

# Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

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THE SURE TRIUMPH OF THE CRUCIFIED ONE.

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## A Sermon

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, APRIL 25TH, 1875, BY

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“Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.”—Isaiah lii. 13–15.

MODERN Jewish writers refuse to see the Messiah in this passage, but their predecessors were not so blind. The Targum and the ancient Rabbins interpreted it of the Messiah, and indeed all attempts to explain it apart from him are palpable failures. Christian commentators in all ages have seen the Lord Jesus here. How could they do otherwise? To whom else could the prophet have referred? If the Man of Nazareth, the Son of God, be not right visible in these three verses, they are dark as midnight itself. We do not hesitate for a moment in applying every word to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear brethren, when our Lord ascended on high he gave us this commission “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Our duty is to obey that command, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear; the commission is unconditional, and is not dependent upon our success. If up to this date, 1875, there had never been a solitary convert through Christian ministry, if the whole of the church of God had hitherto laboured in vain, and the succession of saints had only been kept up by miracle, it would not affect our duty one iota. Our business is to preach the gospel, even to those who are aroused to persecution thereby. We are to sow, whether a harvest follow or not. Success is with God; service belongs to us. I believe, therefore, that true faith, when it is in a healthy condition, will enable us to go plodding on, carefully scattering the seed, even by the wayside and on stony places. Yet there is flesh about us all, and faith is not always unalloyed with sight, and consequently we occasionally flag and almost faint if we do not see some present usefulness. This passage may

cheer us if we fear that we have spent our strength for naught, for such certainly was the condition of the church of God at the time when this passage was addressed to it. There is a break made in our version between the 52nd and 53rd chapters, but no such break should have been made, and if we read straight on we shall see that these consoling words are meant for mourning workers. We hear even prophets saying, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Even the bravest of the prophets lamented that the offence of the cross hindered men from seeing the comeliness of the Messiah. All glorious as he was to the prophets when they beheld his substitutionary griefs, he was not understood by the multitudes who only saw in him a man smitten of God and afflicted, having no beauty that they should desire him. To support them under circumstances so dispiriting there comes in this comfortable word of our text, in which the marred visage and disfigured form of the great servant of the Lord are fully recognised, and yet the voice of the Lord declares that the shame and contempt caused thereby will be temporary, and the ultimate result will be sure. The issue of the great scheme of redemption is by no means uncertain, his cause must prosper, his throne must be established, and the will of the Lord must be done. Let us brace ourselves up this morning with the delightful prospect of the predestinated triumph of the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

In handling our text we shall note, first, that, directing us to the Lord Jesus Christ, it dwells upon *the character of his dealings*,—"My servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." Then, secondly, it mentions *the stumbling-block which lies in his way*, the great hindrance to the progress of his work: "Many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Thirdly, we see in the verses before us *the certainty of the removal of this hindrance*: "He shall sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him." And, fourthly, *the manner of its accomplishment*, namely, by instruction in the gospel: "For that which had not been told them they shall see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider."

I. THE CHARACTER OF OUR LORD'S DEALINGS. He is called in the text, "*My servant*" a title as honourable as it is condescending. The Lord Jesus has undertaken in infinite love to become the servant of the Father for our sakes, and he is a servant like unto Moses, who was set over the Lord's house to manage the affairs of the dispensation. Jesus, though a Son and therefore Lord, has deigned to become the great servant of God under the present economy. He conducts the affairs of the household of God, and it is said in the text, and it is to that we have to draw attention, that *he deals prudently*. He who took upon him the form of a servant acts as a wise servant in everything; and indeed it could not be otherwise, for "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." This prudence was manifest in

