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MELANCTHON AND THE PRESENT.

Versuch einer Charakteristik Melancthons als Theologen, und einer Entwickelung seines Lehrbegriffs von Friedrich Gale. Halle, 1840.

It is the professed object of the book referred to at the head of this article, to give a fair representation of Melancthon, as a theologian in the general acceptation of the term, and more particularly to point out his variations on the two most important subjects in Theology, the Lord's Supper, and the Freedom of the Will. The book indeed, as the author says, sprung originally from a previous article on his variations in doctrine, but as these constitute but a part of his mental history, it was a happy idea in the author, that led him to seek for those portions that remained, and to clothe them with life and beauty. In this he has happily succeeded, and we consequently have an internal history of Melancthon in all its parts, the only true history, which can be given of a scholar, who has spent his time in reflection, rather than in practical life. The book is thorough, that is, it quotes original authority for proof, and it may be regarded, we presume, as standard authority on all subjects connected with the life of the Reformer. In Germany it has taken its place in the theological literature of the day, as a "monograph," a

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can never be a complete Christianity. It must be at the same time historical, the result of the real powers of the new creation working out in a whole way, from generation to generation, the solution of its own great problem.

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THE BIRTH DAY OF THE CHURCH.

§1. *The Miracle of Pentecost.*

Next to the Incarnation and Resurrection of the Son of God; the outpouring of the Holy Ghost and the birth of the Church constitutes the most important and influential fact recorded on the pages of history. As a miracle of the highest order which is daily repeated on a smaller scale in the regeneration and awakening of men, it entered the sphere of our human life attended and certified by phenomena of a supernatural character. Thousands who witnessed it on the day of Pentecost submitted to its conquering power. Over the entire surface of society it has scattered in rich profusion the seeds of life, and is destined, under the direction of Providence, to transform by the energy of the Spirit the whole human family into the image of Christ and unite it in close fellowship to God. For the subject now in hand must not be regarded as an isolated, transitory event whose impress has been worn away by the march of time, but as the generative germ of an infinite series of divine revelations in the course of history, as a fountain of life whose purifying waters flow with uninterrupted course through the channels of time into the bosom of a boundless eternity. The Holy Spirit who had hitherto enlightened, in a temporary and sporadic manner, a special class of men selected by Providence as the representatives of the Old Testament Dispensation, now appeared in the world as an integral, abiding member of its constitution, took up his residence in the hearts of a believing congregation, and has since manifested his power as the divine principle of light and life by means of which the redemption accomplished by Christ is to be made effectual in the conversion of men and the propagation of truth. Previous to his death our Lord expressly declared to his mourning disciples that the communication of the Spirit of Truth as an abiding blessing depended upon his going to the Father. "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if

I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.”¹ In his farewell discourses delivered before his death as well as in his final valedictory prior to the Ascension (Acts 1: 8,) when He commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem till the promise should be fulfilled and they be baptised with the Spirit, He spake with special emphasis concerning the absolute necessity of his departure as the essential condition of the descent of the Comforter (v. 4, 5.).

That this remarkable occurrence which unquestionably constitutes one of the most prominent parts of history, might attract the attention of men of every clime and every tongue, God, in His infinite wisdom, had selected, for the time of its appearance, from the three great festivals of the Jews that which bore a like typical relation to the founding of the Church as the Passover to the death and resurrection of Christ. According to the common reckoning from the 16th of Nisan when harvest season began (Lev. 23: 11, Deut. 16: 9), Pentecost came on the fiftieth day² after the day immediately following Easter Sabbath (Lev. 23: 15, &c.), and was honored by the Jews with a double meaning. It was a festival of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the harvest which took place during the seven weeks preceding, and, on this account, is called in the Old Testament *the feast of weeks*³ or *the feast of harvest*.⁴ Besides, according to old Rabbinical tradition, it had at the same time reference to the establishment of the Theocracy by the giving of the Law at Sinai which happened about this season of the year (comp. Ex. 19: 1), and, on this account, was called the law-jubilee.⁵ Both significations coincided exactly with the nature of the first Christian Pentecost when the types of the Old Testament economy were gloriously fulfilled. For then were gathered into the

¹ John 16: 7, comp. the remarkable passage John 7: 39.: For the Holy Ghost was not yet given (namely to the believers), because that Jesus was not yet glorified,” and John 12: 24, where Christ speaks with reference to his death: “Except a corn fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

² Hence the name, from the greek *ἡμέρα πεντηκοστή* or *πεντηκοστή* merely as subst. (thus Tobiae 2: 1, 2 Macc. 12: 32.)

