

# Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

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PENTECOST.

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## A Sermon

PREACHED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JUNE 1ST, 1884, BY

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

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“The day of Pentecost.”—Acts ii. 1.

LOOKING into a silversmith's window on Thursday last I observed a notice card, upon which was printed as follows—“This shop will be closed this evening, and will not be re-opened until Tuesday evening.” I looked at the name over the window, and observed that it belonged to one of the house of Israel. I had forgotten till that moment that we have now reached the Levitical feast of Pentecost, which contains among its regulations that no servile work is to be done; and hence all business is laid aside by the faithful Jew. Surely, the Jews in their care to observe their law deserve much praise. At what an expense must large trading firms suspend their business! They read a lesson to many professed Christians who seem to have little regard for the Lord's-day, break in upon its rest in a thousand frivolous ways, and half regret that they cannot pursue their earthly callings throughout the whole seven days of the week. It is true that we consider these days, and weeks, and sacred festivals to have become obsolete by the fulfilment of the great truths which they typified; but as this is not the judgment of the Jew because he has not received Jesus as the Messiah, we may at least learn from his strict observance of the Sabbath, and the Passover, and the feast of Pentecost, that it becomes us to study the spiritual meaning of these types, and to guard with care the one great festival which remains to the church, namely, the Lord's-day. On our Sabbath let us do no needless work, but seek rest both for body and soul.

We are now at the season called Pentecost. In the reading of the Scriptures I showed you out of Leviticus xxiii. that the first feast was the Passover, and that there is no feasting, no satisfaction, no peace, no rest, no joy, to any heart till first of all we have seen the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, who is our passover. When we have understood the great truth declared in Jehovah's word, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you,” then we know what it is to dwell in safety within the blood-besprinkled doors, while the destroying angel passes by. Through the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, “we have peace

with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Under the covering of the blood of the Lord's pass-over, we feast upon the pascal Lamb, and thus our hunger is removed, our desires are satisfied, our strength is renewed, and our heart is made glad. As the result and outcoming of that passover, we do in fact what the Jews did in emblem on the morrow after the Passover-Sabbath—we confess that we are not our own, but are bought with a price, and that all that we have belongs to our redeeming Lord. On the morrow after the Sabbath the Israelite brought the wave-sheaf of his barley-harvest, which was waved before the Lord in type that every product of the soil, and all the result of man's labour, was from God, and belonged to God. So soon as we have fed upon Christ, and have come out of the house of bondage, we begin to enquire, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" It becomes an instinct with us to express our gratitude in one way or another. Without any deliberation or delay we conclude that if he has loved us, and given himself for us, we ought to show our love to him in some manifest form.

Seven clear weeks passed away from the waving of the sheaf of the barley harvest, and then came the feast of first-fruits for all the crops, and principally for the wheat harvest, which was then in full operation: this was Pentecost. In fifty days Israel was fully clear of Egypt, far away in the desert, and quite delivered from all fear of pursuing armies. Pharaoh's hosts had been destroyed, and the Red Sea rolled between Israel and her former oppressors. Then it was that they held a holy convocation. They did not bring to God in the wilderness the loaves of bread of first-fruits, for they had not yet reached the land which would yield them a harvest, but they held their convocation, and were instructed as to what their duty would be when they came to the promised land. When they actually reached their possessions in Canaan, they kept the fiftieth day, and held a solemn feast in which they presented unto the Lord two loaves of bread, made of fine flour from the new wheat. This offering dedicated the harvest. The teaching of this ceremony is just this:—"When you are saved, when you have entered into rest, when you have considered and deliberated, then renew your vows unto the Lord, make your consecration more large, and full and deliberate, and dedicate yourself and all that you have unto the Lord who has given you all things richly to enjoy. You have already, in the short time since you have known the sprinkled blood, obtained a harvest of joy and peace: therefore delay not to bring a worthy portion unto the Lord, and say unto him, 'Thou hast set me free, and made me to be thy servant, and now I offer to thee all that I am and all that I have, for thou hast bought me with thy precious blood.'"

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all!"

