

A FREE GRACE PROMISE

NO. 2082

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S DAY, MAY 5, 1888.

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,

DELIVERED ON THURSDAY EVENING,

OCTOBER 11, 1888.

“And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”

Joel 2:32.

VENGEANCE was in full career. The armies of Divine justice had been called forth for war—“They shall run like mighty men. They shall climb the wall like men of war.” They had invaded and devastated the land and turned the land from being like the garden of Eden into a desolate wilderness. All faces gathered blackness—the people were “much pained.” The sun itself was dim, the moon was dark and the stars withdrew themselves—the earth quaked and the heavens trembled. At such a dreadful time—when we might least have expected it, between the peals of thunder and the flashes of lightning—was heard this gentle word, “It shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”

Let us carefully read the passage—“And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.” In the worst times that can ever happen there is still salvation for men! When day turns to night and life becomes death, when the staff of life is broken and the hope of man has fled, there still remains in God, in the Person of His dear Son, deliverance to all those who will call upon the name of the Lord.

We do not know what is to happen—reading the roll of the future we prophesy dark things. But still this light shall always shine between the rifts of the cloud—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”

This passage was selected by the Apostle at Pentecost to be set in its place as a sort of morning star of Gospel times. When the Spirit was poured out upon the servants and the handmaids and sons and daughters began to prophesy, it was clear that the wondrous time had come which had been foretold so long before. Then Peter, as he preached his memorable sermon, told the people, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” He thus gave a fuller and yet more evangelical meaning to the word “delivered.” “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered”—from sin, death and Hell—shall, in fact, be so delivered as to be in Divine language, “saved”—saved from the guilt, the penalty, the power of sin. Saved from the wrath to come.

These Gospel times are still the happy days in which “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” In this year of Divine Grace we have reached a day and an hour in which “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” To you at this moment is this salvation sent. The dispensation of immediate acceptance proclaimed at Pentecost has never ceased—its fullness of blessing has grown rather than diminished. The sacred promise stands in all its certainty, fullness and freeness—it has lost none of its breadth and length—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

I have nothing to do tonight but to tell you again the old, old story of infinite mercy come to meet infinite sin—of FREE GRACE come to lead free will into a better line of things—of God Himself appearing to undo man's ruin worked by man and to lift him up by a great deliverance. May the Holy Spirit graciously aid me while I shall talk to you very simply.

I. First, THERE IS SOMETHING ALWAYS NEEDED. That something is deliverance, or “salvation.” It is always wanted. It is the requisite of man wherever man is found. As long as there are men on the face of the earth there will always be a need of salvation. I could wish that some of you had the instructive schooling which I received last Tuesday

when I was visiting enquirers. I had a very happy time in seeing a very large number of persons who had joyfully put their trust in Christ. But among them were some who could *not* trust. Poor Hearts, conscious of sin, though they did not think they were—these seemed bound hand and foot, shut up in the prison of despair and darkened in heart.

I tell you I felt dismayed as they baffled me—I felt a fool as they refused to be comforted. I could do nothing for them so far as argument and persuasion were concerned. I could pray with them—I could also set them praying and they *did* pray. But they were cases in which, unless the arm of God were revealed, I was as powerless with them as when a man stands weeping over the body of his dead wife.

Dear Friends, while we mingle only with those who are saved, we forget how much need there is still of Divine salvation. If we could go through London—into its dens and slums—we should think very differently of human need from what we do when we simply come from our own quiet domestic circle and step into our pew and hear a sermon. The world is sick and dying. The world is corrupt and rotten. The world is a ship in which the water is rising fast and the vessel is going down into the deep of destruction. God's salvation is wanted as much today as when the Holy Spirit preached it in Noah's day to the spirits in prison. God must step in and bring deliverance or there remains no hope.