the days of his flesh, from his childhood among the doctors in the temple on to his confession before Pontius Pilate. Our Lord was enthusiastic. There was a fire burning within him which nothing could quench. He found his meat and drink in doing his Father's will; but that enthusiasm never carried him into rashness, or forgetfulness of sound reason. He was as wise and prudent as the most cold-hearted calculator could have been. Our Saviour was full of love, and that love made him frank and open-hearted. No frigid reserve kept him at a distance from the people, or shrouded him in a cloud of mystery. He was a man among men, transparent, childlike, "the holy child Jesus." But for all that he was ever prudent, and "committed himself unto no man, for he knew what was in man." Too many who aspire to be leaders of the people study policy, craft, and diplomacy, and think it needful to use language as much for the concealment as for the declaration of their thoughts: such men watch their own words till their very soul seems withered within them. The Friend of sinners had not a fraction of that thing about him, and yet he was wiser and more prudent than if diplomacy had been his study from his youth up. You see his wisdom when he baffles his adversaries. They think to entangle him in his speech, but he breaks their snares asunder as with a wave of our hand we sweep cobwebs from our path. You see his wisdom when he deals with his friends. He has many things to say unto them, but he perceives that they cannot bear them. He, therefore, does not overload their intellects, lest undigested truth should breed mischief in their souls. Little by little, like the increasing brightness of the dawn, he lets light into their souls, lest their eyes should utterly fail before the brilliance thereof. He does not send them upon difficult errands at first. He reserves for their riper years and stronger days the sterner tasks and more heroic deeds of daring, As we see his career in the light of the four evangelists, it is distinguished for his prudence, and in that respect "never man spake like this man."

He who on earth became obedient unto death has now gone *into the glory*, but he is still over the house of God, conducting its affairs. *He deals prudently still*. Our fears lead us to judge that the affairs of Christ's kingdom are going amiss, but we may rest assured that all is well, for the Lord hath put all things under the feet of Jesus, and made him to be head over all things to his church. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in the hand of Jesus still. *We* err, but *he* does not. Nay, the very points wherein we err are overruled by him for the display of his unerring wisdom and consummate skill. The storms and tempests which surround the church serve only to illustrate the wisdom and power of our great Pilot. He has ultimate designs which are not apparent upon the surface, and these he never fails to accomplish.

Brethren, all along through the history of the church the dealings of the Lord Jesus with his people have been very remarkable. The wisdom in

them is often deep, and only discoverable by those who seek it out, and yet frequently it sparkles upon the surface like gold in certain lands across the sea. Note how the Lord has made his church learn truth by degrees, and purified her first of one error and then of another. The church has fallen first into one folly and then into another, but her Lord has borne with her and delivered her. Full often he has allowed her to work her folly out, so as to see its result,

and by this process he has stamped out the error effectually, so that it will never gain power again. At the present time the gross folly of uniting with the State is being practically proved before the eyes of all men, and when it has come to its fulness it will end, never to be revived again. We wonder sometimes why he allows this or that error to exist, and we ask how it can be that the church should be so despoiled of her purity and weakened in her strength. We wonder that our Lord does not judge the evil and punish it at once, or that he does not raise up some strong voice to protest against it, and, sending his Holy Spirit therewith, destroy the evil at once. I trow [believe] he might, but there is prudence in the withholding of his power. The wise physician tolerates disease until it shall have reached the point at which he can grapple with it, so as to eradicate it from the system, so has the good Lord allowed some ill to fester in the midst of his church, that he may ultimately exterminate them. We wish to see great success following all forms of ministry, we would see our missionary societies prosperous to such a degree that a nation should be born in a day. But the Lord withholds success in a great measure, and herein he is dealing prudently. He keeps us back from prosperity, till we have learned that it does not after all arise out of our plans, and schemes, and resources, and energies. He would strip us of pride. He would put us in such a condition that it would be safe to us to give us success, and would be glorious to himself also. Often has a church, like Israel of old, to suffer defeat till it finds out and destroys the Achan who troubles the camp. The church has been foiled and humbled till at last in sheer despair she has fallen upon her face in prayer, and lifted up her heart to the strong for strength, and then her strength has returned, and victory has waited on her banners. As rivers filter and purify in their running, so does the church in her course become pure through the manifold wisdom of her Lord.

Study the pages of ecclesiastical history, and you will see how Jesus Christ has dealt wisely in the raising up of fitting men for all times. I could not suppose a better man for Luther's age than Luther, yet Luther alone would have been very incomplete for the full service needed had it not been for Calvin, whose calm intellect was the complement of Luther's fiery soul. You shall not find a better age for Wickliffe to have been born in than the time in which he shone forth as the morning star of the Reformation. God

fits the man for the place, and the place for the man. There is an hour for the voice, and a voice for the hour.