Thus the three feasts can be understood by us in our own spiritual experience. We can keep them in spirit; let us do so at once. Let us again rehearse the passover by fresh faith in Jesus; let us renew our first dedication, which was like to the wave-sheaf; and then let us come

with solemn resolve, and after many days of sweet experience, let us renew our covenant before the Lord, saying—

“High heaven, that heard the solemn vow,  
That vow renew'd shall daily hear :  
Till in life's latest hour I bow,  
And bless in death a bond so dear.”

We deliberately wish our loyalty to stand good to the end ; we have no desire to draw back, but rather would we wish to be more completely the Lord's than ever we have been. We would bring “a new meat offering before the Lord,” and keep the feast with great joy, ceasing from all servile work, but in the spirit of obedient children serving the Lord with gladness. Thus we read Pentecost by the light within.

On the larger platform of the Lord's doings for his church, the passover stands for the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus upon the cross, when he poured out his soul unto death, that by his blood we might be saved from wrath. The waving of the barley sheaf was carried out by our Lord's rising from the dead on the morrow after the Sabbath, when he rose from the dead and became the first-fruits of them that slept. The feast of first-fruits fifty days after his death is fulfilled by the descent of the Holy Ghost, giving to the church the first-fruits of the Spirit, and working the conversion of three thousand souls, who were thus the first-fruits from among the Jews. This beginning of blessing was followed by a revival which continued with the church at Jerusalem for a long time, and extended throughout all the world, till almost every nation had in a short time learned the doctrine of the cross, and multitudes had submitted unto Christ. Of this greater Pentecost we shall not fail to speak this morning : we shall dwell upon both the type and the antitype, and if I run them a little into one another, you must forgive me. The type is so admirable, and so many-sided, that it has its own actual lesson as well as its figurative lesson. I scarcely know where the type ends and where the antitype begins : but your meditations will easily set it right if I should make a muddle.

First, I shall speak upon *the consecrated harvest of the field*, which we shall illustrate by the passage out of Leviticus ; then, secondly, upon *the consecrated harvest of our Lord Jesus Christ* ; and, as a practical lesson, we shall close by considering *the consecrated harvest which should come from each soul* unto the redeeming Lord.

I. First, let us speak of THE CONSECRATED HARVEST OF THE FIELD. It may seem somewhat singular to you that we should be talking of harvest on this first day of June ; but I beg you to remember that the Bible was not written in England, but in Palestine ; and in that country the harvest is much earlier than in this northerly latitude, where the climate is so much more severe. An early day in June would be the average time for the fruits of the field to be ripe. At the beginning of the barley harvest the first ripe ears were presented to the Lord in due order, but at the fuller festival they brought into God's house, not the ears of wheat, but two large loaves of bread taken from their habitations,—the fruit of the earth actually prepared for human food. These loaves were offered unto the Lord with other sacrifices. What did that mean ?

It meant, first, that *all came from God*. “We know that,” says one.

Yes, we do know it, but we often talk as if it were not true. We regard our bread as the fruit of our own labour; which also is true, but it is only a small part of the truth: for who is he that gives us strength to labour, and gives the earth the power to bring forth her harvest from the seed which is sown in her furrows? It is not every man that accepts the mercies of daily providence as in very truth sent from God. I fear in many houses bread is eaten and the giver is forgotten. There may, perhaps, be a formal giving of thanks, but there is no heart in it. It is a horrible thing that men should live like brutes,—like dumb cattle, grazing but thinking nothing of him who causeth grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man. If any here have sunken into that brutish condition, may God deliver them from their degrading ingratitude! Oh, you Christian people, you are clothed by the charity of God, and fed by his bounty, and if you do not continually acknowledge that every good gift is from your heavenly Father, may the Lord have pity upon you, and bring you to your right minds! Poverty has been sometimes sent upon men because they were not grateful when they enjoyed abundance. Persons who can grumble when their board is loaded, must not wonder if one of these days they become so distressed as to pine for the crumbs which once fell from their table. Let us not provoke God to chasten us for our murmuring, but let us bless him this day for our life, our health, our bread, and our raiment; yea, and for the very air we breathe. All that is short of hell is more than we deserve. Let us by grateful offerings to the Lord express our thankfulness for all the comforts we enjoy.

