

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

OTHERS TO BE GATHERED.

A Sermon

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“The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.”—Isaiah lvi. 8.

GOD'S work now is that of *gathering*. There was a time when it was scattering. Man built the tower of Babel, which was intended to be the centre of unity, the armoury of power, and the seat of dominion, whence some mighty Nimrod might sway his sceptre over all the human race: but the Lord would not have it so. Infinite wisdom baffled finite ambition. Man's centre is not God's centre, and therefore he confounded their language, and scattered them into nations, by whom the whole earth has been inhabited. Now the Lord is gathering together in one the children of God which are scattered abroad. His Son Jesus Christ hath descended and dwelt among us, working out our redemption, and now, exalted in the highest heavens, he is God's appointed centre of his people; as Jacob said of old, “Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” The Lord hath made him to “stand for an ensign of the people, to him shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.” The great promise given by the mouth of Isaiah is to be fulfilled under the gospel dispensation,—“I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory.” Jesus hath made both Jew and Gentile one, breaking down every wall of partition, so that there is neither barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all. The power and grace of God are continually drawing men from all nations and kindreds and tongues to the common hope, even the atonement made by the death of our Lord Jesus, and to the common service, even to service under the one and only Lord, of whom it is written, “One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” This ingathering process is going on every day by the testimony of the word, and it is to be continued until the end of time. I trust it will be carried on in our midst to-day. May the Lord put the magnet down among us, and draw towards the loadstone of Jesus' love all hearts made ready to

feel its influence. It is my earnest hope that some who have never thought of being gathered to Christ may find themselves drawn towards him to-day. May the mystic current of divine grace carry many of you away with its gentle force, and bear you first to Jesus, who is Israel's Prince, and then to his church, which is the true Israel of God.

I. Under our first head we shall notice a point of considerable encouragement to those who seek the Lord. Note well THE INSTANCES MENTIONED: instances of gathering by the hand of the Lord, who is described as "The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel." Outcasts have been gathered, and this is the token that others shall be gathered.

I suppose Isaiah first alludes to *the banished who had been carried away captive to Babylon* and to all parts of the East, but who were at different times restored to their land. The Israelites had been subject to many captivities. One tyrant after another invaded the country, and carried them far away; but the Lord promised to gather them together, and he did so. The names of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the like, will remind you of the home-coming from distant lands of various contingents of God's host, who marched through the deserts and passed through hostile nations till they reached the city of their God. Very marvellous were these restorations, for kings that knew not God were girded by him to accomplish his designs; even as he said of Cyrus—"I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts." Now, God who brought his people out of Babylon can bring men out of sin: he who loosed captives from bondage can liberate spirits from despair; he who made the mighty tyrant relax his grasp can cause Satan to loose his hold; and he who led his people by a way that they knew not till they came back to their land can lead the poor seeking sinner through all the devious paths of doubt and fear, and bring him to rest in Jesus Christ. Let Israelites returning from Babylon preach the gospel to us this morning: let them proclaim to us the word of hope: "If we who were carried captive far off from Zion are brought back, so also will the Lord devise means that his banished be not expelled from him."

But I prefer to use the text in reference to our divine Lord and Master, seeing that to him shall the gathering of the people be. When he was here below *he gathered the outcasts of Israel by his ministry*. Look at the group around him, and mark carefully those who press nearest to him. You need not notice those scribes and Pharisees in the outer circle; fain would they entrap him in his speech; let us leave them to themselves, and only notice those who stand so quietly, who listen so eagerly, whose tears flow so freely, and whose hearts are so deeply touched. Who are these? It is written, "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." His enemies said it in scorn, but we tell it to his honour—"This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." All through his progress in the Holy Land he was seeking "the lost sheep of the house of Israel"; not merely silly, defenceless sheep, but *lost* sheep, wanderers in sin, "for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." His eye was always readiest to spy out the fallen, and his glance was always kindest for

those who were most erring, for, said he, "The whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." O blessed Master, "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," the sinners came to thee, and coming to thee, found thee to be Jesus, the sinner's friend.