Our Lord has done all things well even unto this day, but now, perhaps, we are getting a little tired. It is near two thousand years since he died, and there has been a long talk about its being the end of the six thousand years since creation's day, and we murmur to each other that the great Sabbath must surely be very near. I am not much in love with this chronological theory, for I think we cannot be very certain that we have not long ago passed beyond the seventh thousand years. It is very questionable to me whether we do not altogether misunderstand the chronology of the Old Testament. Certainly nothing is more perplexing than the ancient Hebrew numbering. Still, so the many will have it, and possibly so it is. A portion of the church not only expects the Lord's second advent, but gets into a state of feverishness about the matter. Surely, say they, his delays have been very great: why are his chariots so long in coming? Ah, brethren, the Master knows best. It may please him to finish up the present dispensation today; if so, he will doubtless deal prudently in so doing. But it may be that myriads of years are yet to elapse before his appearing, and if so there will be wisdom in the delay. Let us leave the matter alone, for while the general fact that he will come is clearly revealed in order to quicken our diligence, the details are veiled in mystery, since they would only gratify our curiosity. If I knew that our Lord would come this evening, I should preach just as I mean to preach; and if I knew he would come during this sermon, I would go on preaching until he did. Christian people ought not be standing with their mouths open, gazing up into heaven and wondering what is going to happen; but they should abide with loins girt and lamps burning, ready for his appearing, whenever it may be. Go straight ahead upon the business your Lord has appointed you, and you need be under no apprehension of being taken by surprise. On one occasion I called to see one of our friends, and I found her whitening the front steps. When she saw me she jumped up and blushing said, "Oh dear, sir, I am sorry you caught me like this; I wish I had known you were coming." "My dear sister," I said, "I hope that is how the Lord will find me at his coming—doing my duty." I should like to be found whitening the steps when the Lord comes, if that were my duty. Steady perseverance in appointed service is far better than prophetic speculation, especially if such speculation leads us to self-conceit and idleness. We may rest assured that the future is safe, for Jesus will deal wisely and come at the right time, therefore we may leave all matters in his hands. If the times are dark, it is right they should be. If the times are bright, it is right they should be. I at least cannot change the times, and therefore my duty is to do the work God has given me to do, whether the times be dark or bright. For all practical purposes it is enough for us that infinite wisdom is at the helm of affairs: "my servant shall deal prudently."

Another translation of the passage is “my servant shall have prosperous success.” Let us append that meaning to the other. *Prosperity will grow out of our Lord's prudent dealings.* The pleasure of the Lord prospers in the hands of Jesus. The gospel will prosper in the thing whereto God has sent it. The decrees of God will be accomplished. His eternal purposes will be fulfilled. We may desire this or that, and our wish may or may not be granted, but whatsoever the Lord has appointed in his infinite wisdom to be done will come to pass to the last jot and tittle. The blood of Jesus Christ will not miss of its foreseen result in reference to any individual under heaven, and no end that was designed in the eternal plan of redemption shall be left unaccomplished. All along the line the Captain of our salvation will be victorious, and in every point and detail of the entire business the will of the Lord shall be done, and all heaven and earth shall be filled with praise as they see that it is so.

*In consequence of this the text tells us the Lord shall be exalted and extolled.* How well he deserves to be exalted and extolled for his matchless prudence! Too highly he cannot be esteemed. At the present time you will say the name of Christ is not honoured; but wait awhile, and he shall be very high. His name is even now more honoured than in former days, when it was the jest of the nations. The prudent plans which the Lord has adopted are surely working out the growth of his kingdom, and will certainly result in bringing to the front his name, and person, and teaching. Perhaps you think that certain doctrines are hindrances to the success of the gospel: you know not what you say. In the end it shall be seen that every part of his teachings, and procedure, and every act of his life, and all his government in providence were so wisely ordered, that as a whole they secured in the best and speediest manner the exalting and extolling of his holy name. The star of Jesus rises higher every hour. The twilight of Calvary brightens towards millennial day. He was despised and rejected of men, but now tens of thousands adore him. And, according to the omnipotent promise of the Father, to him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord. The Spirit of God is at work glorifying Jesus, and providence is bending all its forces to the same end. In heaven Jesus is exalted and extolled; in his church he is very high; and even in the world itself his name is a word of power already, and destined to be supreme in ages to come. Thus much, then, upon the character of Messiah's dealings.