The waving of those loaves before the Lord signified, next, that *all our possessions need God's blessing upon them*. It would be a horrible thing to be rich with unblest riches, yet some are in that condition; and, consequently, the more they hoard, the more curse they lay up for themselves. Without a blessing from God his gifts become temptations, and bring with them care rather than refreshment. We read of some that "while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them." Thus it seems that the very bread on the table may prove a curse unless God shall bless it. It was, no doubt, a very joyous sight to see the loaves and the fishes multiplied for the crowd; but the best part of it was that ere fish or bread had been increased, the Master had looked up to heaven and blessed them. The people ate of blessed fish and blessed bread, and thus it nourished them. If thou hast little, my brother, yet if God has blessed thy little there is a flavour in it which the ungodly cannot know when they fill themselves with their stalled oxen. If thou hast an ample estate, yet if thou hast more blessing, thy riches shall not be a snare to thee; but thou shalt be able to endure prosperity, which to many is like the height of the craggy rock from which they are dashed down to destruction. God's blessing is what we want upon common life, yea, upon the leavened bread of daily life as well as upon the unleavened bread of our holy things. We want the Lord's blessing from morning to night, from the first day of the week till Saturday night. We need it on all we are, and have, and do. The Israelites brought the two loaves of leavened bread, praying the Lord to bless all the other loaves that would be baked out of the year's harvest; and the Lord did so.



Let us sanctify the bulk of our substance by the sacrifice unto the Lord of what is needed for his holy service.

It meant, next, *all that we have we hold under God as his stewards*. These two loaves were a kind of peppercorn rent acknowledging the superior landlord who was the true owner of the Holy Land. The two loaves were a quit rent, as much as to say, "O Lord, we own that this is thy soil, and we are tenants at will." We farm our portions as bailiffs for our God; we gather the fruit of it as stewards for the Most High, and bring a part thereof to his altar in token that we would use the rest to his glory. Have we all done this with our substance? Do we continually dedicate all that we have unto our God, and stand to the dedication? Do we make a conscientious use of such temporal benefits as the Lord entrusts to us? Where is that one talent of thine, O slothful servant? Where are those five talents, O thou man of influence and of wealth? If thou hast not traded with them for the Great Master, what art thou but an embezzler of thy Master's goods, false to thy trust? Beware lest he come and say to thee, "Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward." The faithful believer will bring unto the Lord with gladness the Lord's portion, and thus confess that everything he has is, like himself, the royal possession of the King of kings.

Again, the bringing of those loaves signified that *they were afraid they might commit sin in the using of what God had given*. The first thank-offering, as we have seen, was of barley, fresh plucked from the field. There was nothing evil about that; and so our Lord when risen from the dead made a pure and perfect presentation unto the Lord: but this second offering of the first-fruits was not wheat as God made it, but a loaf of bread in which there was leaven. Somehow human nature seems to crave for leaven with the pure flour; and so the Israelite brought to God not his pure gift, but that form of it which is used by man for his nourishment. Why was it ordained that they should present leaven to God? Was it not meant to show us that common life, with all its imperfections, may yet be used for God's glory? We may, through our Lord Jesus, be accepted in shop-life as well as in sanctuary-life, in market-dealing as well as in sacramental meditation. Life, as it comes to common people in their daily labour and in their domestic relationships, is to be holiness unto the Lord. Yet do not fail to notice that when they brought these two leavened loaves they brought with them a burnt-offering of seven lambs, without blemish, and one young bullock, and two rams: the Holy Ghost thus signifying that our daily lives, and services, and gifts cannot be accepted in and of themselves, but we must bring therewith the true sweet-savour offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself without spot unto God. The precious blood of his sacrifice must fall upon our leavened loaves, or they will be sour before the Lord. We can never be accepted except in that one ordained way,—"*He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*" Christ's sacrifice is so sweet that it perfumes our offerings, and renders that acceptable which else would have been rejected. This poor leavened cake of ours has the elements of corruption in it; but lo, here in Jesus we have a savour which is sweet unto the Lord, and the Lord is well pleased with us for his righteousness' sake.