³ “Hag Haschebuoth” (Deut. 16: 9, &c., Ex. 23: 16, Lev. 23: 15, &c.), *ἡγία ἡμέρα ἑβδομάδων* (Tobiae 2: 1).

⁴ “Hag Hakezir,” also “Jom Habecorim” (The Day of the first fruits, Numb. 28: 26).

⁵ “Simchath Hathorah.” As regards this meaning of the festival the Old Testament and the writings of Philo and Josephus convey no certain information. It was inferred, however, from a comparison of Ex. 12: 2 and 19: 1.

garners of the Church, as the matured harvest of the Jewish nation, the first fruits of the Christian faith. Then was established the communion of the new covenant with privileges in no way restricted to a single nation or age, but gratuitously offered to all nations and ages by God who in the place of the letter of the law written on tables of stone which had power only to destroy the awakened sinner, implanted in the hearts of his followers the law of the spirit of life which works by love.

In the second chapter of the Acts we have a brief but comprehensive account of this significant event and the circumstances connected with it. In the year 30¹ of our era, on a Sabbath² day of the festival of Pentecost succeeding the resurrection of

¹ As regards the correctness of our era we agree with Bengel and Wieseler who admit that it commences four years too late. Comp. the "Chronology. Synopsis of the four Gospels" by Wieseler, 1843, p. 48, &c. According to the statement of Luke (3. 23, comp. the corresponding chronological date in John 2: 20) Christ was about thirty years old when baptized; according to John he labored in his public ministry three years. He must have died, therefore, in the 34th year of his age.

² This view of the case must be adopted, because the 15th of Nisan, on which day according to the synoptic Gospels (with which also John, though apparently at variance with them, can and must be reconciled) Christ died, came on a Friday; consequently the 16th of Nisan of that year was a Sabbath Eve. If we reckon from this, according to the order given in Lev. 23: 15, fifty days, we cannot obtain a Sunday as the late Dr. Olshausen (in his commentary on Acts 2: 1) supposed who evidently started, in his calculation, with the same supposition, but again a Sunday Eve as Wieseler rightly judges (in his excellent "Chronology of the Apostolic Period" 1848, p. 19). In his chronological system all the results of which, however, we cannot adopt, this learned scholar attempts to ascertain still more precisely the festival of Pentecost and places it on the 6th of Sivan or the 27th of May, inasmuch as, according to his calculations, Christ died on the 8th day of April of the year 30. But, now, this view stands opposed to the primitive and universal practice of the Church which was accustomed to celebrate Pentecost on a Sabbath, on the fiftieth day after the Resurrection, and the tenth after the ascension of Christ. This difficulty, however, would easily be removed if we adopt the view of the Caraci, who affirmed, in opposition to the Pharisees, that the word שבת in the decisive passage Lev. 23: 11, 15, 16, must not be explained as referring to the first Easter day (the 15th Nisan) which was kept as a Sabbath no matter on what day it came, but to the *proper* Sabbath, that is, the seventh day of the week. In such case Pentecost would *always* come on a Sunday. This same view has been ably set forth by the acute Hitzig who urges its correctness, mainly, on lexicographic grounds (Easter and Pentecost. Letter to Ideler—Heidelberg, 1837). But it cannot be proven that the customs of the Caraci were prevalent in the time of Christ. On this account the safest method, perhaps, is to refer the celebration of Pentecost on a Sunday by the Church to an evangelical opposition to Judaism as the reason, which, in the end also, caused the celebration of the Passover to be changed from fixed days of the *month* to fixed days of the *week* and of the Sabbath to a Sunday.

Christ, the Apostles and other disciples of Jesus, in number about 120, (comp. Acts 1: 15,) were assembled with one accord in their house of prayer, or, as seems to us more probable, in a department of the temple.¹ During the first season for devotion (about 9 o'clock in the morning,) unusual phenomena announced the fulfillment of an event which had been promised with the most solemn assurance, expected with the most intense de-