II. Now let us view THE STUMBLING BLOCK IN THE WAY OF OUR LORD. It is his cross, which to Jew and Greek is ever a hindrance. As if the prophet saw him in vision, he cries out, “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” When he was here, his personal position and condition and appearance were very much against the spread of his kingdom. He was the son of a carpenter, he wore the smock-frock of a peasant, he associated

with publicans and sinners. Is he the Son of David? We looked for a great prince. We hoped for another Solomon. Is this he? Therefore the Jews rejected the meek and lowly prince of the house of David, and, alas, they persist in their rejection of his claims.

Today he has risen from the grave and gone into his glory, but the offence of the cross has not ceased, for upon his gospel there remains the image of his marred visage, and therefore men despise it. The preaching of the cross is foolishness to many. The main doctrine of the gospel concerns Jesus crucified,—Jesus, the Son of God, put to an ignominious death, because for our sakes he was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sin of many. Men will tell you they could believe Christianity if it were not for the atonement; that is to say, if Jesus will come down from the cross, modern scoffers will believe in him, just as the ancient ones tauntingly promised to do. But of the gospel we may say that atoning blood is the pledge thereof, and if you leave out the substitutionary work of Christ from it, there is no gospel left. It is a body without a soul. This, then, seems to be the impediment to the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom:—he himself with his marred visage, and his gospel with a visage equally uncomely in the eyes of carnal men.

The practical part of the gospel is equally a stumbling-block to ungodly men, for when men inquire what they must do to be saved, they are told that they must receive the gospel as little children, that they must repent of sin, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Very humbling precepts for human self-sufficiency! And after they are saved, if they inquire what they should do, the precepts are not those which commend themselves to proud, hectoring human nature—for they are such as these—“Be kindly affectioned one to another,” “forgiving one another and forbearing one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.” To the world which loves conquerors, and blasts of trumpets, and chaplets of laurel, this kind of teaching has a marred visage, and an uncomely form.

Then, what seems even more humbling, the Lord Jesus Christ in his prudent dealing not only brings before us a gospel offensive, because of the doctrine of atonement, and offensive in its practical precepts, but he sends this gospel among us by men who are neither great nor noble, nor even among the wise of this world. The proud say, “We would submit ourselves to men of master-minds, but we cannot endure these foolish ones. Send us philosophers and orators combined, let men overcome us by cogent arguments, let them master us by words whose splendour shall dazzle our intellects.” Instead of which the Lord sends a man who talks humbly, plainly, and perhaps even coarsely. Very simple is what he says: “Believe and live. Christ in your stead suffered for you, trust him:” he says this and little more. Is not this the fool's gospel? Is it not worthy to be called the foolishness of preaching? Men do not like this, it is an offence to their dignity.

They would hear Caesar if he would officiate in his purple, but they cannot endure Peter preaching in his fisherman's coat. They will hear a pope in his sumptuous array, or a cardinal in his red hat, and they would not object to listen to a well-trained dialectician of the schools, or an orator from the forum; but they are indignant at the man who disdains the excellency of speech, and styles the wisdom of this world folly. How can the gospel spread by such means? How, indeed, unless the Lord be with it, using human weakness to display the power of his grace?

Worse still, if worse can be, the people who become converted and follow the Saviour are generally of the poorer sort, and lightly esteemed. "Have any of the rulers believed?" is still the question. With what scorn do your literary men speak of professed Christians! Have you ever seen the sneer upon the face of your "advanced thought" gentleman, and of the far-gone school of infidels, when they speak of the old women and the semi-idiots who listen to the pious platitudes of evangelical doctrines? They know how to despise us if they know nothing else! But is such scorn worthy of men? It is only another version of the old sneer of the Pharisees when they said, "Hearst thou what these say?" and pointed to the boys and the rabble, who shouted, "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Contempt has always followed at the heels of Jesus, and it always will till the day of his glory. If the great ones of the earth despise the Lord Jesus, on their own heads be their blood; to him it is a glory rather than a shame that "the poor have the gospel preached to them." He is the people's Christ of whom it was written of old,—“I have exalted one chosen out of the people.” He rejoices to be called a leader and commander of the people, and he is glad that "the common people hear him gladly." But here stands the head and front of the difficulty,—the cross, which is the soul of Christianity, is also its stumbling block.