Nay, that was not all. In consideration of the loaf being leavened, they brought with it a sin-offering as well. "Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin-offering." See Leviticus xxiii. 19. Confessing, as each one of us must do, that however hearty our dedication to God, there is still a faultiness in our lives, we are glad to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus. However much we labour to live wholly and alone unto God's glory, yet in many things we offend and come short of the glory of God. We bring a sacrifice for sin because it is needed; we confess the iniquities of our holy things. That loaf which we present is of fine flour, but it is baked with leaven, and therefore a sin-offering is needed. O man of God, never try to bring any prayer, or any act of penitence, or any deed of faith, or any gift of love, to God apart from the great sin-offering of Jesus Christ! Thou art a saint, but thou art still a sinner; and though thou art clean before men, yet when thou comest before God his pure and holy eyes behold folly and defilement in thee which nothing can put away except the cleansing blood of Christ. "If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another"; yet still we sin, for it is written, "and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," which it could not do if there were no sin to put away even then. It is to my mind a great joy that you and I can give to God the first-fruits of our substance, and can dedicate to him our time and talents, and that in so doing we need not be afraid of rejection, because we bring with us the sweet-savour offering of Jesus Christ, which is his righteousness, and the sin-offering of Jesus Christ which he offered when he was made to be sin for us.

Let us learn one more lesson: *all this was done as an act of joy.* A new meat-offering was offered unto the Lord with peace-offerings, which two offerings always signify, among other things, a quiet, happy communion with God. In addition to all this they presented a drink-offering of wine, which expresses the joy of the offerer. Pentecost was not a fast, it was a festival. When thou givest anything to God, give it not as though it were a tax, but render it freely; or it cannot be accepted. If thou doest anything for the Lord thy God, do it not as of forced labour demanded by a despot, whom thou wouldst gladly refuse if thou couldst. Thou doest nothing unto God, if it be not done of a willing mind. God loveth a cheerful giver. He wants no slaves to grace his throne: you shall hear no crack of whips in all the domains of our great Lord. His service is perfect freedom; to give to him is rapture; to live to him is heaven. When we shall perfectly serve him we shall be in our glory, which is his glory. The sinking of self is the rising of joy. Beloved, the Lord would not have any of you give of your substance to him with rueful countenance, squeezing it out as though you were losing a drop of blood. Give nothing if you cannot give heartily, but do everything unto the Lord with all your heart, and soul, and strength. The Lord would not have the ark of the covenant dragged by unwilling beasts, but he ordained that it should be carried upon the willing shoulders of chosen men, to whom the service was an honour and a delight. He would have his servants sing in their joyous hymns, "God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." He would have each one gladly say, "O Lord, truly I am

thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds."

II. Thus far we have been considering part of the lesson of the original Jewish Pentecost. Now we must hasten on to consider, in the second place, THE CONSECRATED HARVEST OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, as taught by the events of the great Christian Pentecost described in the Acts of the Apostles. Our Lord is the greatest of all sowers, for he sowed himself. Did he not say, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit"? Our Lord had been sown in his death and burial: and since such a corn of wheat as this is quick in growing, and soon yields a harvest, in fifty days there comes a time for the ingathering of the first-fruits. Had he not said, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest"? and now, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, the fruit was seen of them, and joyfully gathered. Let us learn some lessons from the Christian Pentecost.

First, learn that *the first harvest of our Lord Jesus Christ was through the Holy Ghost*. There were no three thousand converts till first of all was heard the rushing of mighty wind. Till the cloven tongues had rested on the little company of disciples there were no broken hearts among the crowd. Until the believers were all filled with the Holy Ghost the minds of their hearers were not filled with conviction. We are longing, greatly longing, for our Lord Jesus to see of the travail of his soul, and to be satisfied in this congregation, and in this city. How we long to see millions brought to Christ! I am sure some of us feel a heart-break till whole nations come to Jesus' feet; and this cannot be except by the special power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will bless the world by filling the church with his own might. If I want my hearers converted, I must first of all myself be filled with the Holy Ghost. I know that I address a great many workers, and I therefore say to each one of them—pay great attention to your own spiritual state. If you desire to save your class you must yourself be endowed with the power of the Holy Ghost. You cannot burn a way for the truth into the heart of another unless the tongue of fire is given to you from on high. Mind this. I tried last Sabbath-day to exhort you to pay much reverence and honour to the Holy Spirit, who is so often forgotten in the church of God. I pray you take good heed to the exhortation. Do maintain a grateful spirit towards the Holy Ghost, paying special honour unto him, for he worketh all our works in us, and without him there will be neither sheaves nor loaves of the harvest to offer unto the Lord. The ingathering of the revival at Pentecost was wrought by the Holy Spirit.

