

# THE MISSIONARY RECORD

OF THE

## Free Church of Nova Scotia.

VOL. I. HALIFAX, N. S., DECEMBER, 1851. No. 12.

### THE PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT.

ISAIAH XLIV., 3.—“*I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry grounds; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring.*”

These words are a promise to Israel, of what God was yet to do for them under what is called the dispensation of the Spirit. After Christ came, after he was glorified, the Spirit was given in larger measure than He had ever been before. He had never in any age been withheld, and it was through his influence and operation that the old Testament saints were believers in the promised Messiah, and not only looked forward to his coming, but rejoiced in his day. But the Spirit was vouchsafed in far larger measure after the ascension of Christ. We see this fact in the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, in the numbers converted then, and subsequently, wherever the preaching of the Apostles was accompanied with power from on high. The Spirit was then granted to the Gentiles also as well as to the Jews. When Peter preached to Cornelius and his company we are told—Acts x. 44–45—“*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” The promise here is not limited to the Jews, to Israel and their seed, but takes in the Gentiles as well—for in Christ Jesus there is no distinction, there is neither Greek, nor Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.—When the dispensation of the Spirit is contemplated all distinction is forgotten,

and the promise takes a general character: “*I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.*” And then it is added with reference to the multiplication of believers, of converts—“*And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.*”

But let us look to the import of the promise “*I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, &c.*” The promise is constructed according to what is called the Hebrew parallelism—a mode of expression according to which the same thing is repeated in one part of a verse, which was stated or announced in a former part although under a figure it may be, or a different figure, or in different words. This was a very common mode of writing among the Jews—and it is to be met with in almost every part of their poetical compositions, in the Psalms and in the Prophets. Here, accordingly, the latter part of the promise is the same as the former, and is the literal expression of what is conveyed before in a figure. The Spirit of God, the blessing of God, are what are meant by water and the floods. This indeed is just a promise of the outpouring of the Spirit. His influences are frequently represented under the figure of water.—For example, in the 41st chapter of this Book, the 17th verse: “*When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.*” And in Ezekiel