If any here are offended with Christ because of his cross, I beg them to dismiss the prejudice. Should it lead any man to doubt the Saviour or withhold his heart from him because he comes with a visage marred with sorrow? If he came to teach us to be unhappy and to prescribe to us rules for increasing misery, we might be excused if we shunned his teaching. But if he comes bearing the grief himself that we may not bear it, and if those lines of agony were wrought in his countenance because he carried our griefs and our sorrows, they ought to be to us the most attractive of all beauties. I reckon that the scar across the warrior's face, which he gained in defending his country, is no disfigurement to him. It is a beauty spot. If my brother had in saving my life lost an arm or received a hideous wound, he would be all the more beautiful in my esteem. Certainly I could not shun him on that account. The wounds of Jesus are precious jewels which should charm our eyes, eloquent mouths which should win our hearts. Be attracted by him, all of you! Hide not your faces from him! Look on him and live



and love. That crown of thorns has far more true glory about it than any crown of gold. Those hands pierced and nailed it should be your delight to kiss. Before that once sorrowing person you should bow with joyful alacrity. Jesus, thou marred One, thy cross, instead of being a stumbling-block to us is the glory of our faith.

That the gospel is spoken very plainly and that God blesses very simple people ought not to offend anybody. Ought it not rather to make us hopeful for the conversion of men because God may so largely bless commonplace instruments. Ought the conversion of the poor and the illiterate to be any offence to us? It shows a want of humanity. It looks as if pride had dried up the milk of human kindness in us, if we can grudge to those who have so little of this present world the priceless boons of another.

III. THE CERTAINTY OF THE REMOVAL OF THIS STUMBLING BLOCK and the spread of Christ's kingdom. As his face was marred, so surely "shall he sprinkle many nations;" by which we understand, first, that the doctrines of the gospel are to fall in a copious shower over all lands. Jesus shall by his speech which drops as the dew and distils as the rain, sprinkle not the Jews only, but the Gentile nations everywhere. Thy brethren abhorred thee, O Immanuel! they despised thee, O Man of Nazareth! but all lands shall hear of thee, and feel thee coming down like showers upon the mown grass. The dusky tribes afar off, and the dwellers in the land of the setting sun shall hear thy doctrine, and shall drink it in as the fleece of wool sucks up dew. Thou shalt sprinkle many nations with thy gracious word.

This sprinkling we must interpret according to the Mosaic ceremonies, and you know there was a sprinkling with blood, to set forth pardon of sin, and a sprinkling with water to set forth purification from the power of sin. Jesus Christ with

"The water and the blood  
From his riven side which flowed,"

has sprinkled not only many men but many nations, and the day will come when all nations shall feel the blessed drops which are scattered from his hands, and know them to be "of sin the double cure," cleansing transgressors both from its guilt and power.

Dr. Kitto explains the passage by an Oriental custom. He says that kings when they invited their subjects to great festivals would employ persons to sprinkle with perfume all who arrived, as they passed the palace gate. I scarcely think that that is the meaning of the text, but at any rate it supplies an illustration of it. Jesus invites men of all nations to come to the gospel feast, and as they enter he casts upon them the sweet perfumes of his love and grace, so that they are fragrant before the Lord. There were no perfumes for thee, O Jesus, upon Calvary! Vinegar and gall were all they

could afford thee; but now, since thou hast gone to heaven thou dost provide perfumes for multitudes of the sons of men, and nations north and south and east and west are refreshed with the delicious showers of fragrance which through the gospel fall upon them.