Moreover, our Lord did not merely gather outcasts to his ministry, but *he gathered them by forgiving their sins*. This brought them nearer still, and held them there. You know who it was that washed his feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head: that woman whose memorial shall never die out of the church, who loved him much, because much had been forgiven her. She was a sinner, a city sinner, a shameful sinner, but she came to him for cleansing and it was granted her. I should not wonder if she had heard him tell about the lost piece of money, and the lost sheep, and the lost son; and perhaps the parable itself, and the way in which Jesus spoke it, touched her heart, and made her hope and long to be sought and found. With her much sin she came to him who had much grace, and her black sins were blotted out by his dear love, and henceforth she, above all women, loved him, for much had been forgiven her. I suppose she was but a specimen of many others who clung to him, because in him they had found what an awakened heart needs above everything else, namely, forgiveness for transgression. At this present moment, in Jesus' name, I would set that woman before you, and say as he did, "Seest thou this woman?" Then learn that like as Jesus received her, so also will he receive you if you come to him, for he hath said it, and he cannot lie, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Come unto him then, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and he will give you rest. Let the one poor outcast, who wept at his feet, set you the fashion, and do you at once imitate her. You know how in the pursuit of game men use decoys that they may attract the birds by one of themselves; and I would this morning use this woman as a decoy; if there be others like her, guilty of the very same sin, let them come to Jesus for pardon as she did. Others should come also who may not be guilty of the same form of evil and yet feel equally condemned in the sight of the Lord. If consciousness of guilt humbles you to that poor woman's level, come and accept her Saviour. Jesus gathers together the outcasts of Israel. Dear hearts, why should he not gather you? Why should not the glance of love which fell on the sinner of old fall also upon you? Why should not you also feel the same love, and exhibit it in acts of penitence and deeds of humility? Jesus is ready to have his feet washed again by such as you.

Nor, indeed, was this all, for *our Lord gathered some, yea many, by graciously helping them*. He met with some whose great trial was sore affliction, temptation, and sorrow. Magdalene is a chief instance; beloved name in the Christian church! Magdalene out of whom he cast seven devils. It was not her fault so much as her grief that seven devils had entered her. She struggled with those demons but they would not leave her; but when Jesus came they fled at his rebuke; and henceforth Mary of Magdala was foremost among the holy women who follow the Blessed One. Now just as our Lord delivered Mary of Magdalene from seven devils, so can he deliver any of you who are sore beset by

temptation. Do the devils within you arise from habit? Such spirits are very powerful, but Jesus is more than a match for them. Habit becomes second nature to a man, but Jesus is greater than either first or second nature. Habits began to bind us as with spiders' webs, but they thicken and harden into meshes of iron: our Lord can with a breath remove the iron net and set the prisoner free. Or are you tempted by constitutional sin, some evil which has entrenched itself within the peculiarities of your being, finding, as it were, a rest within the special texture of your mind and fashion of your body? Jesus can dislodge the subtle foe, and make this body of yours, which has been a cage of unclean birds, to become a temple of the Holy Ghost. Or are your surroundings very unfavourable? Does the devil molest you through the place wherein you dwell, and the people among whom you reside? Jesus can help you there, and make you fair as the curtains of Solomon, even while you dwell in the tents of Kedar. Or is your case of another kind? Are you beset with doubts and infidelities innumerable? Do you question this and question that? Has your mind a sceptical bias? My Master can gather you also, and make you stronger in faith than your brethren, even as Thomas, who doubted, became a firm and adoring believer. Unbelief is a very tormenting spirit, and causes much distress of soul; but the Lord can gather unbelievers and misbelievers, and bring them to the true faith, and to the peace which cometh of it. Since he gathered to himself a woman out of whom he cast seven devils, and a man from whom a whole legion were made to flee, why should he not deliver those of you who are under bondage now?

He gathered them, also, so as to enrol them under his banner. It was a marvellous moment for Levi, when he sat at the receipt of custom, when Jesus called him. He had changed his name, and tried to be a Gentile, calling himself Matthew, and there he sat, careful only for the coin, and Jesus said to him, "Follow me," and he obeyed the voice. He was no longer a gatherer of taxes, but a gatherer of souls: he enlisted beneath the banner of Christ, and no longer engaged in the service of the Roman. Yes, and my Master can gather just such as he. You busy men, who have almost brought your pens behind your ears into the house of God this morning, you who as you take up your hymn-books almost wish you had your day-books and your ledgers with you, he can say to you, "Follow me." He can make you to use the pen of a ready writer in his cause. You shall do business in the most precious commodities, and make many rich. Rising from the receipt of custom, you shall yield yourself to Jesus, and become henceforth his steward. Those gathered by our Lord, when he was here among the sons of men, are specimens to allure your hope, to excite your desires, that you also may be gathered into his church and unto himself.