Some want deliverance from present trouble. If you are in this need tonight through very sore distress, I invite you to take my text as your guide and believe that "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Depend upon it—in any form of distress—physical, mental, or whatever it may be, prayer is wonderfully available. "Call upon Me," says God, "in the day of trouble: I will deliver you and you shall glorify Me." If you are so down at the heel that your foot is on the bare pavement. If you have come to this place in bodily sickness and feel as if you should die on the seat in which you sit. If there be no physician to help you and no friend to stretch out a generous hand, I beseech you call upon God!

You have come to the end of men. You are now at the beginning of God. See whether your Maker will forget you. See whether the great, generous heart of God does not still beat tenderly towards the sorrowful and the afflicted. If I saw you lying wounded on a battlefield, bleeding to death, I would say, "Call upon God." If I knew that you had not a house to go to but must walk these streets all night, I would say, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." I will take the text in the broadest sense and bid you, no, *command* you to test your good and gracious God in the day of your calamity.

This is true whenever you come into a position of deep personal distress, even though it should not be of a physical kind. When you do not know how to act but are bewildered and at your wits end—when wave of trouble has followed wave of trouble till you are like the sailor in the storm who reels to and fro and staggers like a drunken man—if now you cannot help yourself because your spirit sinks and your mind fails—call upon God, call upon God, call upon God! Lost child in the woods, with the night fog thickening about you, ready to lie down and die—call upon your Father! Call upon God, you distracted one. For, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered."

In the Last Great Day, when all secrets are known it will seem ridiculous that persons took to writing tales and romances. For the real stories of what God has done for those who cry to Him are infinitely more surprising. If men and women could but tell in simple, natural language, how God has come to their rescue in the hour of imminent distress, they would set the harps of Heaven a-ringing with new melodies and the hearts of saints on earth a-glowing with new love to God for His wonderful kindness to the children of men! Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness! Oh that we could abundantly utter the memory of His great goodness to ourselves in the night of our weeping!

The text holds good concerning deliverance from future troubles. What is to happen in the amazing future, we do not know. Some try to startle and alarm you with prophecies of what will soon happen. I would warn you, concerning these to be well upon your guard. Take small heed of what they say. Whatever is to happen according to the Word of God—if the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood—if God shall show great wonders in the heavens and the earth—blood and fire and pillars of smoke—remember that though you will then assuredly want deliverance, deliverance will still be near at hand. The text seems to be put in a startling connection in order to advise us that when the worst and most terrible convulsions shall occur, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

The star Wormwood may fall but we shall be saved if we call upon the name of the Lord. Plagues may be poured out, trumpets may sound and judgments may follow one another as quickly as the plagues of Egypt but, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." When the need of deliverance shall apparently increase, the abundance of

salvation shall increase with it. Fear not the direst of all wars, the bitterest of all famines, the deadliest of all plagues—if we call upon the Lord, He has pledged to deliver us. This word of promise meets the most terrible of possibilities with a sure salvation.

Yes, and when you come to die, when to you the sun has turned into darkness and the moon into blood, this text assures deliverance in the last dread hour. Call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be saved! Amid the pains of death and the gloom of departure you shall enjoy a glorious visitation which shall turn darkness into light and sorrow into joy. When you wake up amid the realities of the eternal future, there will be nothing for you to dread in resurrection, or in judgment, or in the yawning mouth of Hell. If you have called upon the name of the Lord you shall be delivered. Though the unpardoned are thrust down to the depth of woe, and the righteous scarcely are saved, yet you who have called upon the name of the Lord must be delivered. The promise stands firm. Whatever may be hidden in the great roll of the future, God cannot deny Himself—He will deliver those who call upon His name.