¹ Similar difficulties are connected with the place of assembling. Luke designates the place by οἶκος, c. 2: 2, without any more precise determination of it. The majority of commentators, and amongst them Neander (Hist. of Apos. I p. 13, of the fourth Edition), admit that this expression in itself refers most naturally to a private house. If we adopt this meaning to the exclusion of others, we must suppose that the disciples, having been assembled in an upper chamber (ὑπερῶν) which was used according to Oriental fashion for prayer, (comp. Acts 1: 13) stepped forth upon the flat roof, and thence addressed the people gathered in the forecourt; for in the house itself the immense multitude, of whom 3000 were baptized, could not possibly have been accommodated. But it is not absolutely necessary that οἶκος be referred to a private house. In 1 Kings 8: 10 (LXX) the word denotes the whole temple; with greater propriety may it be taken for *lepor* when, as in the present case, a single department is spoken of. It is not even necessary to recur to the passages in Josephus' Antiq. VIII, 3, 2 where the thirty side-chambers which surrounded the main edifice, are called οἶκοι; for the temple itself included several buildings, οἶκοι, οἰκοδομαί, (comp. Mark 13: 1, 2, Math. 24: 1). That οἶκος in this present instance need not necessarily refer to a private house but to some department in the temple as both Olshausen and Wieseler conclude, will appear evident from the following considerations: 1. According to Luke 24: 53 and Acts 2: 46, (comp. Acts 5: 42) the disciples assembled daily in the temple. They still adhered to the worship practised by their fathers. These statements of Luke, apart from any positive declaration, authorize the conclusion that on the day of Pentecost the disciples were wont to assemble in the temple and on this one particularly they would not fail to be present. But he even signifies this much by the remark c. 2. 15 that the event happened about the third hour (9 o'clock in the morning) when the Jews presented their daily morning sacrifices in the temple. 2. This supposition gives to the entire occurrence a greater degree of credibility and renders it more easy of explanation. The gathering of the multitude in the temple, particularly, admits of a more natural interpretation. 3. Finally, we may say with Olshausen that the event itself gains in importance if it be admitted that "the solemn inauguration of the Church of Christ took place in the sanctuary of the old covenant." It might be objected, however, to this last remark that Christianity as an invocation of God in Spirit and in Truth attaches far less importance than either Judaism or Paganism, to the sacredness of particular times and places. The first two reasons, however, prove to us conclusively that the out-pouring of the Spirit was accomplished within the precincts of the temple. The mere mention of Pentecost c. 2: 1 would lead us to suppose this much; the entire connection would warrant a reference of οἶκος to a private house only in case the text necessarily compelled to such a meaning. But the expression οἶκος itself by no means includes such necessity.

sire, and prayed for with the most ardent supplication—the descent of the Spirit and the beginning of a new moral creation. It is a fact worthy not only of mention but of profound study that, in virtue of the mysterious sympathy existing between the physical and moral worlds, the grand leading epochs of history have generally been accompanied and authenticated, as it were, by extraordinary phenomena in the sphere of nature. Thus the proclamation of the Law delivered at Sinai was attended with thunder, and lightning, and the voice of a trumpet (comp. Ex. 19: 16, &c.). So in the case now under consideration, the disciples recognized in the visible form under which God revealed his presence to them an appropriate symbol of the spiritual act just accomplished. A sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, suddenly filled the quiet house of prayer. The Holy Ghost who once brooded over the chaos of the natural world as the life-giving breath of God, now appeared in a nobler character, under the form of cloven tongues like unto fire, as the spirit of the glorified Redeemer, as the spirit of faith and of love, of truth and of holiness. In this whole transaction, it is evident that the wind and fire were symbols expressive of the purifying, enlightening, and vivifying power of God. The believing disciples were translated into a new sphere of life, into the very centre of the christian system, and, in conformity to the prediction of Christ, became instruments by means of which the Holy Spirit announced His presence and intentions: “The Spirit of truth shall testify of me and ye also shall bear witness” (John 15: 26, 27). For the bearing of witness is the first fruit of faith and furnishes at the same time resources for its propagation. Forthwith they gave vent to their feelings in audible prayers and songs of praise; with joy ineffable and a courage which neither difficulties nor threats could daunt, they proclaimed the wondrous workings of God and the redemption effected by Christ to the astonished people who, attracted by the rushing noise and the speaking in tongues,¹ had flocked around them. During this period when their minds were enkindled by the exciting feelings of an unusually exalted inspiration, the language of common life failed to express the new spiritual ideas which agi-

¹ The *φωνῆς γάρων* Acts 2: 6 seems to be referred by the *demonstr.* to the speaking in tongues immediately preceding, whilst the singular of the subst. seems to refer it to the rushing wind (v. 2). But as in the distance persons could not distinguish the single voices but would hear an indistinct general noise, the phrase may be regarded as an undefined collective and applicable to both.

tated their souls. As body and soul, thought and language, are necessary complements to each other and cannot come to true expression without mutual adaptation, it was necessary that the Spirit thus poured out should originate in them words fit for the transmission of the new thoughts infused into their minds. Here, accordingly, for the first time, came to view the power of *speaking in tongues* which Christ prior to his ascension had expressly promised would be given to his disciples (Mark 16: 17). The obscurity connected with the right understanding of this remarkable phenomenon compels us to enter upon an investigation of its character. It must be confessed, however, that, on account of a want of experience in events of a like nature and, consequently, of the almost inextricable confusion in the interpretation of the passages bearing upon the subject, it does not admit of a perfectly satisfactory and clear representation.