I will give one other specimen, and then we will leave this point. You will, perhaps, think that my Master's gathering power lay in his being here himself. It is true there was a matchless charm about him, and yet to let us know that we must know him no longer after the flesh, there was not even in the charms of Christ's most blessed person enough of power to prevent the people crying, "Crucify him, crucify him." His power is spiritual, the power of his own Spirit, and therefore it is exercised now, though his bodily presence is removed. It fell on a day when our Lord

had gone home to his Father that his servants were all met together in one place with one accord for his worship, and suddenly the Spirit burst in upon them as a rushing mighty wind, and in cloven tongues of fire it sat on each of them. Then they stood up and preached in his name, and declared that Jesus, who had been crucified, was now the Saviour. On that same day he gathered, for he was there by his Spirit, though not in person; he gathered, I say, unto his church, three thousand souls. Jesus can gather indeed: the people flock unto him. It is still true, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Though he be not here, yet if we preach him, if we tell out his love, if we speak of his death, and of his atoning blood, his name is as ointment poured forth and the virgins will come together to enjoy the perfume. There is no name like his for gathering the people. He will gather others beside those which have been gathered unto him.

II. I now pass on to my second head, which is this, THE PROMISE UTTERED. "The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him." It is evident that *this promise is very wide*. It means in the first place that the Gentiles should be called to know the Lord. "Yet will I gather others to him." Not other Jews, but those others whom they called "Gentile dogs." It was a bright day when first of all the centurion of Cæsarea sent men to Joppa and received a visit from Peter and was baptized of him. Fair also was the day when the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized of Philip. Then was the Lord "gathering others unto him." How strange it must have seemed at first to the apostles, who were all Jews, and very strongly Jewish too, especially Peter, to see the Gentiles gathered. One marvels that Paul was not more narrow in heart, considering his birth and education, but he had vanquished his old notions, and gloried in being the apostle of the Gentiles.

It is delightful to my mind to think of men of divers colours coming to Christ, and in the best possible manner proving the unity of our race. What would the twelve have thought if they could have foreseen that the gospel which they preached would bind in one brotherhood all races of men? Jesus has gathered not merely Romans and Greeks and Jews, but the descendants of those barbarous people who lived in the white-cliffed island beyond Gaul which men called Britain. He has gathered those savage people unto him. And now how pleasing to see the Red Indian bowing with the pale-faces at Jesus' name; to see China, once hermetically sealed, now open to the gospel, and Japan inviting our missionaries to instruct her; also to see the dwellers in the South Seas and the black races of Africa stretching out their hands unto God. Strange and uncouth in appearance and in tongue are many of the tribes of mankind, but they shall be gathered as surely as the more civilized. There scarcely remaineth any nation out of which the Lord hath not gathered some to his church; and our faith is that ere long the gospel shall be preached throughout all lands. It has not come yet. We heard the other night of nations which have never yet received a Christian minister. There is Thibet, for instance, lying with its millions without a word of Christ ever having been spoken among them. To millions upon millions of people the name of Jesus is as yet an unknown sound; yet they shall be gathered out of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and

tongues, and shall unite in one great family. The gospel of Jesus is cosmopolitan. It suits so well with our own latitude that one would think that our Lord was born an Englishman : but the same is true in reference to every land. His name was fitly mentioned by the Jordan, but it loses none of its music by the Thames, the Ganges, or the Orinoco. Jesus belongeth to all lands, whether they are scorched by tropical suns or frozen by the long winters of the poles. Jesus is *a man*, and a man is a noble name, nobler than Jew, or Briton, or Roman. He is "*the man*," the man of men, man's man, the man for men. Let all men worship him, for he is the hope of our race, the restorer of our ruin, the gatherer of the new people, and he shall gather others beside those that have been gathered unto him. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth," and that one blood also has at the back of it another blood more precious still, by which one blood he hath redeemed from among men a multitude which no man can number.

