



The Guest of The Soul

Chapter 2 – THE BLESSEDNESS OF PENTECOSTAL BAPTISM

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? (Luke xi. 13).

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you (Acts i. 8).

Pentecost was the first great event in the history of our religion after the Ascension of Jesus. It was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy and Jesus' promise. Joel, hundreds of years before, had prophesied:

It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy [that is, speak for God], your old men shall dream dreams [of a better day coming than they ever knew], your young men shall see visions [of a world redeemed from sin and conquered for Christ by service, by willing sacrifice, by patient suffering, by endurance to the utmost]: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. (Joel ii. 28, 29).

And Jesus Himself had promised that if He went away He would send another Comforter or Helper, who would be with them evermore.

Before He ascended to the Father, He commanded His disciples that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence (Acts i. 4, 5).

On the day of Pentecost came the ample fulfillment. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. That was the final and all sufficient evidence that Jesus had not been swallowed up and lost in the cloud that had received Him out of their sight, but that He had got Home to Heaven, that



He was upon His Throne, and that in His exaltation and exultation He had not forgotten them. They were still in His thought and in His love; He was depending upon them still, and equipping them with power to carry on His work and fulfill His purpose.

They were exultant. Their joy overflowed. They shined and they shouted. Their hearts caught fire, their minds kindled into flame. Their tongues were unloosed. They must testify. They trooped downstairs from the upper room and out into the street. This was no mere drawing-room, parlour-holiness-meeting blessing they had received. It was too big, too glorious and good to be confined. They must tell it abroad.

The city of Jerusalem was full of strangers from all parts of the world, come to the great feast; and to these strangers in their own language the glorious news was told. The populous city was stirred, mystified, and there was a rush together of the curious multitude, and they were "confounded," "amazed." They "marvelled" as every man heard them speak in his own language. In their amazement and doubt they exclaimed, "What meaneth this?" – and well they might. It meant that God had come to tabernacle in the hearts of men, that all Heaven was enlisted in a campaign for the salvation of the world, a campaign which would not cease till the earth was "filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. ii. 14).

But some mocked, and said, "These men are full of new wine," they are drunk; and so they were, drunk with holy joy and gladness and love and quenchless hope and life eternal.

Peter said: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," and so it was. The other Comforter had come, and the great days of the Church were inaugurated with a mighty revival, in the first meeting of which 3,000 people were converted. And every revival from then till now – whether local, in some little church or Salvation Army hall or mission station; or world-wide in its sweep like the Wesleyan revival, or that led by William Booth – has flowed from the presence and activities of the Holy Spirit as He has been received in trusting hearts and honoured in faith and service.



All the lovers of Jesus should in these days seek fresh renewings and a greater fullness of the Holy Spirit. They should study what the Bible says about Him as a Person. He is not a mere influence, passing over us like a wind or warming us like a fire. He is a Person, seeking entrance into our hearts that He may comfort us, instruct us, empower us, guide us, give us heavenly wisdom, and fit us for holy and triumphant service.

If we will seek His presence and yield ourselves to Him in secret prayer, He will make the Bible a new book to us. He will make Jesus precious to us, He will make God the Father ever real to us. We shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. We shall not be weak in the presence of duty or temptation, but "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might" (Eph. vi. 10). We shall be "ready to every good work" (Titus iii. 1).

I suggest to all my readers that by way of preparation they prayerfully and carefully study what Jesus says of the Holy Spirit, "the Comforter," in John xiv, xv, and xvi, and that the Acts of the Apostles, which in many respects might be called the Acts of the Holy Ghost, be read and re-read again and again, and pondered in faith and prayer.

God has greater things for us and all His people than the world has ever yet seen, if we but believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and permit the Spirit to lead us.

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.... And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 14, 17).

And the heir can draw on the estate for all those things needful for his well-being and the full development and use of his powers.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is not given to any and everybody. Jesus spoke of Him as One "whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him" (John xiv. 17). Jesus did not say, "may not receive," but "cannot receive. He is given only to those who can receive, to those who see and know. If a man has closed his eyes to light, if he has turned his



heart from true knowledge, he cannot receive. And yet such people are responsible for their deprivation, because their blindness is due to their own action. Such people could not receive the Holy Ghost because they prepared not their hearts to receive Him. They turned away from the Saviour and the truth which alone could fit them to receive Him.