What is needed, then, is *salvation*. And I do think, beloved Brethren, that you and I who preach the Word and long to save souls must very often go over this grand old Truth of God about salvation to the guilty—deliverance to all who call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes we talk to friends about the higher life, about attaining to very high degrees of sanctity. And all this is very proper and very good. But still the great fundamental Truth of God is, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” We urge our friends to be sound in doctrine and to know what they do know and to understand the revealed will of God. And very proper is this also. But still, first and foremost, this is the elementary, all-important truth—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

To this old foundation truth we come back for comfort. I sometimes rejoice in God and joy in the God of my salvation and spread my wings and mount up into communion with the heavenlies. But still there are other seasons when I hide my head in darkness and then I am very glad of such a broad, gracious promise as this—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” I find that my sweetest, happiest, safest state is as a poor, guilty, helpless sinner calling upon the name of the Lord and receiving mercy at His hands as one who deserves nothing but His wrath. Then I dare hang the weight of my soul on such a sure promise as this, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Get where you may, however high your experience. Be what you may, however great your usefulness—you will always want to come back to the same ground upon which the poorest and weakest of hearts must stand and claim to be saved by almighty Grace—through simply calling upon the name of the Lord. Thus have I said enough upon what is always needed—this deliverance, this salvation.

II. Now, secondly, let us attentively observe THE WAY IN WHICH THIS DELIVERANCE IS TO BE HAD. Help us, Blessed Spirit, in this our meditation. It is to be had, according to the text, by calling upon the name of the Lord.

Is not the most obvious sense of this language prayer? Are we not brought to the Lord by a prayer which trusts in God—by a prayer which asks God to give the deliverance that is needed and expects to have it from the Lord as a gift of Divine Grace? It amounts to much the same thing as that other word, “Believe and live.” For how shall they call on Him of whom they have not heard? And if they have heard, yet vain is their calling if they have not believed as well as heard. But to “call on the name of the Lord,” is briefly to pray a believing prayer—to cry to God for His help and to leave yourself in His hands. This is very simple, is it not? There is no cumbersome machinery here, nothing complex and mysterious.

No priestly help is wanted except the help of that great High Priest who intercedes for us within the veil. A poor, broken heart pours its distress into the ear of God and calls upon Him to fulfill His promise of help in the time of need—that is all. Thank God nothing more is mentioned in our text. The promise is—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

What a suitable way of salvation it is to those who feel that they can do nothing! Ah, dear Hearts! If we had to preach to them a very difficult and elaborate salvation they would perish. They have not the mind, some of them, to follow our directions if they were at all intricate. And they have not enough hope to venture upon anything that looks at all difficult. But if it is true that, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved,” this method is simple and available and they easily understand it. He can pray to God who can do nothing else. Thank God he need not want to do anything else. For if he can call for help, he gets deliverance—and in that deliverance he gets all that he will ever

want between this place and Heaven. He has called upon the name of the Lord, and all that is deficient in him will be supplied for time and for eternity. He will be delivered, not only now, but throughout all the future of his life until he sees the face of God in Glory everlasting!

The text, however, contains within it a measure of specific instruction—the prayer must be to the true God. “Whosoever shall call on the name of *Jehovah* shall be saved.” There is something distinctive here. For one would call on Baal, another would call on Ashtaroth and a third on Moloch. But these would not be saved. The promise is especial—“Whosoever shall call on the name of *Jehovah* shall be saved.” You know that triune name, “Father, Son and Holy Spirit”?—Call upon it! You know how the name of *Jehovah* is set forth most conspicuously in the Person of the Lord Jesus?—call upon Him!

Call upon the *true* God. Call upon no idol, call on no Virgin Mary, no saint, dead or living. Call on no image. Call on no impression of your mind! Call upon the living God—call upon Him who reveals Himself in the Bible—call upon Him who manifests Himself in the Person of His dear Son. For whosoever shall call upon *this* God shall be saved. You may call upon the idols but they will not hear you—“Ears have they, but they hear not. Eyes have they, but they see not.” You may *not* call upon *men*, for they are all sinners like yourselves. Priests cannot help their most zealous admirers. But, “Whosoever shall call on the name of *Jehovah* shall be saved.” Mind, then, it is not the mere repetition of a prayer as a sort of charm, or a piece of religious witchcraft—you must make a direct address to GOD, an appeal to the Most High to help you in your time of need. In presenting true prayer to the true God you shall be delivered.

