

A Time of Refreshing

By Robert Murray McCheyne



“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 they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses” (Isa. 44:3–4, KJV).

The above words describe a time of refreshing. There are no words in the whole Bible that have been oftener in my heart and oftener on my tongue than these. And yet, although God has never left us without some tokens of His presence, He has never fulfilled this promise. I have taken it up today in order that we may consider it more fully and plead it more anxiously with God.

God Alone

Who is the author of a work of grace? It is God: He says, “I will pour.” It is God who begins a work of anxiety in dead souls. If any of you have been awakened, and made to beat upon the breast, it is God, and God alone, who has done it.

It is God who carries on the work—leading awakened persons to Christ. “I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh . . . and whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered” (Joel 2:28, 32) and again in John 16:8: “He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”

Ah! If ever we are to see you who are children of God greatly

enlarged, your hearts filled with joy, your lips filled with praises—if ever we are to see you growing like willows beside the water courses, filled with all the fullness of God—God must pour down His Spirit. He must fulfill His Word; for He is the Alpha and Omega, the Author and Finisher of a work of grace: “I will pour.”

Learn to look beyond ministers for a work of grace. God has given much honor to His ministers, but not the pouring out of the Spirit. Alas! We would have little hope if it depended upon ministers. God is as able to do it today as He was at the day of Pentecost, but men are taken up with ministers, and not with God. As long as you look to ministers, God cannot pour, for you would say it came from man.

Wrestling with God

Learn that we should pray for it. We are often for preaching to awaken others; but we should be more upon praying for it. Prayer is more powerful than preaching. It is prayer that gives preaching all its power.

I observe that some Christians are very ready to censure ministers, and to complain of their preaching—of their coldness, their unfaithfulness. But I do say, where lies the blame of unfaithfulness but in the want of faithful praying? Why, the very hands of Moses would have fallen down, had they not been held up by his faithful people.

Come, then, you wrestlers with God—you who climb Jacob’s ladder, you who wrestle Jacob’s wrestling—strive you with God, that He may fulfill His Word: “I will pour.” Weary sinner! This is Jesus; this is what He wants to do for you: “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty.” Only believe that He is willing and able and it shall be done.

Learn that it must come from His hand. In vain you go to other physicians; you will be nothing better, but rather worse. Wait on Him; kneel and worship Him, saying: “Lord, help me!” Oh,

long for a time of refreshing, that weary souls may be brought into peace. If we go on in this everyday way, these burdened souls may perish—may sink uncomforted into the grave. Arise, and plead with God that He may arise and fulfill His word: “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty.”

May It Flood

Learn, Christians, to pray for floods. It is God’s Word—He puts it into your mouth. Oh, do not ask for drops when God offers floods! “Open thy mouth and I will fill it” (Ps. 81:10).

Oh, pray for an outpoured Spirit, ye men of prayer, that there may be many raised up in our day to call Him blessed!

Ah, so would you be, dear Christians, if there were a flood time of the Spirit—a day of Pentecost. Then there would be less care about your business and your workshop—more of prayer and of sweet praises. There would be more changes in your heart—victory over the world, the devil, and the flesh. You would come out, and be separate. In affliction, you would grow in sweet submission, humility, and meekness.

Oh, would that you knew the joy of giving yourself away! You cannot keep yourself. Oh, this day try and give all to Him!

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