*That day when the Spirit of God was given may be considered to be the ordering of the Christian dispensation.* You may not have noticed it, but if you will count the days you will find that it was exactly fifty days after the original passover that the law was given on Mount Sinai. Many careful readers have observed this, but have feared to attach importance to the fact because the Jews did not connect it with Pentecost. Neither Philo nor Josephus speak of the giving of the law as happening at the time known as Pentecost. But that has nothing to do with us. We are not bound to be blind to a matter because Josephus, or Philo, or



all the Jewish writers did not happen to see it. They are not Rabbis to us. The Jews did not at that time see all in the law which they have seen since, and we having the law in our hands are bound to examine for ourselves. It was at Pentecost that God descended upon Mount Sinai, and the national laws of Israel were proclaimed together with those ten commands which are the standard of equity for all mankind. Moses asked of Pharaoh on the behalf of Israel that they might keep a feast unto Jehovah their God in the wilderness; and this was no mere pretext, but a truthful statement. They did keep a holy season as they proposed; they summoned a special assembly of the elders, and sanctified the people as soon as the turmoil of their leaving Egypt had subsided. On the fiftieth day after the Exodus the Lord came down in the sight of all Israel upon Sinai. The trumpet was held from the top of Horeb, and Sinai was altogether on a smoke. Now we assert that as the inauguration of the law was on Pentecost, so also was the inauguration of the Gospel. At the commencement of the Old Testament dispensation, what manifestation do we get? God gives his people *a law*. At the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, what do we get? A law? No, the Lord gives his people *the Spirit*. That is a very different matter. Under the old covenant the command was given; but under the new covenant the will and the power to obey are bestowed upon us by the Holy Ghost. No more have we the law upon stone, but the Spirit writes the precept upon the fleshy tablets of the heart. Moses on the mount can only tell us what to do, but Jesus ascended on high pours out the power to do it. Now we are not under the law, but under grace, and the Spirit is our guiding force. In the church of God our rule is not according to the letter of a law, but according to the Spirit of the Lord. Some people look for a specific ordinance for every item of procedure on the part of the church; but, so far as I can see, there is a singular absence of written rule and ritual concerning particulars, apart from the two great standing ordinances. I do believe that under this dispensation saints are left to the freedom of the Spirit, and are not specifically commanded in every detail by a written law. Neither this form of church government, nor that is forced upon us; but life is permitted to assume its own necessary form, under the moulding power of the Holy Ghost. Because we are to become men in Christ and to be no longer children, we are directed not so much to a specific law as to certain great general principles which are made to be our guide through the Holy Spirit. Servants, you know, must be told to do this and that, at such an hour, and in such a way; but loving, obedient children may be left free to obey the dictates of their loving hearts. We love the inspired Book which reveals to us the mind of God, and we revere it all the more because the Lord himself who inspired the Book dwells among us to conduct us by its holy instruction in all things. The Lord is among us in a higher degree than ever he was in Sinai, where bounds were set to keep off the trembling people. The Lord is in the midst of his people in love and fellowship, and by the indwelling Spirit whereby he leads the sacred marchings of his redeemed. Pentecost was thus the inauguration of the gospel dispensation.

This Pentecost was also *the beginning of a great harvest of Jews and Gentiles*. Were there not two loaves? Not only shall Israel be saved,



but the multitude of the Gentiles shall be turned unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and he shall see of his soul's travail in those whom his Father gave him from before the foundation of the world. If the first-fruits were so great, what will the ultimate harvest be? Let us look for whole kingdoms to submit themselves to Jesus.