Moreover, the prayer should be intelligently presented. We read, “Whosoever shall call on the *name* of the Lord.” Now, by the word “name” we understand the Person, the Character of the Lord. The more, then, you know about the Lord and the better you know His name, the more intelligently will you call upon that name. If you know His power, you will call upon that power to help you. If you know His mercy, you will call upon Him in His Grace to save you. If you know His wisdom, you feel that He knows your difficulties and can help you through them. If you understand His immutability, you will call upon Him as the same God who has saved other sinners, to come and save you. It will be well, therefore, for you to study the Scriptures much and to pray the Lord to make Himself known to you that *you may know Him*. In proportion to your acquaintance with Him, will you with greater confidence be able to call upon His name.

But, little as you may know, call on Him according to the little you *do* know. Cast yourself upon Him, whether your trouble tonight be external or internal. But especially if it is internal, if it is the trouble of sin—if it is the burden of guilt, if it is a load of horror and fear because of wrath to come—call upon the name of the Lord, for you shall be delivered. There stands His promise. It is not, “He *may* be delivered,” but he “*shall* be.” Note well the everlasting “shall” of God—irrevocable, unalterable, unquestionable, irresistible. His promise stands eternally the same. Has He said and shall He not do it? “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

This way of salvation—calling upon the name of the Lord—glorifies God. He asks nothing of you but that you ask everything of Him. You are the beggar and He is the Benefactor. You are in the trouble and He is the Deliverer. All you have to do is to trust Him and beg of Him. This is easy enough. This puts the matter into the hands of the Lord and takes it out of your hands. Do you like the plan? Put it in practice immediately! It will prove itself gloriously effectual.

Dear Friends, I speak to some whom I know to be now present who are under severe trial. You dare not look up. You seem to have given up. At any rate you have given yourself up. And yet, I pray you, call upon the name of the Lord. You cannot perish *praying*—no one has ever done so. If you could perish praying, you would be a new wonder in the universe! A praying soul in Hell is an utter impossibility. A man calling on God and rejected of God—the supposition is not to be endured! “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” God Himself must lie, He must quit His nature, forfeit His claim to mercy, destroy His character of love if He were to let a poor sinner call upon His name and yet refuse to hear him.

There will come a day but that is not now—there will come a day in the next state when He will say, “I called but *you* refused.” But it is not so now. While there is life there is hope. “Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart,” but call upon God at once. For this warrant of Divine Grace runs through all the regions of mortality, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

I remember a time when if I had heard a sermon on this subject, putting it plainly to me, I should have leaped into comfort and light in a single moment. Is it not such a time with you? I thought I must do something, I must be

something, I must in some way *prepare* myself for the mercy of God. I did not know that a calling upon God, a trusting myself in His hands an invocation of His sacred name would bring me to Christ the Savior. But so it stands and happy, indeed, was I when I found it out. Heaven is *given* away. Salvation may be had for the *asking*. I hope that many a captive heart here will at once leap to loose his chains and cry, “It is even so. If God has said it, it must be true. There it is—in His own Word. I have called upon Him and I must be delivered.”

III. Now I come to notice, in the third place, THE PEOPLE TO WHOM THIS PROMISE AND THIS DELIVERANCE WILL BE GIVEN. “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”

According to the connection, the people had been greatly afflicted—afflicted beyond all precedent, afflicted to the very brink of despair. But the Lord said, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Go down to the hospital. You may select, if you please, the hospital which deals with the effects of vice. In that house of misery you may stand at each bed and say, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” You may then hasten to every door of every prison cell, yes, even at the grating of the condemned cell—there lie men and women given up to death—and you may with safety say to each one, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”