Now, let us look at the text and note that *the promise is continuous* : "Yet will I gather others." That was true when Isaiah stated it ; it would have been true if Peter had quoted it on the morning of Pentecost. It was quite true when Carey acted upon it, and started on what men thought his mad enterprise, to go as a consecrated cobbler to convert the learned Brahmins of India, and to lay the foundation of Messiah's kingdom there. It was true *then* : it is quite as true *now*. If the promise had been written this morning and the ink were not yet dry it would be no more true than it is now :—"Yet will I gather others to him."

It will be true, whoever stands in this pulpit, when we are dead and gone ; and until the earth shall have completed the cycle of longsuffering, and the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout it shall still be true,—"*Yet will I gather others to him.*" "*Other sheep have I,*" said Christ, "*that are not yet of this fold, them also I must bring in.*" There are many yet unsaved, unregenerate, uncalled, who must be brought to Jesus : "*Yet will I gather others to him, that have not been gathered unto him.*" To him, that is to Israel or to the church, and so to him who is the head of Israel and the head of his church, even unto Christ must others be gathered.

While the promise is wide and continual, I cannot help remarking upon its being *most graciously encouraging*, because it evidently applies very pointedly to outcasts. "The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, *Yet will I gather others.*" Other outcasts are evidently intended. Does my voice reach anyone at this time who reckons himself an outcast ? Has there strayed into this house of prayer an outcast from society ? Harken thou to this word—"Yet will I gather others to him." But if not an outcast from society, it may be you are an outcast in your own esteem. You judge that you have sinned beyond all hope ; you consider yourself to be an unreasonable offender, an out-of-the-way rebel. Blessed be our great High Priest, he can "have compassion on the ignorant, and on those that are out of the way." That text meets your case, does it not ? I hear you cry, "Oh, but there is no hope for me." Listen, "He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel, and yet will he gather others,"—why, then, is there no hope for you ?

There is every hope for you. True, you have written your own condemnation, and you have signed and sealed it, and therefore you have made a covenant with death, and a league with hell, and given yourselves up to Satan: but your covenant with death shall be broken, and your league with hell shall be disannulled. By God's eternal grace, far off as you are, you shall find God's arm of mercy long enough to reach you; and weighed down with sin as you are, you shall find his hand of love strong enough to uplift you, for he will gather others such as he did gather of old,—more Magdalenes, more Matthews, more publicans and sinners, more of those who have a special claim to the name of "sinner." He will gather more of such, I know he will, blessed be his name, for so hath he promised in his word. How sweetly encouraging this should be to all of you that are sick of yourselves, and sick of your sins! There is no hope elsewhere, but there is hope in Jesus, for he is mighty to deliver, and "able to save to the uttermost." Trust ye in his name.

I admire greatly in my text the fact that *the promise is absolute*—"The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him." He speaks like a king. This is the kind of language which only an omnipotent being can use as to men's minds. "Yet will I gather others." But they are free agents! "I will gather them," says he. But suppose they will not come. "Yet will I gather others unto him." Certain of my brethren are much taken up with the fact of man's free agency. I believe that he is a free agent, but it is by his free agency that he is lost. For salvation we must look alone to free grace, for there only is man's hope. God has a way and an art, without violating the free agency of man, of nevertheless accomplishing the purposes of his grace without let or hindrance. He saith, "Yet will I gather," as if he knew himself to be the master of the situation, and able to effect his resolve. There may be some in this house now who have never even thought of believing in the Lord Jesus up to this moment, yet he knows how to bring even these. Perhaps some have even said in defiance, "I will not come." Have you not heard of one who said, "I will not," but afterwards repented and went? Grace can turn you in the same manner, and make you act as you never dreamed of doing. Does this annoy you? Do you put your teeth together and say, "No, I will never alter: I will never be a religious man." I tell you to be less obstinate, for you know not how soon you will yield, and find yourself weeping over these hard speeches. Were you never subdued by *human* love? Did your mother never conquer you, young man, not with a threatening, but just with a look and a tear? Did your wife never vanquish you in the same fashion? You were a free agent, but yet you were a complete captive, and you could not help yourself. If my Master and Lord is but seen by you in all his love and loveliness, adorned not only with his tears of pity but with his wounds, wherewith in love he redeemed mankind, I warrant you your obstinacy will find itself dissolved. Oh, if you knew him! Would to God he would manifest himself to you now, and you would cry—

"I yield, by mighty love subdued,
Who can resist its charms?"