The text, then, claims for Jesus Christ that the influence of his grace and the power of his work shall be extended over many nations, and shall have power not over the common people only, but over their leaders and rulers. "The kings shall shut their mouths at him." They shall have no word to say against him. They shall be so subdued by the majesty of his power that they shall silently pay him reverence, and prostrate themselves before his throne. Kings, mark you. I am always glad to hear of noblemen being converted, though I am by no means inclined to flatter the great, or to think more of one man's soul than of another's. I am glad, however, to hear of the salvation of peers and princes, for it indicates the wide spread of the gospel when all classes are affected by it, and when those who usually stand aloof yield themselves to its power. "Kings shall shut their mouths at him." This promise has not been fulfilled yet. There are those who think that the Biblical prophecies are pretty nearly accomplished, and that we are passing into a new dispensation. Well, I dare not dogmatise, but I dare question most of the talk I hear nowadays about the future. Scores of prophecies are not yet fulfilled. Kings have not shut their mouths at him yet. They have mostly opened their mouths wide against him, and reviled and blasphemed him and persecuted his saints. There must be brighter days to come for this poor world yet, when even princes shall humbly obey our Lord. The more I study the Bible, the more sure I am of two things which I cannot reconcile: first, that Christ will come at such an hour as men look not for him, and may come now; and secondly, that the gospel is to be preached in all nations, and that "all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord." I do not know which of the two things I am surest of. Neither do I know how to reconcile them, but they are both in the Word, and in due time they will be reconciled by history itself.

Assuredly the day will come when the mightiest prince shall count it his highest honour to have his name enrolled as a member of the church of Christ. "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." The little handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains is yet to increase till the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon. "They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know him from the least to the greatest."

We look for this, and come it will. O thorn-crowned King of Calvary, kings shall be thy courtiers yet!

IV. Let us consider THE MANNER OF ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT. How will it come to pass? Will there be a new machinery? Will the world be converted, and the kings be made to shut their mouths by some new mode of opera-

tion? I do not think so. Will the saints take the sword one day? Will it be accomplished by that wonderful implement of civilisation, a gun-boat? Shall we convert the Hottentots by gunpowder? We have had a little trial of these carnal weapons, and some admire the success, but they may live to lament it. The Prince of Peace bids us put the sword into its scabbard. His weapons, like his kingdom, are not carnal. No, the way which has been from the beginning of the dispensation will last to its close. I believe that this battle is to be fought out on the line upon which it began. It pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. To conceive that our Lord will end the present mode of warfare, as though it were admitted that evil could not be conquered by the use of instrumentality, is to my mind to do him great dishonour. To me it is plain that, as he has chosen to magnify his power by using feeble instruments, he will continue to do so till the victory is won. He has never yet relinquished his work so as to give the enemy an opportunity of claiming a victory. To change weapons is to lay one's self open to the charge of being unable to conquer with those first used; but it is not so with our Lord. The very same grain of mustard which is now so small is yet to become a tree with far-spreading branches, the leaven is yet to leaven the whole lump. The last harvest will be the result of sowing by men and not by some miraculous agency. The dividing of the people at last will be made from the contents of one and the same gospel drag-net, which we are bound to use till the heavens be no more.

According to this passage, these kings and nations are first of all to hear. "Faith coming by hearing." They are to hear something new. Well, brethren, if they are to hear, we must preach and teach, so that our clear line of duty is to go on spreading the gospel. Jesus Christ would have his servants preach and teach the gospel. Are you doing it? Go on doing it, brother, in the power of the Holy Ghost, whatever comes. Have you not done it? Begin to do so now, as one of Christ's servants, and pray for divine help. Do you say you cannot do it? You can. You are hiding your talent in a napkin. Take it out, thou unfaithful servant, lest thy Lord come and judge thee! But you cannot teach many? Who said you could? Teach one. Oh, but you cannot preach? Who said preach? Teach; teach somehow. Cause the people to know the story of the cross. But you cannot teach kings, you say. Why need you? Teach servants and children, only do spread the gospel. The world is to be won to Christ, if it be ever won at all, by hearing the glad tidings of a dying Saviour's love, and how can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent? Christ sends you, for he says, "Let him that heareth say 'Come.'" In the power of that commission say at once,

"Now will I tell to sinners round  
What a dear Saviour I have found,

Point them to his redeeming blood  
And say, Behold the way to God."