The Holy Ghost is given only to those who, accepting Christ and following Him, are prepared to receive. The Pentecostal baptism is for an inner circle. It is a family affair. It is for the children who have become sons and daughters of God through penitent, obedient faith. It is part of their heritage. It is the portion of that immeasurable inheritance in Christ which is bestowed upon them while upon earth. What the measure of that full inheritance will be in the heavenly world no tongue can tell, no heart can conceive. Pentecost is the foretaste. It is that which, received and properly, wisely, diligently used, will fit us for the final and full reward, but which, rejected or neglected, will leave us eternal paupers among those who weep and gnash their teeth in outer darkness.

(1) The Pentecostal Blessing is for our comfort while we are away from Home and from the unveiled presence of the Father. "I will not leave you comfortless," said Jesus, "I will come to you" (John xiv. 18). The coming of the Comforter is also the coming of Jesus in the Spirit. Where the Spirit is there Jesus is. When He is come we are no longer orphans, lonely and bereft. Though unseen He is present with us, and our hearts are strangely warmed and comforted. To some of us this world would be desolate and lonely beyond words if it were not for the presence of the Comforter.

(2) The Pentecostal Blessing is for our instruction in the things of God. The Holy Ghost is the great, secret, silent, inward Teacher, speaking to the ears of the soul, whispering in the silences of the night, instructing in the hours of prayer and communion. We are dull and ignorant, making no assured progress in the School of Christ, until the Comforter is come.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you



(said Jesus) (John xiv. 26).

When He comes He arouses and quickens our dull minds. He opens wide the closed eyes, the sealed ears of the soul; and we see and hear things that were hidden from us. He brings our inner life into harmony with the mind of God as revealed in the Bible, and its spiritual meaning begins to open up to our understanding. He quickens our memory and we now can remember the word of the Lord. We can go home from a meeting and tell what we have heard when the Comforter is in our hearts.

(3) The Pentecostal Blessing is for our guidance. There is one way that is everlasting. "Lead me in the way everlasting," prayed the Psalmist (cxxxix. 24). There is one, and only one, road that leads Home. Heaven is at the end of that way. There are many attractive and alluring by- ways, but only the one true way, and we need the Comforter to guide us in that way. "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you," said Jesus, "guide you into all truth" (John xvi. 13) – the truth about God, about Jesus His Son, about salvation and holiness, about sin and its certain and unending consequences, about the shed blood that saves from sin, about the way of faith and the life of obedience and the will of God and the joy set before us. It is the way of the Cross, of duty, of lowly, humble, faithful service; the way of love and truth and justice and all right and holy living; the way of patient well-being, forbearance and kindness, and the spirit that forgives and gives and asks no reward but the grace to give more fully, love more tenderly, believe more firmly, serve more wisely, hope more joyfully, and never to fail.

(4) The Pentecostal Blessing is for power. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," said Jesus (Acts i. 8). We are naturally weak in "the inner man." We fall before temptation. We faint with hopelessness, discouragement or fear in the presence of difficulty or danger. We flame with hasty temper or passion under provocation. We are puffed up with false views of our own ability or importance; or we are cast down by a feeling of our own impotence. But when the Comforter comes He strengthens us in the inner man. He humbles us with a true view of our weakness, our ignorance, our foolishness and insufficiency, and then lifts us up with



the revelation of God's sufficiency and eagerness to reinforce us at every point of our spiritual need.

I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (wrote Paul), that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man (Eph. iii. 14, 16).

We should watch and pray and trustfully wait, daily and hourly and momentarily, for that inner strengthening by the Spirit, that we may be strong to work, to fight, to resist, to serve, to sacrifice, to suffer, to dare and bear up and press on joyfully and not grow weary nor fainthearted.

Before Pentecost Peter was ignorant of himself. So conceited was he that he rebuked Jesus for saying that He was to die on a cross; so cocksure of himself that he boasted that he would die with Jesus; and yet so inwardly weak that he denied Jesus when a maid pointed him out as one of the disciples, and he cursed and swore that he did not know Jesus. But when a few days later the Holy Ghost had come and strengthened him "in the inner man," he boldly preached Christ Jesus to the multitudes in Jerusalem. And when he and John were beaten and threatened and thrown into prison, they gloried that they were counted worthy to suffer and bear shame for Jesus. They were comforted, instructed, guided, and made inwardly strong to do and dare and bear and suffer – by the Pentecostal baptism.

"The baptism with the Holy Ghost is for power for service!" so many people think and say. And so it is. But it is for far more! The baptism does reinforce and empower the soul. The man or woman who is baptized with the Spirit is "endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49), and as a spiritual energy and effectiveness which are not of this world. Their lives and their words take on a strange, new influence and power which come from the active co-operation of an unseen Guest, a holy and Divine Presence abiding in love within them, and this fits them for the service of their Lord.