This is why the Lord talks so positively, because he knows his own

power, and means to put it forth. "Yet will I gather others unto him." So shall it be with you, dear hearer. With your full consent, against your own wicked will, the Lord will lead you to Jesus, and there shall you be found rejoicing to be united to him and to his people. May the promise thus divinely uttered be fulfilled in you who sit or stand before the preacher this day, and on those who shall read those words in days to come.

III. I desire for a little time, in the third place, to mention THE FACTS WHICH SUSTAIN OUR FAITH IN THIS PROMISE. We believe it, whether or no; fact or no fact, to back it up, God's word is sure; but still this will help some of you who have but slender confidence. The facts which sustain our faith in the text are many; here is just a handful of them.

The first is *the perpetuity of the gospel*. Still is the good news preached among you, dear hearers. Still are we bidden to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Now, we feel certain that if all God's people were saved already, our Master would say, "You need not go any further, there are no more to be gathered in." Suppose when the King came in to see the guests every seat at the banquet was full, then he would not say to the servants, "Go ye out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in;" but because our commission runs on, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," we feel sure that there are more to be saved. If we are bidden to preach the gospel till the end of the world, it must be because to the very end of the world there are other souls to be called by grace. There are still to be harvests, for we are still sent to sow; there are still some fish to be caught, for we are still bidden to cast the net.

The next fact which helps our faith is this:—I, will give it you in verse and you will recognise it none the less distinctly—

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
'Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

The blood of atonement has not lost its power, and therefore all the ransomed church of God is not yet saved; there are more to be washed, for the fountain is still open; there are more to be healed, for the Balm of Gilead is still set before us, there are more to be liberated, for the redemption price has not exhausted its value. Our Lord Jesus has redeemed so great a multitude from among men, and his precious blood is of such an infinite value that we know beyond all doubt that there must remain myriads more to be gathered into his church. Do you think that he bought a miserable handful of men? Is your little Bethel a fold large enough to hold all the ransomed? No, a number that no man can number shall be the fruit of his travail, and he has not as yet seen such a number following at his feet. There is still power to save in the atonement, and a wondrous mint of merit in the righteousness of our Lord, therefore its issues are not yet fully seen; much more must come of it. We are sure that our Lord's sacred passion must have a grander

result than we have yet seen, and he will gather others besides those that have been gathered unto him. My brethren, can your eyes look beyond the firmament and see the invisible? If so, mark that hard by the blazing throne of the Eternal there stands a man who is more than a man :—

“Adoring saints around him stand,
And thrones and powers before him fall ;
The God shines gracious through the Man,
And sheds sweet glories on them all.”

But how is this glorious One occupied? He is making intercession and pleading for his redeemed. “He is able, therefore, to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” So long as there is an intercessor at the throne of God there must be more sinners to be saved. If all were brought in he would cease his pleading, but while there is still a soul ignorant or out of the way the great High Priest will continue to urge his suit before the Eternal Majesty. More souls must be brought in, for Jesus lives to plead for that end.

Nor is this all, for we are sure that these purposes of grace are not yet fully accomplished, because *the Spirit of God is with us still*. He abides in the church, and he has come to convince men of sin : there must be more souls to be convinced. He has come to quicken men, and abides here, and therefore there must be more dead sinners to be quickened, or else his mission would be ended. There must be more to whom the things of Christ are to be revealed, or else the Spirit would not linger here as our Illuminator. The Spirit has not gone away ; in many of us he abides, and we feel his power ; the presence of the Spirit is a sure token that the promise is not spent ; it is still full of meaning, and others must yet be gathered beside those that are gathered unto him.

Nor is this all. *The glory and majesty of the gospel*, or rather the greatness of the glory of God in the gospel, demands that many more should be gathered than have as yet been enfolded in the church. At the largest computation, the Christian church of the present day is a poor minority of mankind ; and we do not believe it to be consistent with the majestic purposes of grace that at the winding up of affairs there should be a handful of saved ones against an awful multitude of the lost. No, in all things Jesus shall have the pre-eminence, and he will have it in this also, that his saved ones shall exceed the lost : this is our hope and confidence. Multitudes, multitudes, multitudes beyond all conception are yet to be brought to Messiah’s feet, they shall fly as a cloud, they shall hasten as doves to their dove-cotes, they shall advance in strength like waves of the sea, and they shall cover the earth, being as the sand on the seashore, innumerable.

