread the gospel. This was prophetic of the way in which revealed truth was to be disseminated. Christ not only lived He preached. The first revival opened men's mouths and set men talking. There is no place for silent Christians under the administrations of the Holy Ghost. The pressure of God upon the heart inevitably finds escape at the lips. A dumb Christian is a kind of monster. The victory by which the world is to be subjugated to the gospel is to be a moral victory; and the power which is to accomplish it is the story of the cross.

It was a symbol that the gospel was for all nations, all races, all kinds of people.

It was the symbol of the unity of the church,—one spirit, but many tongues.

Those who are filled with the Spirit speak to all hearts, all needs, all characters. Not each disciple to all, but some disciple for each need. They speak with new tongues, new meaning, new power.

TWO EFFECTS.—Vs. 12, 13. *All amazed, and....in doubt*, in great perplexity as to what all this meant. They were in a questioning mood. *Others mocking.* Jesting at the strange scene. They heard languages unknown to them, and it sounded like nonsense. This is very common in revivals, where men refuse to enter into sympathy with the movement enough to understand it. *Full of new wine.* Intoxicated. Peter's answer is given in the next lesson.

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OUR MOTTO.—*If God be for us, who can be against us.*

Meg.

REV. T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

Father comes in from the barn, knocks the snow from his shoes, and sits down by the fire. The mother sits at the stand knitting. She says to him: Do you remember it is anniversary to-night? The father is angered. He never wants any allusion to the fact that one had gone away, and the mere suggestion that it was the anniversary of that sad event made him quite rough, although the tears ran down his cheeks. The old house-dog, that had played with the wanderer when she was a child, came up and put his head on the old man's knee, but he roughly repulsed the dog. He wants nothing to remind him of the anniversary day.

The following incident was told me: It was a cold winter night in a city church. It is Christmas night. They have been decorating the sanctuary. A lost wanderer of the street, with thin shawl about her, attracted by the warmth and light, comes in and sits near the door. The minister of religion is preaching of Him who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and the poor soul by the door said: "Why, that must mean me; mercy for the chief of sinners; bruised for our iniquities, wounded for our transgressions."

The music that night in the sanctuary brought back the old hymn which she used to sing when with father and mother she worshiped God in the village church. The service over, the minister went down the aisle. She said to him:

Were those words for me? Wounded for our transgressions? Was that for me?

The man of God understood her not. He knew not how to comfort a shipwrecked soul, and he passed on and he passed out. The poor wanderer followed into the street.

What are you doing here, Meg? said the police. What are you doing here to-night?

Oh, she replied, I was in to warm myself; and she held the railing until the paroxysm was over She passed down the street, falling from exhaustion; recovering herself again until after a while she reached the outskirts of the city, and passed on into the country road. It seemed so familiar, she kept on the road, and she saw in the distance a light in the window. Ah! that light had been gleaming there every night since she went away. On that country road she passed until she came to the garden gate. She opened it and passed up the path where she had played in childhood She came to the steps and looked in at the fire on the hearth. Then she put her fingers to the latch. Oh! if that door had been locked she would have perished on the threshhold, for she was near to death. But that door had not been locked since the time she went away. She pushed open the door. She went in and laid down on the hearth by the fire. The old house-dog growled as he saw her enter, but there was something in the voice he recognized, and he frisked about her until he almost pushed her down in his joy.

In the morning the mother came down and she saw a bundle of rags on the hearth; but when the face was upturned she knew it, and it was no more old Meg of the street. Throwing her arms around the returned prodigal, she cried: Oh Maggie

The child threw her arms around her mother's neck, and said: Oh, mother! And while they embraced a rugged form towered above them. It was the father. The severity all gone out of his face, he stopped and took her up tenderly and carried her to mother's room and laid her down on mother's bed, for she was dying. Then the lost one looking up into her mother's face, said: "Wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities! Mother, do you think that means me?

Oh, yes, my darling, said the mother. If mother is so glad to get you back, don't you think God is glad to get you back?

And there she lay dying, and all her dreams and all her prayers were filled with the words, "Wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," until just before the moment of her departure, her face lighted up, showing the pardon of God had dropped upon her soul. And then she slept away on the bosom of a pardoning Jesus. So the Lord took back one whom the world rejected.—The Vigilance.

The church can not show the world its true mission better than by fighting a few battles for righteousness. The church triumphant must first be the church militant.

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