I know what the Pharisees will say—“If you preach this, men will go on in sin.” It has always been so—that the great mercy of God has been turned by some into a reason for continuing in sin. But God (and this is the wonder of it) has never restricted His mercy because of that! It must have been a terrible provocation of Almighty Grace when men perverted His mercy into an excuse for sin. But the Lord has never taken even the edges off His mercy because men have misused it—He has still made it stand out bright and clear—“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Still He cries, “Turn and live.” “Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts—and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him. And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”

Undimmed is that brave sun that shines on the foulest dunghills of vice. Trust Christ and live. Call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be pardoned—yes, you shall be rescued from the bondage of your sin and be made a new creature, a child of God, a member of the family of His Grace. The most afflicted and the most afflicted by sin are met with by this gracious promise, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Yes, but there were some, according to Joel, who had the Spirit of God poured out upon them. What about *them*? Were they saved by that? Oh no! Those who had the Spirit of God so that they dreamed dreams and saw visions—they still had to come to the palace of mercy, by His Grace, by this same gate of believing prayer—“Whosoever shall *call on the name of the Lord* shall be saved.” Ah, poor Souls! You say to yourselves, “If we were deacons of Churches, if we were pastors, oh, then we should be saved!” You do not know anything about it—Church officers are no more saved by their *office* than you are by being without office. We owe nothing to our official position in this matter of salvation—in fact we may owe our damnation to our official standing unless we look well to our ways.

Pastors and officers of Churches have no preference over you plain folks. I assure you I am quite happy to take your hand, whoever you may be, and come to Christ on the same footing as yourself—

*“Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Your Cross I cling.”*

Often, when I have been cheering up a poor sinner and urging him to believe in Christ, I have thought, “Well, if he will not drink this cup of comfort, I will even drink it up myself.” I assure you I need it as much as those to whom I carry it. I have been as big a sinner as any of you, and therefore I take the promise to myself. The Divine cordial shall not be lost—I will accept it.

I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn, and faint and sick, and full of sin—and I trusted Him on my own account and found peace—peace on the same ground as my text sets before all of you. If I drink of this consolation, you may drink it, too. The miracle of this cup is that fifty may drink and yet it is just as full as ever. There is no restriction in the word “Whosoever.” You maidens that have the Spirit of God upon you, and you old men that dream—it is neither the Spirit of God nor the dreaming that will save you—but your calling on the sacred name. It is, “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Also, there were some upon whom the Spirit of God did *not* fall. They did not speak with tongues, nor prophesy the future, nor work miracles. But though they did none of these marvels, yet it stood true to them, too—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” What? Though no supernatural gift was bestowed, though they saw no

vision and could not speak with tongues—they called upon the name of the Lord and they were saved! There is the same way of salvation for the little as well as for the great, for the poorest and most obscure as well as for those that are strong in faith and lead the hosts of God to the battle.

But some were terribly afraid. I should think that a good many must have been sadly alarmed when there were in the earth blood and fire and pillars of smoke, the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood—but, afraid as they were—if they called upon the name of the Lord, they were delivered. Now, Mrs. Much-Afraid, what do you say to that? Mr. Ready-to-Halt! Did I hear your crutches sounding in the aisle just now, or was it an umbrella? Never mind. If you call upon the name of the Lord, you shall be saved. You that are so feeble in mind, so weak, so wounded that you hardly dare to trust—still it is written for *your* sakes also—“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

“Ah,” says another, “but I am worse than that. I have no good *feelings*. I would give all that I have to own a broken heart. I wish I could even feel despair but I am hard as a stone.” I have been told that sorrowful story *many times* and it almost always happens that those who most mourn their want of feeling are those who feel most acutely. Their hearts are like hardened steel, so they say. But it is not true. And even if it were true, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Do you think that the Lord wants you to give *yourself* a new heart first and *then* He will save you? My dear Soul, you *are saved* when you have a new heart and you do not need Him to save you then, since you are already saved.