These people appear not only to have heard, but to have *seen*. "That which had not been told them shall they see." This seeing is not with their bodily eyes but by the perceptions of their minds. Faith comes by the soul perceiving what the gospel means. We cannot believe in that which we do not perceive. Therefore we must go on telling people the gospel till they see what the gospel is. Many men will never know the gospel till they have been told it a thousand times, and you must keep on telling it to them till you get to that thousandth time. "What do you mean by that?" say you. I mean this, that it must be line upon line and precept upon precept, almost to the exhaustion of patience, a mother's prayers, a teacher's anxieties, providences, sicknesses, twitches of conscience, ministries of all sorts, and many pleadings, and it is only at the last stroke that the word will be achieved, though all the other efforts will have contributed towards it. Go on, dear brother, go on, and teach Jesus Christ till the people see him. That sight will come upon a sudden. How many times have I heard the young convert say, "I knew all about this before, sir. I have heard it many times, but I could not see it. Now I do see it." Oh, how it makes a man shut his mouth at Christ in humble silence, when he perceives at last that his marred visage and suffering form were tokens of divine love, and that by such sorrows sin is purged away. Would to God you all saw him now.

After they had seen, it appears from the text that they *considered*. "That which they had not heard shall they consider." This is how men are saved: they hear the gospel, they catch the meaning of it, and then they consider it. Let us pray, dear friends, that God would set unconverted people considering. If we can but get them to think, we have great hopes of them. If any of you here have never yielded to Jesus Christ, I would ask you to hear or read about him. Spend this afternoon in carefully reading one of the gospels. Turn to Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John, and read the story of his passion, and ask God to let you see what it all means, and when you do see it, turn it all over in your minds. Think of it. Think how wonderful it is that God should become man to suffer in your stead. See if it be reasonable to disbelieve it or right to refuse to love the Saviour. There are a thousand reasons why you should rush into his arms and say, "Incarnate Deity, how can I resist thee? Bleeding Omnipotence, how dare I doubt thee? Immortal love, crucified for my sins, I yield myself to thee! I would be thy servant for ever."

It is clear that those people, when they had seen and considered silently, accepted the Lord as their Lord, for they shut their mouths at him. They ceased from all opposition. They quietly resigned their wills, and paid allegiance to the great King of kings. Brothers and sisters, we want to see this

done for Christ now by hundreds here. There is a great religious stir just now, and we desire that this church, and all the churches abroad, should use the favourable breeze. You know how in harvest time the farmer gets all the men he can to work, and they toil on through long hours. I have seen them working briskly beneath the bright moonlight to get in the wheat. This is our harvest time, and we must get our sheaves in. The Lord has much corn, and it needs to be garnered. I pray you make long hours and work hard for Jesus, and let the subject expounded this morning inspire you therein. The success of the gospel is in no jeopardy whatever. Jesus must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. If the devil can persuade you that Christ is going to give up the war, or is going to fight it out on another line, and dispense with your efforts, you will soon grow idle. You will find an excuse for laziness in some supposed conversion of the world by miracle, or some other wonderful affair. You will say the Lord is coming, and the war will all be over at once, and there is no need of your fighting it out now. Do not believe it. Our Commander is able to fight it through on this line: in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, by the power of the Eternal Spirit, we are bound to keep right on till this world yields before God. You remember the American general who, when the nation was eager for speedy victory, said he did not know when that would come, but that he would keep on pegging away. That is what we are bound to do; to keep on "pegging away." No gunner may leave his gun, no subaltern may disperse his band, no officer may suggest a retreat. Brethren, Popery must fall, Mahomedanism must come down, and all the idol gods must be broken, and cast to the moles and to the bats. It looks a task too gigantic, but the bare arm of God—only think of that—his sleeve rolled up, omnipotence itself made bare,—what cannot it accomplish? Stand back, devils! when God's bare arm comes into the fight, you will all run like dogs, for you know your Master. Stand back, heresies and schisms, evils and delusions; you will all disappear, for the Christ of God is mightier than you. Oh, believe it. Do not be downhearted and dispirited, do not run to new schemes and fancies and interpretations of prophecy. Go and preach Jesus Christ unto all the nations. Go and spread abroad the Saviour's blessed name, for he is the world's only hope. The cross is the banner of our victory. God help us to look to it ourselves, and then to hold it up before the eyes of others, till our Lord shall come upon his throne. Amen.

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PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Isaiah lii. 13-15.

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HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—72, 418, 352.