§2. *The Speaking in Tongues.*

The power of speaking with *other* or *new Tongues* (Glossology²) is one of the most extraordinary spiritual gifts which distinguish the apostolic church from all other periods of history whose character bears the lineaments of more tranquil and natural features. Down to the second and third centuries we find traces of its presence.* If we leave out of view the sporadic and oc-

¹The different interpretations of *γλώσσας λαλεῖν* which we cannot here state in detail, have been classified in the most convenient and complete form by De Wette in his commentary on the Acts p. 20-30.

²Luke, in his account of the festival of Pentecost, makes use of the expression "to speak with *other* tongues" (*ἑτέροις γλώσσαις λαλεῖν*), which may stand opposed to the vernacular and, in some sense, to all human languages. Our Lord himself designates the gift (Mark 16: 7) as "a speaking with *new* (*καιναις*) tongues" which seems to imply that a language hitherto unknown and the direct product of the Spirit, would be spoken by the disciples. With these exceptions we always find in use the abbreviated formula: "to speak with tongues" (*γλώσσαις λαλεῖν*, also in the singular *γλώσση λαλεῖν*, Acts 10: 46; 19: 6; 1 Cor. c. 12 and 14,). The simplest grammatical meaning of *γλώσση* is: *dialect*. This is demanded by the qualifying adjective *ἑτέροις* in the second chapter of the Acts and the word "*dialect*" which the strangers then present (v. 8) evidently used in the same sense. Besides, it alone agrees with the singular form *γλώσση λαλ.* as used by Paul. This last formula is sufficient to disprove the interpretation of Bleek who explains *γλώσσαις* as referring to uncommon, highly poetical, and provincial expressions—a meaning which profane writers very seldom allow and cannot be admitted in the Old and New Testament.

³Irenaeus (died 203) speaks of many brethren living in his own time who "were in possession of prophetic powers and spake by the aid of the

casional appearances of modern times concerning which it may with propriety be asked whether they proceed from the operation of the Holy Spirit, or of an unusually excited nature that delights to revel in exhibitions of a sickly, sentimental fanaticism of feeling,¹ we may safely affirm that since the third century the gift of speaking with other tongues has utterly vanished.

In considering this subject we must take care to ascertain what constitutes the *peculiar* nature of glossology as a gift of the apostolical Church in general and the particular form it assumed at its first appearance on the day of Pentecost. In order to

Spirit in various languages (*καρποδοαίς γλώσσαις*) and exposed to view the hidden things of men and the mysteries of God for the spiritual improvement of Christians" (adv. baer. V, 6.) Comp. the somewhat obscure passage of Tertullian in his argument against Marcion V, 8 and Neander's History of the Planting &c., I, 26, 4, Edition.

¹ We refer to the speaking with tongues as exercised in the assemblies of the Irvingites. A Swiss, by name Michael Hohl, who was an eye and ear witness of their proceedings, gives the following interesting description in his "fragments of the life and writings of Edward Irving, former preacher of the Scottish National Church in London," St. Gallen, 1839, p. 149: Previous to their speaking one could observe that the persons concerned were wholly absorbed in self-contemplation which manifested itself in closing the eyes and covering them with the hand. Suddenly, as if struck by an electric flash, they fell into spasmodic convulsions which shook the whole body; then gushed forth from quivering lips a copious, passionate effusion of strange, energetic tones, resembling most nearly, in my opinion, the sounds of the Hebrew language, which were usually repeated three times and, as already said, with incredible vehemence and acuteness. After this first outburst of strange sounds which were regarded as the main proof for the genuineness of the inspiration, followed invariably, in no less violent tone, a shorter or longer address in English which was likewise repeated partly by words and partly by sentences and consisted now in very forcible and earnest admonitions, then in horrible warnings of approaching misery, and in words full of soothing comfort and moving pathos; the last part was generally regarded as a periphrastic explanation of the first, although it as such could not be wholly explained by the speaker himself. Having given utterance to his feelings the inspired person continued for some time in a state of profound silence and recovered only by degrees from the weakness occasioned by his powerful excitement." The inward condition of such persons was told the narrator by a young girl after the following fashion: "Suddenly and unexpectedly the Spirit seized hold on her with irresistible power. For the time she felt herself to be entirely under the influence of a higher nature and guided by its motions, without which, indeed, she would have been incapable of such severe physical exertion. Of that which she was compelled to speak she had no distinct consciousness; much less did she understand anything of what she spake in a strange, and to her utterly unknown, language, so that she was not able to give any precise account of the scene in which she had been the chief actor. A state of great weakness and exhaustion succeeded the departure of the inspiration, from which she in a short time recovered."

