

THE ADVENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Charles H. Babcock

The coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was not only the fulfillment of the Divine promise, but it was the coming of Deity to incarnate Himself in His true church, and to become the Divine center of Spirit life and power. In our casual reading or thinking we do not grasp the greatness of this advent. As great as was the coming of Christ, the Holy Spirit comes with a higher and a more glorious sacredness and manifestation to the sons of men—not that He is different from the Godhead, but He is the last and final message of God to the age. There is no other revelation.

In other dispensations God was revealed in His power and authority. Men approached Him as a Divine Sovereign; it was the dispensation of the Father, which is one of fear: "Fear God and keep His commandments," and that was a sense of the Divine deity of the Father. That dispensation passed, and we come into the dispensation of the Son; the coming of the Son was to unfold the Father. The Christ did not speak of Himself; it was prophesied that He would not speak of Himself, but that He would speak of the Father. That word 'Father' had not been in the vocabulary of men. You can look all through the Old Testament. There God was King, Sovereign, Lawgiver, the mighty God. But when Jesus came, the Father was revealed in Him.

Then as Jesus gets to the end of His mission He speaks of Another to come. He says, "When he is come he will take the things of mine and reveal them unto you." This dispensation of the Spirit, with cloven tongues of fire, and with a new manifestation of God, is something different in the history of mankind. Never before had there come anything like this among men. Never had a people become so gloriously filled. God had never come down and shaken a building. As near as He ever came to doing that was in His Son, but now He comes in the human heart. So Pentecost is a dispensation that reveals two great facts. In the past it remembers Sinai; in the present it dates from Calvary. It is a law written upon your heart, not by the hand of man but by the Holy Ghost. A new enterprise is started and God begins a new invasion of the world. Why, if Pentecost had been preached and experienced, the world would not have had the degeneracy and darkness it has now. It is because we have disobeyed and have not received the Holy Spirit that the darkness from hell is creeping over the earth until apostasy and darkness and damnation are increasing.

Again Pentecost means not only a glorious coming of God but it means also that there is a revelation from the inward to the outward. It is not only outward obedience that God is requiring, but it is the Holy Spirit enthroned within you. It is not an outward obedience, but an inward righteousness. Christ made that plain in the Sermon on the Mount. The revelation of God is the Spirit that comes to cleanse and abide forever. Pentecost begins on the inside and radiates out. Before there was a cloven tongue on the head there was a burning sensation in the heart. While Pentecost is a historical fact, it is also a present, glorious experience with endless possibilities in God. Pentecost will fix you not only for great joy but for great suffering, when your shouting is over, you haven't lost your religion. When your sky is dark, you know that God hasn't left you. He will let you see what it means to suffer with Him.

The disciples had the upper-room experience

of wind and fire and joy and glory, but they got the prison experience too. How did it go then? It went better than in the upper room when the wind was blowing. They were shouting and full of glory.

And, again, Pentecost is the full revelation of Jesus to the heart. Brother, you will never know the fullness of God and the glory of God until you have received the Holy Spirit. Those disciples were far nearer to Christ than any of us in that respect. They followed Him in the flesh and yet they did not know Him. After He performed the miracle of feeding the 5,000 people you would have thought that they would have believed Him for anything. Philip was the mathematician of the company and he said, "Send them away." But Christ said, "Set them down!" Think of seating 5,000 people and having nothing to feed them! A little lad had a portion and the Lord used it to feed that whole multitude. Brother, that is the way God works. It is the way of the Spirit in unfolding Christ to your heart, the mighty indwelling power of God. The disciples didn't understand the possibilities of the infinite fulness of Christ; and, friends, we are hindered, defeated and confused, and the Kingdom of God today is hindered because of the unbelief and division and carnality. Demons cannot be cast out, people cannot be touched, men's eyes cannot be opened, and the Holy Ghost cannot have His way because we are not in a condition to receive His power. Let us bow our heads and say, "Have mercy on me, O God!" Look at your own heart and ask God to pity your heart that is full of unbelief, and cry until you somehow come in touch with your Divine Lord. Oh, what we need is the Holy Ghost!