“Oh, but I must get good feelings!” Must you? Where are you going for them? Are you to rake the dunghill of your depraved nature to find good feelings there? *Come without any good feeling*. Come just as you are. Come, you that are like a frozen iceberg, that have nothing about you whatever but that which chills and repels! Come and call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be saved. “Wonders of Grace to God belong.” It is not a small Gospel that He has sent us to preach to small sinners but ours is a great Gospel for great sinners. “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

“Ah, well!” says one, “I cannot think it is meant for *me*, for I am nobody.” Nobody, are you? I have a great love for nobodies. I am worried with somebodies and the worst somebody in the world is my own somebody. How I wish I could always turn my own somebody out and keep company with none but nobodies! Then I should make Jesus Everybody. Nobody, where are you? You are the very person that I am sent to look after. If there is nothing of you, there shall be all the more of Christ. If you are not only empty but cracked and broken, if you are done for, destroyed, ruined, utterly crushed and broken—to YOU is this word of salvation sent——“Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

I have set the gate wide open. If it were the wrong track, all the sheep would go through. But as it is the right road, I may set the gate open as long as I will but yet the sheep will shun it unless You, Great Shepherd, shall go around the field tonight and *lead* them in. Take up in Your own arms some sheep that You have purchased long ago with Your dear heart’s blood—take him upon Your gracious shoulders, rejoicing as You do it, and place him within the field where the good pasture grows.

IV. I want you to dwell for a minute upon THE BLESSING ITSELF. “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.” I need not say much about it because I have already expounded it. It is a very good rule when a man makes you a promise to understand it in the narrowest sense. It is fair to him that you should do so. Let him interpret it liberally if he pleases. But he is actually bound to give you no more than the bare terms of his promise will imply.

Now, it is a rule which all God’s people may well practice, always to understand God’s promises in the largest possible sense. If the words will bear a bigger construction than at the first sight they naturally suggest to you, you may put the *larger* construction upon them. “He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or even think.” God never draws a line in His promise, that He may go barely up to it. But it is with the great God as it was with His dear Son, who, though He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet spent the greater part of His time in Galilee, which was called, “Galilee of the Gentiles.”

He went to the very verge of Canaan to find out a Canaanite woman, that He might give her a blessing. You may put the biggest and most liberal sense, then, on such a text as this, for Peter did so. The New Testament is likely to give a broader sense to Old Testament words. And it does so most rightly—for God loves us to treat His Words with the breadth of faith. Come, then, if you are the subject of the judgments of God. If you believe that God’s hand has visited

you on account of sin, call upon Him and He will deliver you both from the judgment and from the guilt that brought the judgment—from the sin and from that which follows the sin. He will help you to escape. Try Him now, I beseech you.

And if your case should be different—if you are already a child of God and you are in trouble and that trouble eats into your spirit and causes you daily wear of spirit and tear of heart—call upon the Lord. He can take away from you the fret and the trouble, too. “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.” You may have to bear the trouble, but it shall be so transformed as to be rather a blessing than an evil—and you shall fall in love with your Cross since the nature of it has changed by God’s Grace.

If sin is the great cause of your present trouble and that sin has brought you into bondage to evil habits. If you have been a drunkard and do not know how to learn sobriety. If you have been unchaste and have become entangled in vicious connections—call upon God and He can break you away from the sin and set you free from all its entanglements. He can cut you loose tonight with the great sword of His Grace and make you a free man. I tell you, that though you should be like a poor sheep between the jaws of a lion, ready to be devoured immediately by the monster, God can come and pluck you out from between the lion’s jaws. The prey shall be taken from the mighty and the lawful captive shall be delivered. Only call upon the name of the Lord! Call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be delivered.

Yes, and I repeat what I said just now. If you have come under the power of disease, if you are near to death, if already death has written his name legibly upon your body and you are afraid of death and Hell—call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be delivered at this last moment. Even now, when the pit gapes wide for you and like Korah, Dathan and Abiram you are ready to go down alive into it—call upon the name of the Lord and you shall be delivered.