a proper understanding of the first point we must summon to our aid the remarks made by Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians.—As regards its general *nature* it may be termed an involuntary, spiritual speaking in an ecstatic state of the most exalted devotion, in which the subject is not translated to a sphere beyond himself but buried rather in the inmost essence of his own being and brought into felt contact with that part of his nature which allies him directly to the Divine mind. In such case the ordinary consciousness of himself and the surrounding world recedes, disappears, as it were, and the language of common life fails to give utterance to his feelings, while his consciousness of God's presence governs his whole personality and he becomes the involuntary organ of the divine Spirit that dwells within him. Hence it is written in Acts 2: 4; "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." This inspiration has respect to form and contents, to thought and language. Paul calls the speaking with tongues a praying and singing "in the spirit" (*πνευμα*); by means of which he distinguishes the highest intuitional faculty, or the direct consciousness of God from "the understanding" (*νοῦς*), or the logical, reflective consciousness (1 Cor. 14: 14, 15.). The contents of the speaking with tongues was a praising of the wonderful works of the redeeming love of God (Acts 2: 11; 10: 46; 1 Cor. 14: 14, 16.) in the form of prayer, thanksgiving, and song (Acts 10: 46; 1 Cor. 14: 14, 18). Closely related to it is the gift of prophesying which likewise sprang from a direct inward revelation of divine mysteries and in Acts 19: 6 is mentioned in immediate connection with the gift bestowed on the day of Pentecost. The difference between them is of a twofold character. In the first place, the man who employed other tongues addressed himself directly to God, while the prophet spake to the congregation; in the second place, the latter delivered his thoughts in such form that even unbelievers could understand their meaning, while the former, such was the case at least in the Corinthian Church, could not be understood without the aid of an interpreter (1 Cor. 14: 2, &c). Hence Paul gives the preference to the gift of prophesying (1 Cor. 14: 5) and likens the speaking with tongues to sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal (1 Cor. 13: 1), to the uncertain sound of an instrument (1 Cor. 14: 7, 8), of a barbarous language which no man can understand (1 Cor. 14: 11) and which appears to the uninitiated as proof positive of madness in those who exercise it (v. 23). The speaking in tongues, therefore, was a dialogue carried on be-

tween the enraptured soul and God, an act of the most intense devotion which could become a source of profit to others only by being interpreted and translated into the language of common life. As regards this last point, however, an important difference obtained between the gift of tongues as described by the Apostle and the gift of tongues as used on the day of Pentecost. This leads us to a consideration of the second point of our subject.

As regards the *particular form* which this gift first assumed, it seems to have been immediately intelligible to the hearers without any explanation; at least, in the account recorded in the Acts no mention is made of an interpreter. Even in such case, however, there must have been at hand an inward receptivity for the proper apprehension of the truth delivered; for a portion of the assembled multitude turned the entire occurrence into a convenient occasion for mockery and regarded it as the product of minds disordered by intoxication (Acts 2: 13). But there was a second and more important difference. Paul gives no sufficient reason to suppose that the speaking with tongues consisted in the use of various foreign languages as distinguished from the vernacular. He himself, though pre-eminently endowed with the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 14: 18: "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all"), did not understand the speech of Lycaonia (Acts 14: 11, 14). The ecclesiastical tradition of primitive antiquity, also, speaks of interpreters of the Apostles; thus Papias calls Mark "the Interpreter of Peter." It would seem necessary, therefore, to suppose the existence of an unusual facility in the use of the vernacular, or of an entirely new spiritual language which differed from all *other* languages in vogue in the same degree that the thoughts and feeling of the speaker were elevated above the consciousness and understanding of common life. The internal ecstasy that agitated the subject, and the unusual spiritual elevation of the soul which was involuntarily brought into close connection with the Divine life, manifested their presence in this particular *mode* of communication. Yet this mode of speech itself, it must be borne in mind, so far as its essential nature is concerned, did not annihilate the language originally spoken by the subject but stood rather in close fellowship with it. Those, accordingly, who were not under the influence of this high-wrought inspiration, could not possibly understand the speaker who felt its power. The Acts of the Apostles, on the contrary, evidently describe the gift of tongues as a speaking in the strange languages of the foreigners who were present on the day of Pentecost. For, from this very