—Selected by J. H. Golding of Peel, N. B.

"CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS"

Author Unknown

It was a cold, blustery day as a boy eleven years old was hurrying along a back street in a large city, holding the hand of his sister, eight years old.

Their clothes showed the pinch of poverty, yet they were neat, and a look of intelligence showed their home training.

As they entered their humble home, a weak, gentle voice said:

"Charlie, is it you, my son? Come here."

Charlie went to the bed on which his mother lay. "What success—no work yet?"

"No, mother, none; no one wants a boy. Dot and I have gone over the city but it is no use; we must starve or beg."

"We went from store to store until tired. Coming to a church we went in. We heard the preacher say 'Cast thy bread upon the waters,' but I thought it would be better to give it to poor people like us."

"You did not understand him, Charlie," and she explained to him what it meant.

Little Dot said, "Mother, does it mean that it will come back a big loaf?"

"Yes, my dear; it means what we give to the Lord will be given back increased a hundred-fold."

Dot said nothing but seemed to be thoughtful all afternoon.

In the evening Charlie made a hot drink for his mother. After each had eaten a slice of bread there was only one slice left in the cupboard and no money to buy more.

After Charlie had gone out, Dot went to the cupboard and took the slice of bread and went out. Her mother was asleep.

Dot did not know where to find the water and asked a gentleman, "Please, sir, where is the water?"

The gentleman said, "Do you mean the river, my dear?"

"Yes, sir," replied Dot.

"What takes a little girl like you to the river on such a cold day? You had better go home."

"No, sir, I must throw the bread on the water first, so we will get more," and on she went.

The gentleman's curiosity was aroused and he followed the blue-eyed girl at a distance.

Dot soon got to the river. The gentleman was close behind her, hidden behind a woodpile.

Dot held the slice of bread and prayed, "Please, God, this is all the bread we've got. We have none for breakfast, but if it isn't too long till the hundred slices come back, maybe Charlie can get some money to buy some. Send it to Dotty Horn, in Thomas alley, for Jesus' sake. Amen." And then she cast the bread on the water of the river.

To say that the gentleman was affected would not describe his feelings. He wiped the tears from his eyes, and followed Dot home.

When near home, she was met by Charlie, who was hunting for her. She was soon clasped in her mother's arms. In reply to her mother's question, she told her where she had been, ending with, "I just thought as we only had one slice of bread, I would go and throw it on the river, and we would get the hundred slices after while."

Her mother's eyes filled with tears. She could not find it in her heart to scold her for her simple faith, although she knew the cupboard was empty and there was no one to provide more for the morrow.

"Don't cry, mother," said Dot. "God will send it sure; the preacher said He would."

Soon Charlie lighted the lamp and sat by the bed to read a chapter of the Bible before going to bed. He had just begun when a knock was heard at the door. Before he could get up to open it, a man entered and placed a large basket on the floor and a letter on the table. To the surprise of all, the man departed without saying a word.

Running to the door, Charlie looked for the man, but could not see him. He examined the basket, which was labeled, "For Dotty Horn; her bread from the water." Opening it, he found bread, a chicken and a great many groceries. He then read the letter. It was addressed, "Master Charles Horn," and said that he was appointed messenger boy in the store of John Lennox and Company.

There was earnest thanksgiving to God in that humble home that night. The gentleman who had followed Dot had made inquiry concerning the family from the near neighbors and resolved that such faith could not go unrewarded.

Charlie is a partner in the firm now. His mother is well, and they both feel that their happiness is due to Dot's faith. "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matt. 21:22.)—Selected.

"The Defender" in a recent issue says: "A woman in Washington gave a fifty thousand dollar New Year's party at which guests consumed 120 gallons of champagne, 55 gallons of whiskey, 12 gallons of cocktails, three gallons of miscellaneous liquors and 40 gallons of beer During 1936, tobacco users in the United States purchased 134,607,741,257 cigarettes, 4,763,883,947 cigars, 95,875 tons of pipe tobacco and 18,030 tons of snuff. Thus do the American people poison themselves with nicotine."—Sel.