One other argument I put last, though it is not so strong as it might be. It may seem to be an anti-climax to finish with the weakest reason, but then it is one that needs to be made stronger, and because I want each believer here to strengthen it, I place it last, that it may not be forgotten. I know there must be many more souls to be ingathered because of *the longings of the saints*. They are not satisfied unless they see conversions ; they are anxious to hear the cry of penitents. I wish

they had far stronger longings and more intense anxieties. I know some Christians who are far too comfortable,—inhumanly insensible I call it, though even their own children are not converted. True saints are hungry and thirsty after souls; till men are saved they cannot rest. Nay, it has come to be with some of us far more than a longing or a thirsting, it has sharpened and deepened down into the very pangs of birth for souls. Many saints travail for souls; their hearts are in anguish until Christ be formed in others the hope of glory. Beloved, you know that when Zion travails she brings forth children: this therefore is a token for good,—there are more souls to be gathered, for God must hear prayer, and many are praying. Do not his elect cry day and night unto him? Will he not hear them? Are there not multitudes of ministers, teachers, and all sorts of workers hunting for souls with heavenly ardour, and giving God no rest day nor night till he bring in the outcasts. There must, therefore, be many more souls to be gathered.

One thing I know, the church *needs* more conversions. We never prosper as a church unless we have a fresh stream of young blood running into us. Mark an old church with no converts, and see how diseased it is. It generally sours down into a crotchety, ill-tempered, bigoted little clique, of very little use in the world, wanting rather a pair of crutches with which to totter about its own floor than a sword with which to fight the foe. The church needs young blood in its veins. Our strength for holding the faith may lie in experienced saints but our zeal for propagating it must be found in the young. We greatly need that new converts should be added to us, and therefore because we need it, and we feel confident that our God will supply all our need, we feel sure that he will increase us with men as with a flock. To keep his church alive and vigorous, he will lay hold upon Sauls and make Pauls of them. May this church be set on fire by the burning love of new-born souls. Though we have enjoyed a constant increase for nearly twenty-five years, may the Lord give us a far larger addition. It is his promise, let us plead it. *Others* besides those that have been gathered unto him we will ask him to give us; and just in proportion, my beloved brethren and sisters, as you and I begin to trouble about this, groan about it, pray about it, and cry about it, the Lord will fulfil his gracious promise, and others shall be gathered beside those that are gathered to him.

IV. I finish, therefore, with the fourth head, which is **THE CONDUCT CONSISTENT WITH THIS PROMISE**. Let us view this question with reference to God's people, I have already trenched upon that topic. The conduct congruous to the promise is to *believe it*, and then to *pray about it*. Let us at once get together in little knots of twos and threes, and seek to have the word fulfilled. This very afternoon enter into your chambers alone, or gather your families and hold little prayer-meetings with them. Remember this promise, and speak with the Lord concerning it. Perhaps you have not noticed its gracious utterances before, but now that it has come under your eye, be sure you make use of it. If a man finds that a cheque has been lying by him for a good while, and he comes upon it while turning over his letters, what will he do to-morrow morning? Why, he will go and get it cashed. Now, here is one of my Master's bills which you have not yet turned into actual money. Go and take it to the Lord; take it to-day, for the bank of heaven is open at

this moment—when is it closed? Go and get the word fulfilled unto you by praying, “Lord, thou hast said, Yet will I gather others that have not been gathered,” therefore fulfil this word unto thy servant. Having done this, you will have lifted up your hand to the Lord, and you cannot go back. If you pray, *you must work*, for prayer without endeavour is hypocrisy: the next thing after prayer is to go and gather in the others by speaking to them concerning Jesus and the way of salvation by faith in his precious blood. Go and use the grand gospel means, and then, because God has promised it, *expect to see others gathered*. Do not be thunderstruck when you hear of many being converted on a certain Sabbath through your speaking of Jesus Christ. Expect it—wonder that it does not happen oftener; and be on the look out for coming souls. *Look out for them* this morning. My Master has gathered some while I have been speaking, I feel sure of that. These new converts will feel quite lonely ere long unless you speak to them. They are like little children that are just born, and they need tender nursing; find them out and nurse them for the Lord and he will give you your wages. Try and speak a word of encouragement to those who for the first time are found hovering near the gospel; do not drive them away, but cheer them on. “Oh, but I am afraid I shall not find them.” If you speak so you will not find them; but if you are hopeful and believing you will find them fast enough, for they abound in these parts. Has not the Lord said that he will gather? Then be sure he will. You have asked him to fulfil his word, have you not? Then he will do it, beyond all doubt. Find out the hopeful ones, hear their troubles, and help them in their difficulties.