cause, their great astonishment sprang that illiterate Galileans should speak in languages they had never acquired by natural means and the knowledge of which must have been suddenly bestowed upon them by supernatural agency (Acts 2: 6, 11). Even commentators of the rationalistic school cannot deny that the account plainly delivers such a meaning. If, then, we refuse to recognise any difference between the gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost and that bestowed on the church of Corinth, and to adopt the supposition that the disciples spake strange languages which they could not possibly have acquired by actual study; we will be compelled either to acknowledge an unhistorical, mythical element in the account of Luke¹—and this both internal and external reasons forbid—or a self-deception on the part of the hearers whose impressions the narrator has impartially recorded without passing his private judgment on their credibility. As regards this latter view, we might either suppose that the disciples, having been filled with divine energy, spake in an entirely new language originated by the Holy Spirit, though more closely allied, perhaps, to the Aramaic than to any other, language, with such intense enthusiasm and inspiring force that the susceptible hearers involuntarily translated what they heard into their respective vernacular tongues, just as though it had originally been delivered in them, and that the barriers which sundered the different languages of the earth were momentarily removed by a participation in the communion of the Holy Spirit. Or, according to another supposition, we may suppose that the Apostles spake the *primitive language* which the arrogance of those who essayed to climb the heavens by building the tower of Babel had caused to be divided into a multitude of single distinct tongues. In gracious condescension to the humility manifested by the members of the renewed Zion, God had given them power to gather its scattered fragments and relicts and restore its primeval unity. On this memorable Pentecostal day its enlivening tones sank deep into the inmost recesses of the hearts of the hearers; reminding them of the happi-

¹ As Neander does, Hist. Apos. I, p. 28. This is one of the instances in his history of the Apostles—and more may be found in his Life of Christ—in which this venerable theologian whose profound experience of the living power of Christianity otherwise separates him at an almost infinite distance, we might say, from the dangerous tenets of Rationalism, has yielded too much force to the results of Modern Criticism.

ness enjoyed in the Paradasaical period and encouraging them with cheering hopes for the future.¹

It must be confessed, however, that these attempts at a psychological explanation of the miracle of tongues do not afford entire satisfaction. We feel disposed to place implicit confidence in the verbal meaning immediately derived from the record contained in the Acts, and give it as our opinion that, at the first manifestation of this gift and in presence of an immense multitude congregated from all parts of the habitable globe, the Holy Spirit in order to stamp the deepest possible impression on the minds of those whose dispositions were susceptible of it,² elevated the minds of the disciples to an unusual pitch of spiritual excitement and discernment and gave them power, temporarily, to understand and to use with facility the different languages of the several nations then represented. Nor is it a difficult task to ascertain the symbolical meaning of this astounding event. It was a practical demonstration of the universalness of the Christian system which embraces within its compass all nations and countries, and of the fact that in no long time the tidings of salvation would be proclaimed in every language spoken on earth. Now, that the Church and the Bible promulgate the glorious deeds of Jehovah in every clime and every tongue, the single Christian has no necessity for the gift of tongues for a right understanding of the truth. Already in the Apostolical period did the power of speaking with other tongues, though in substance the same, lose its original form. For it is not possible to understand the reason why this gift as employed in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10 : 46 ; comp. 19 : 6) or in the church of Corinth, should have been exercised in the use of foreign languages. In the Roman empire where Christianity achieved its

¹ Adopting this or a similar explanation we may say with the venerable Bede: *Unitatem linguarum, quam superbia Babylonis disperseerat, humilitas ecclesie recollegit*, or with Grotius: *Poena linguarum dispersit homines ; donum linguarum dispersos in unum populum recollegit*. It would seem then as if in the first beginning of the Church the end of her progress had been prophetically anticipated, when there shall be not only one Shepherd and one fold but one language also of the Holy Spirit.

