

ened by the Spirit—we must have the Spirit poured out upon us from on high. And it is when God really pours out his Spirit that the sinner is convinced of sin—that he truly embraces Christ, and is refreshed with the Divine consolations—the water of life. Then he rejoices in God his Saviour. Then the soul no longer feels that aching void which nothing in this world can fill.—Then it is filled, filled to the full, filled with the fulness of God.

But the soul is not only destitute of true happiness and comfort, but it is barren of all good—and accordingly, the promise not only is: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty"—the Spirit, conferring peace and joy and comfort, by leading to Christ in whom all these are enjoyed—"but floods upon the dry ground." The dry ground cannot be productive: it cannot produce fruit. The plant must receive moisture before it can grow; or it is but a stunted growth where there is a lack of moisture. How poor is the vegetation, how scanty the crop, when it has been a dry season! The soul in itself without the dews and the showers of God's Spirit, of his blessing, is like the dry ground, the parched soil: it is barren of any spiritual good: it produces no fruit unto holiness: it bears no fruit unto God. In application to this state, then, God promises: "I will pour floods upon the dry ground." What is it that makes the trees, the flowers, spring, the fruits flourish, and all nature rejoice? It is the former and the latter rain—it is the floods which God pours out of his store house in the heavens. It is when he visits the earth and watereth it, when he greatly enricheth it with the river of God, which is full of water: when he watereth the ridges thereof; setteth the furrows thereof; maketh it soft with showers; blesseth the springing thereof. What is it that makes the soul naturally barren and dead, destitute of all the fruits of holiness, adorned with none of the graces of the Spirit—what is it that makes it fruitless, that covers it with the vegetation of the Spirit, that makes it green and lovely and productive: it is the Spirit of God—it is the grace of God—it is the blessing of God. It is the shower of spiritual blessing descending upon the soul. It is the Spirit's work producing faith and love and holiness—quickening, reviving, our spirits, descending in all his benign and gracious influences. When this is the case, then all the graces of the spirit will grow, all the

fruits of the spirit will flourish. The soul will abound in holiness—it will be productive of all spiritual good. It will revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, and cast forth its roots as Lebanon. Holiness to the Lord, meekness, faith, love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, temperance, will be all seen, and will all flourish.

Now, there is need for this promise else God would not have made it. In ourselves, we are destitute of all true happiness—of spiritual comfort; and nothing will confer these but the Spirit of God imparted, and applying the things of Christ to the soul. Not till we are converted by the Spirit of God can we enjoy the happiness, the comfort, which we lack. These are obtained only in and through Christ, and it is by conversion that we come to possess them, by and in Him. It is when we are effectually wrought upon by the Spirit, and when we are made to close with Christ—to believe in him for salvation—to have no confidence in ourselves—to receive pardon and peace through the blood of the cross—through the merits of Christ alone—it is then and then only that we are reconciled to God—have peace with Him, and enjoy a happiness which the world knows not of. Then God himself is our exceeding joy—our chief happiness is in his favour: we are not happy without the favour of God, but that is sufficient happiness. Then we will seek our happiness nowhere else, not in the world, not in its amusements, or pleasures, or possessions. These we shall hold as subordinate to God. And when any of these are dried up, when even friendships fail, and all earthly sources of satisfaction are removed—still God is sufficient to fill the soul, his peace to keep the heart—and we can say with the Psalmist: "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth that I desire besides thee. My heart and my flesh faint and fail, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." The soul that has thus been brought to Christ by the effectual operation of God's Spirit shall never thirst. It has obtained the water of life. The showers of God's grace now perpetually descend. The water which Christ hath given him is in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. It is not a stagnant pool, but a living well, ever fresh, ever springing, rising from the heart which is converted to God, which has His peace dwelling in it, active at all seasons, and in all cir-