If I were telling you what I had made up, or hammered out of my own brain, I could not expect you to believe me. But as this Book is inspired, and as Joel spoke in the name of God, and as the Apostles spoke in the name of Jehovah, this is the very Truth of the God that made the heavens and the earth. “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.”

V. In conclusion, I must remind you of one mournful thought. Let me warn you OF THE SADLY COMMON NEGLECT OF THIS BLESSING. You would think that everybody would call upon the name of the Lord. But read the text, “For in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said.” It shall be there as the Lord has said. Will they not have it then? Notice—“And in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” It seems to shrivel me up altogether, that word “remnant.” What? Will they not come? Are they madmen? Will they not come? No, only a remnant. And even that remnant will not call upon the name of the Lord until first *God calls them by His Grace*.

This is almost as great a wonder as the love which so graciously invites them. Could even devils behave worse? If they were invited to call upon God and be saved, would they refuse? Unhappy business! The way is plain but “few there are that find it.” After all the preaching and all the invitations and the illimitable breadth of the promise—the only ones save are contained—“in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” Is not our text a generous invitation? The setting open of the door, yes, the lifting of the door from off its hinges that it never might be shut? And yet “broad is the gate and wide is the way that leads to *destruction* and many there are that go in thereat.”

There they come, streams of them, hurrying impatiently, rushing down to death and Hell—yes, eagerly panting, hurrying, dashing against one another to descend to that awful gulf from which there is no return! No missionaries are wanted, no ministers are needed to plead with men to go to Hell. No books of persuasion are wanted to urge them to rush onward to eternal ruin. They *rush* to be lost—they are *eager* to be destroyed! As when the wild Bison of the prairie hasten onward in their madness, until they come to a great gulf and then rush down headlong—a waterfall of life leaping to death—so is it with the sons of men! They choose their own delusions and covet their own damnations and that without end. And so this is all that Sovereign Mercy rescues after all—a remnant—and that remnant only because the arm of the Lord is revealed and a miraculous power exerted upon their wills.

This is the misery of it—that the guilty are not willing to be parted from their sins. They will not seek that which alone is their life, their joy, their salvation. They prefer Hell to Heaven, sin to holiness. Never spoke the Master a word which observation more clearly proves than when He said, “You will not come to Me, that you might have life.” You will attend your Chapels, but you will not call on the Lord. Jesus cries, “You search the Scriptures. For in them you

think you have eternal life and they are they which testify of Me. But you will not come to Me, that you might have life.” You will do anything rather than come to Jesus. You stop short of calling upon Him.

O my dear Hearers, do not let it be so with you! Many of you are saved. I beseech you intercede for those who are *not* saved. Oh, that the *unconverted* among you may be moved to *pray*. Before you leave this place, breathe an earnest prayer to God, saying, “God be merciful to me a sinner. Lord, I need to be saved. Save me. I call upon Your name.” Join with me in prayer at this moment, I entreat you. Join with me while I put words into your mouths and speak them on your behalf—“Lord, I am guilty. I deserve Your wrath. Lord I cannot save myself. Lord, I would have a new heart and a right spirit, but what can I do? Lord, I can do nothing! Come and work in me to will and to do of Your good pleasure—

*‘You alone have power, I know,
To save a wretch like me.
To whom, or where should I go
If I should turn from You?’*

“Lord, I now, by Your grace, from my very soul call upon Your name. Trembling, yet believing, I cast myself wholly upon You. O Lord I trust the blood and righteousness of Your dear Son. I trust Your mercy and Your love and Your power as they are revealed in Him. I dare to lay hold upon this Word of Yours that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Lord, save me tonight, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

Portion Of Scripture Read Before Sermon—Joel 2:11-32.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN-BOOK”—282, 544, 275.

Adapted from *The C.H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software, 1.800.297.4307