² If we could place any reliance on the speaking with tongues of the Irvingites as a reasonable analogy, we would have a similar elevation in their case, because according to the above cited report of Hohl the ecstatic speeches were first delivered in foreign sounds like unto the Hebrew, and, when the inspiration had abated somewhat of its vigor, in the vernacular English.

principal victories, the preachers of the Gospel could make their thoughts almost universally intelligible by means of the Greek and Latin languages, and the style of Paul's expression in Greek proves that he had acquired a knowledge of it by natural means. Nor do the old missionary reports afford any proof that the rapid spread of the Gospel was brought to pass, or, in any way, assisted by the supernatural gift of tongues.

At any rate this much is certain, that the Bible considers the rise of several distinct languages as a penalty inflicted on man for perverseness of nature (Gen. 11), and that Christianity can not only accommodate itself to all languages and nations but has power also to remove all the barriers which sin has erected to obstruct the progress of Society, to gather into one fold the scattered sheep of God's selection, and to unite them in the bonds of a single language—the language of the Spirit.

§3. *The Sermon of Peter and its Result.*

The astonishment of the susceptible hearers who were overpowered by such wonderful phenomena and the disdainful reproach of unbelievers who attributed the speaking with other tongues to the influence of intoxicating drinks, compelled the Apostles to speak in vindication of their character and of the event itself. The argument they pronounced in favor of the truth, constituting as it did their first independent testimony, was spoken from a firm conviction that the fulness of the Spirit dwelt within them, and proved to be the efficient signal for the ingathering of the first fruits of the new spiritual creation. In immediate connection thus with the founding of the Church was established the office of preaching which henceforth constituted the chief agent for the propagation of the kingdom of God. The witness of the Holy Spirit confirmed its power in those who were His representatives. In conformity to the character portrayed of him in the Gospel the impetuous, rash Peter whose constitutional disposition admirably qualified him for a leader and spokesman, stood forth in the name of the rest of the Apostles and of the entire Church and gave practical demonstration of the truth that he was the rock on whose courageous confession of the faith the Lord had promised to build His Church. His speech to the assembled multitude, delivered most probably in the Hebrew language, is uncommonly simple and in beautiful harmony with the significance of the day. It was neither a direct polemical assault upon Judaism, nor a systematic exhibition of doctrine,

but a simple proclamation of historical facts, particularly of the resurrection of Christ; it was a plain but powerful testimony of the most assured experience that issued directly from the spiritual life of the speaker. Worthy of special note because of its remarkableness, is the contrast between the exalted inspiration of the speaking with tongues that preceded and the considerate discretion and sparkling clearness of this sermon. But it is the harmonious union of both that constitutes a characteristic trait in the lives of the Apostles who were alike removed from a cold, calculating formality and an extravagant, sentimental fanaticism. With humble affability and a mildness worthy of imitation Peter first refutes the unkind charge of drunkenness with the very modest and apparently trivial, but popular and convincing argument, that it was but the third hour of the day (9 o'clock in the morning), before which time the Jews took good care to abstain from every indulgence and even drunkards were ashamed to give way to the vice of intemperance. This phenomenon, he goes on to remark, is rather to be regarded as the glorious fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel who predicted that the outpouring of the Spirit would be attended with remarkable natural appearances and would not be confined to single ambassadors of God of pre-eminent piety and talent, as was the case under the reign of the old covenant, but extended to all, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned. This communication of the Spirit has been effected by Jesus of Nazareth, the promised Messiah, who as such has been powerfully authenticated, in your presence and for your good, by deeds and miracles. You have, it is true, in obedience to the eternal design and foreknowledge of God,¹ delivered him up and caused him to be nailed to the cross by the hands of idolatrous Romans;

¹ On the part of God the death of Christ was the fulfilment of His eternal decree for the salvation of men, of Christ, a voluntary act of love, of the Jews, a crime for which they could justly be held responsible, the climax of their sins against Jehovah. In this instance only the first and the last reference come into view. Peter charges upon *all* present the murder of Jesus, because the act of the government is the act of the people represented by it, who besides were directly implicated, for they cried out: "Crucify, crucify him!" and because the death of Christ on account of the general depravity of man is an act caused and guilt incurred by the entire human family. When Meyer in his commentary on Acts 2: 23, objects to the validity of this last reason that, if correct, Peter, including himself of course, would have spoken in the *first* instead of the second, person, he overlooks the fact that the Apostle here speaks in the name of God and of Christ and that he as a *believer* had been pronounced free from all participation in that guilt.