That day of Pentecost, or feast of first-fruits, what was it? Did it consist in many conversions only? No. I believe that *the filling of the apostles with the Holy Ghost was a part of the first-fruits* of the day of Pentecost. We ourselves who are born to God, whenever the Holy Spirit visits us in his fulness, and sanctifies and elevates us, are a large part of our Lord's reward. A man full of the Holy Ghost rejoices the heart of Christ. Your poor starveling Christians, who have a name to live and nothing more, who shiver over Christ's commands, and never plunge into his service to find waters to swim in, bring him little honour and little pleasure; but when we are filled with the Holy Ghost we make men see the glory of his grace, and his name is magnified in the esteem of all onlookers.

Still, the major part of the Pentecostal first-fruits will be found in *the great number that were that day converted*. How much we desire the like blessing as a church, for ourselves, and all other churches. We hope to receive some seventy-five to-day, but what is this to three thousand? We are not without additions to the church every month, but oh that the Lord would add to us daily. Why should it not be? Persuade the people to come and hear. Pray for them and for the preacher while they are hearing; and watch for their souls after hearing, and we shall yet see a far larger increase.

*The Christian Pentecost is to us full of instruction.* Learn you its lessons. First, *the disciples had to wait for it*. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth." Sow on. If you have to wait a week of weeks or a week of years, wait with confidence, for Pentecost will yet yield its loaves unto the Lord.

*They obtained nothing until they began preaching the gospel*, and then in one day the church was multiplied by twenty-five. O! when shall each member bring in five-and-twenty in a day by preaching the word. Those three thousand souls were due to the testimony of Jesus by the disciples. The Spirit of God was there, but he did not work upon men apart from the means which he has ordained. Peter stood up with the eleven. They preached Christ crucified, and then the people believed. Oh, for a great day of preaching, when all shall turn out and preach. If all the Lord's servants and handmaids began to publish his salvation, we should soon wake up these sleepy millions, and London would be all on the move towards better things. A great multitude must preach the gospel if we are to have a great multitude converted by it.

*Of all those people saved, it was acknowledged that they belonged unto the Lord alone.* When they were pricked to the heart and believed in Jesus, they came at once and were baptized. As they were dead to the world, it was meet that they should be openly buried with Christ in baptism. So consecrated were they that their lives were wholly given to their Lord. In a very especial manner it was so with them, for they had all things common; they lived a heavenly life here below. We read, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and

breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Thoroughly did they give unto God the glory of their salvation, for they were wholly occupied with "praising God": so we are told in the last verse of the chapter from which we have culled our text.

Yet if even we should see three thousand converted in a day *we must not reckon that such first-fruits would be absolutely perfect*. In the first Pentecost, as we have seen, leavened cakes were presented to God, so in all our successes and additions there will sure to be a leaven. Do not wonder if some converts go back; if others turn out to be hypocrites, or merely temporary converts. It will always be so, and we should not think it a new and strange trial; tares grow with the wheat, and bad fish are taken in the same net with the good. Therefore let the church in her best success keep still to Christ and his precious blood, and daily turn to his finished sacrifice. Let us use upon the large scale as well as in our own personal concerns the great sacrifice for sin; and when we admit members into the church wholesale let us continually plead the precious blood that each one may be dedicated to God thereby. Be this our motto: "None but Jesus, None but Jesus!" Let us exalt the Lamb of God, the sin-atonement Lamb. These converts and this success can only be accepted in the beloved.

But with all our care and prudence *let us not damp our joy*; for the feast of first-fruits is ever to be a gladsome occasion. So the type teaches us, and so let the fact always be with us. Oh, brothers, on that day on which I lately saw forty persons one by one, and listened to their experience and proposed them to the church, I felt as weary as ever a man did in reaping the heaviest harvest. I did not merely give them a few words as enquirers, but examined them as candidates with my best judgment. I thought that if I had many days of that sort I must die, but I also wished it might be my lot to die in that fashion. Having so many coming to confess Christ my mind was crushed beneath the weight of blessing, but I would gladly be overwhelmed again. O that my hearers would thus oppress me every week of my life! Pray the Lord to send us day after day such additions to the church that we shall be scarcely able to hear all the testimonies of what the Lord has done for them. Then let us sing, "Hallelujah, Hallelujah," every day in the week and every hour of the day. Let us rejoice and be glad, and give a hearty welcome to those who come into the church, and hearty praise to God who sends them.