I am anxious that now, and for many months to come, all of you who are in Christ should be dwelling hourly on this word, and be continually saying, “Where are these *others*?” The Lord said, “Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered.” Where are these others? Perhaps at this time they have not come to this Tabernacle at all—they may be at some other house of prayer. Bless the Lord when other churches have their full share of increase, and souls are gathered into their ranks. But perhaps those whom the Lord will ingather are not at this time in any place of worship: go and find them in their homes and haunts. There are others to be gathered, look after the others. The first question of a saved man should be, “What can I do for my Lord?” and the next should be, “What can I do for others?” The more he knows Christ, and the greater his love, and the higher his enjoyment, the more should he cry, “Where are the others? What can I do for the others?” I am sure if you were all starving and ready to perish with famine, and I were to come with a good store of bread and call out half-a-dozen of you, and give you a good meal in the vestry, as soon as ever you had been fed you would cry, “Pray think of others. Thousands out there are starving, even as we were; pray give us bread for them as well as for ourselves.” How pleased you would be, each one, to go out and say, “There is a meal for all of you. There is no stint, you may eat to the full,—come along.” If they rejected your message you would feel very grieved, and you would plead with them—“Look at us, we have been fed: do not die here, but come and be fed also.” Some one would reply, “It is not good meat,” and you would answer, “Taste and see.” If one of you had a wife, and she was hungry, but would

not believe you, and come to the feast, you would plead with her even unto tears, and fear that she was insane. If you had children that would not come, and were dying with hunger, I think I know how their mothers would weep over them; how they would seek with loving entreaties to turn them from their infatuation and be induced to feed upon the bread so lovingly provided. We would not let them die if love could persuade them to be wise. The case is much the same spiritually: let us show a like earnestness.

As to what conduct is consistent with this text on the part of those who have not yet been gathered, it will be clear that they should be encouraged to hope. If I were a thief, and I read of the dying thief who rejoiced to see the fountain of atoning blood in his day, I would rejoice too and say, "If one thief was cleansed, why not another? Why not I? In the Bible are cases of very great sinners who nevertheless were washed from all their sins; I am like them in their sins, why should not I be as they were. More outcasts have to be gathered, then why not I amongst them? What should shut me out? I will go and try." In earthly things men seek promotion even when the hope is small. In the case of a vacancy in the Civil Service, I have heard of eight hundred applying for one situation. This was a poor chance, and yet many go in for it. But here we know that others are to be gathered, and those others not ones nor twos but thousands—why, then, should not a seeking soul put in for it? There never was one that did seek the Lord by faith who was refused yet. Never a single soul! He who comes to Jesus by a simple faith has never yet been refused. Come, my friend! Come now to Jesus! If he should cast you away, you will be number one upon the black list. We will place you here in the Tabernacle in a conspicuous seat, and we will show you as the first sinner that our Lord Jesus could not save. See, we will say, "Here is the first man that came to Jesus and Jesus rejected him." I shall alter all my preaching, for when I preach I shall say, "Jesus will in no wise cast out any that come to him, except one, and that one man sits in the Tabernacle." I shall tell them when I am preaching at Leeds during this week that Jesus Christ receives all sinners except one man, who was cast out at the Tabernacle last Sunday. I warrant you I will make your name ring round the world; the saints shall know it in heaven, and the devils will soon know it in hell, and they will triumph over the defeated Saviour. Why, man, you would be the first proof that God was not true, and that Christ was not gracious, and his blood is not omnipotent. Shall this ever be? You know better. Come along, and try the Saviour now! Rejected you shall never be. Oh that you would this morning yield to the gentle drawing of his almighty love. May you, dear brothers and sisters, be amongst those who shall say, "It is true, it is true that he gathers other outcasts, for he has gathered me into his fold, and I bless his sovereign grace, his irresistible love, and will bless him for ever and ever." Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Psalm cxlvii.;
Isaiah lvi.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—907, 956, 503.