But service is not the whole purpose of man's being. What a man is is more important than what he does. Goodness is better than greatness. A man may do much and make a great name for himself, and end in Hell; but a good man, who loves God and his fellow-men, though he may not be known beyond the street in which he lives, the factory in which he works, the place where he worships, he is on the way to Heaven, and is well known up there. There are those who are first who shall be last; and there are last who shall be first.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost is to bring us into union with Christ, into loving fellowship with the Heavenly Father, to fit us snugly into God's great, complex scheme of life, and equip us for such service or sacrifice as falls to our lot. The busy housewife, the burdened mother, the toiler in mine or factory, on farm or train or ship. board, the clerk at his desk, the merchant prince, the boot-black and the Prime Minister, the King and the President, the schoolboy and girl – each and all need the Pentecostal Blessing for daily life and duty, as much as does the Captain of a Salvation Army corps, the missionary in India or Africa, the General of The Salvation Army or the Archbishop of Canterbury, if they are to live worthy lives that shall glorify God and do their work in a spirit well pleasing to Him.

We each and all need the Blessing of Pentecost, not simply for service, but for holy, worthy living, for the perfecting and completing of character from which will flow influences which often are more effective than the busy activity which we call service.

A hard-headed business man saw a poor widow woman with her brood of fatherless children going to the house of God Sunday after Sunday, and one day it convicted him of his sin and neglect and turned him in repentance and faith to the Saviour. Her patient continuance in well doing " (Rom. ii. 7), which was a fruit of the Spirit, was more effective than any word she could have spoken.

A lawyer came to his wife's pastor and asked to be received as a member of the church. The pastor was glad, for he had preached sermons to reach this man. So he asked, somewhat shamefacedly, which one of his sermons had brought him to decision.



"Well, pastor," replied the lawyer, "to tell the truth, it was not one of your sermons. A few Sundays ago I was leaving the church and found old coloured Auntie Blank haltingly trying to get down the icy steps, and I took her arm and helped her. Then she turned her black face, all radiant, up to mine, and asked, 'Do you love my Jesus?' It cut to my heart. I saw her peace and overflowing love and joy, in spite of her poverty and rheumatism, and it convicted me of my sin and led me to Christ."

The fruit of the Spirit, manifest in life and look and everyday, unpremeditated speech, often works more silently, deeply, effectively than our preaching; and only the Pentecostal Blessing can produce this fruit unto perfection in our lives.

Many years ago I was campaigning in a little city in far-away Minnesota just at the time of the annual meeting of the Methodist Conference. The town was full of Methodist preachers, many of whom attended our Salvation Army open-air meetings, and some of whom came to our hall. Some of them invited me to come to their "love feast," or testimony meeting, at nine o'clock on Sunday morning, just before the bishop's great sermon, and give my testimony; which I did. After speaking for some time I was going to sit down, but they begged me to speak on, so I continued. Then the presiding elder, host of the Conference, came in, and seeing me in the pulpit he most peremptorily ordered me to sit down. The preachers protested, while my peace flowed like a river. I assured him I would be through in a moment, and I hurried out to my holiness meeting.

Several of the preachers said, "We have not believed in the Blessing, but that Salvationist has it, else instead of smiling and keeping calm and full of peace, he would have taken offence at that presiding elder." And leaving the bishop they came to our little hall, and in the holiness meeting came to the Mercy Seat for the Blessing. One of them received the fiery, cleansing, humbling baptism and became a witness to the Blessing and a flaming evangelist throughout all that region.

It was not my preaching alone, but the fruit of the Spirit that won him. And it was not of me. I am not by nature calm and peaceful. Quite the contrary. It was supernatural. My proud heart had been humbled to receive the Comforter, and graciously and in love He had come; and it was He



in my heart who kept me peaceful and calm, and to Him be the glory. "Great peace have they which love Thy law" – in whom the Comforter abides – and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. cxix. 165). Nothing. It is to cleanse and empower the soul and produce this heavenly fruit in earth's harsh climate that the Pentecostal Blessing is given.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. v. 22). And the Christian in whom this fruit – full, rich, and ripe – is found has received his Pentecost, and, in spite of infirmities and human frailties and limitations, is reproducing the life of Jesus upon earth; and out of him, most often unconsciously, flow influence and power that are like "rivers of living water" (John vii. 38) in desert lands. In him Christ is magnified (Phil. i. 20) and the Father is glorified (John xv. 8).

Have YOU received the Holy Ghost since you believed? (Acts xix. 2).