So much about the Pentecost at Jerusalem. God send a Pentecost like it to Newington Butts, and to every other place.

III. The last thing was to be THE CONSECRATED HARVEST FROM EACH PARTICULAR PERSON. What I have to say is not mine, but the Lord's. If you open your Bibles at Deuteronomy xxvi. you will find there a form of service which I pray may serve your turn to-day. After the first offering on behalf of the nation consecrating all the harvest, individuals began to bring their first fruits personally, even to the very end of the year. Whenever the olives had been pressed, or the figs had been gathered, or the grapes had been trodden, or the wheat-fields had been reaped, the truly believing Israelite took a part of his crop to the House of God, and presented it as a love-token. "And it shall be, when

thou art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein ; that thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shall go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there. And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us. And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God." See how the offerer began,—“I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us.” I wish to stand here this morning and to say for myself what I hope you can say each one for himself, “I am come to the land of peace and rest which the Lord promised to believers. I am become a possessor of all things in Christ.” That is the reason why I would bring my offering. If the Lord has brought you into the goodly land of salvation you too should bring your sacrifice unto him.

After this the offerer went on to say: “A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous : and the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage.” Here was an admission of a former state of misery. Must we not also say that we were in bondage, but that the Lord brought us out with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and set us free from our oppressors? I can say so, and I know I am speaking the mind of hundreds of you. The Lord has delivered you ; your sin is pardoned, your iniquities are covered ; you are free from the power of sin ; you walk at liberty in righteousness ; you are come into the land of promise ; you have entered into rest. That is abundant reason for bringing your love-gift unto the Lord.

Then the man said also, “The Lord hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey.” Thus we also glory in our happiness and peace in Christ Jesus. Ours is a blessed lot. It is a good thing to be a Christian ; it is a blessed privilege to be a child of God ; it is a delightful boon to be a partaker of the covenant and all the blessings stored up therein. Do we not say so ? I am sure we do ; and therefore it is that we bring our thank-offering as a token that we love the Lord, and desire to praise him for all that he has done for us.

Then the offerer presented his first-fruits, and said, “And now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me.”

When he had made his offering spontaneously and freely because God had done so much for him, then he went home to enjoy all the good things which God had given him. He did not feel as if he were practising self-indulgence when he ate of his figs or partook of his pomegranates, for his fruits in the lump were sanctified by the first-fruits being made holy unto the Lord. He was not afraid to partake of the bounties of providence, for he had received of the bounties of grace. He did not eat what had never been blessed of God, but he went his

way and heard the priest say, as he left the sanctuary, "Thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you." Then he understood the language of Solomon, "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works." Thus may the true believer receive with gladness the supplies which his heavenly Father gives him, and if he, for Christ's sake, and the love of men, abstains from partaking of wine, he abstains with greater delight than he ever had in drinking it. Regarding nothing as common or unclean, let us in everything give thanks, and whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us glorify God, and feel that he blesses us. This earth which once was accursed becomes to holy men a place of blessing, the vestibule of glory, none other than the House of God, and the very gate of heaven.

Oh, you that have never eaten of the Pascal lamb, that have never been sprinkled with his blood, you cannot know anything about this: you cannot offer anything to God: you cannot receive his blessing upon your daily lives, because you have not first of all accepted salvation by the atoning blood. I wish you would now come to Jesus: I pray God you may. But, oh, if you have known the power of the death of Christ, and so are pardoned, do not miss the further joy of a consecrated life, the joy of spending and being spent for him who redeemed you. The Lord your God is so blessed in himself that when you give yourself to him his blessedness overflows and fills you. Nothing is so much ours as what is wholly God's; and when we are not our own, then by some strange logic we are most our own. When we have most fully practised self-denial, then the best riches and the rarest wealth and the truest blessedness is ours. God help us to test this statement, and so to keep the feast. Amen.

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PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Leviticus xxiii. 4—21;  
Acts ii. 1—8, 14—21, 37—42.

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HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—449, 809, 660.

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