but God has raised him up again from the dead, in fulfillment of the prophecy contained in the sixteenth psalm,¹ of which we all are living witnesses. Elevated to the right hand of God the risen Saviour has poured out upon us his disciples His Spirit, as you yourselves see. Let it be known, therefore, unto you that God himself has demonstrated with irrefragible evidence Him to be the Messiah whom you have crucified and from whom you as Israelites expect salvation. It was evidently of prime importance to prove, in few but convincing words, from present facts in connection with the plain predictions of the Old Testament which the hearers themselves recognized, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and, at the same time, by referring to the crucifixion which the Jews had virtually accomplished, to stir them up to an exercise of true, hearty repentance. The sermon of the Apostle did not fall short of its intended effect. Earnestly coveting the blessing of salvation the convicted hearers asked: "What shall we do?" Peter called upon them to repent of sin and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, that they too might obtain the same Holy Spirit whose miraculous power they saw so strikingly exemplified in the case of the Apostles. For the promise had been designed for them and their children and even for those Gentiles² whom the Lord

¹ David composed this Psalm with a conscious knowledge of the Theocracy which God had promised should enjoy an imperishable existence, and looked forward with the eye of prophecy to the Messiah who would vanquish the power of the grave and of death and bring to pass the ideal Theocracy. Olshausen thus explains the subject: "The dread of annihilation and of the dark valley of death excited in David an earnest longing after complete victory over death, and this triumph the Spirit of prophecy allowed him to see achieved in the person of Christ." Hengstenberg, in his commentary on the Psalms vol. 1. p. 301 ff., follows the opinion of Calvin and regards the pious singer as the immediate subject of the sixteenth Psalm; but as David v. 10, triumphs over death and the grave in the consciousness of his union with God, the Psalm must have reference to the Messiah, because he could enjoy this satisfaction only as a member of the body of Christ. "Sundered from Christ" says Hengstenberg, p. 337, "this hope must be regarded as fanatical the futility of which results will render abundantly evident. David served God in his day and generation, then died, was buried, and returned to dust. In Christ, however, who brought life and immortality to light, this hope has its real truth. David in Christ had a perfect right to speak as he does in this Psalm. Christ overcame death not only for himself but for his members also. His resurrection is our resurrection."

² Thus we understand the *τοῖς ἐκ μακρῶν* Acts 2: 39, comp. Zachar 6: 25. Peter knew then that the Gentiles were called to take part in the Gospel, but supposed that they must first become Jews till the vision (c. 10) enlarged his view and rectified his error.

would call to participate in His Kingdom. Here as on every page of the Scriptures, repentance and faith, abandonment of the world and of sin and return to God through Christ, are insisted upon as the fundamental conditions of a participation in the Kingdom of heaven and the blessings of salvation, namely the forgiveness of sins, imparted and guaranteed by Christian baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost as the principle of a new divine life. After several admonitions to repentance the susceptible hearers who cheerfully accepted the word preached, submitted to baptism, and about 3000 souls were gathered into the garner of the Christian Church during this first harvest season of the new covenant. The life-inspiring testimony of Peter and the extraordinary operation of the Holy Ghost supplied the want of a longer preparatory discipline for the solemn act of baptism which in this instance happened contemporaneously with a change of heart. But the young plant stood in need of much nourishment and assiduous care. The believers engaged with one accord in cultivating the four main elements of every genuine Christian church-life; they gave faithful attention to the instruction of the Apostles, continued in brotherly communion the bond of which was an ever-active self-sacrificing love, in the breaking of bread, that is, in the use of the Lord's Supper in connection with their daily love-feasts, and in prayer (Acts 2: 24). "And the Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved."

Such was the normal beginning of the Church, the like of which has not since been, but will be when the prophecy of Joel shall receive its last absolute fulfillment. This young band of believers with their successors now became the salt of the earth to preserve from spiritual putrefaction the mass of mankind. It was ordained that, henceforth, from the society established on this day should proceed every real advance in morality, science, art, social prosperity and outward civilization, as well as all the important epochs of Modern History. The Apostles previously timid, now gloried in their strength and bore witness to the truth with indomitable courage. Previously unknown and illy appreciated, they now became the heroes of the age who soon attracted the attention of the whole world outside of Palestine. A few honest, poor fishermen of Galilee called upon to bear witness of the Holy Spirit and transformed from illiterate, unpolished men to infallible ambassadors of the Saviour of the world and teachers of all succeeding ages; truly, this is a miracle in our eyes!