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Sermon preached by Mr F. L. Gosden at Galeed chapel, Brighton on Sunday evening,  
3rd November 1963.

"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. 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 56:7-8.

This morning we tried to show that with the Lord there is no respecter of persons and there are no distinctions with respect to the matters of salvation, because "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We also referred to cases, odd cases, to those who feel that they have something about them and their souls and their sins and their lives which are altogether against them and it appears as though those peculiarities are outside of the promises in the gospel and that they are out of the secret altogether. If we were to go through the word of God and make a catalogue of the characters that God blesses, that He saves, that He brings into the church and takes to heaven, it would be an amazing list.

It just comes to mind that this is spoken of to the Corinthians: "For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea and things which are not to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence." It also declares for the comfort of poor sinners that "We have a great High Priest who can have compassion on the ignorant and on those that are out of the way." Well, it would be a mercy if these gracious Scriptures should be made a consolation to those who feel that their case is full of objections, full of hindrances, full of reasons why the Lord should not bless them; reasons which seem to them to preclude their ever obtaining those blessings indeed which are in Christ Jesus; 'But even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer.'

Then we began to speak of the church of God. That house to which the Lord brings His people; He uses means for this, and one means is His providence. We can trace this people through the Word of God, distinguish these characters. "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, they found no city to dwell in." If they could have found a city to dwell in they would have dwelt there, and would never have arrived at the city of habitation; but they could find none. Like the dove that could find no rest for the sole of her foot; she was compelled to come back unto Noah into the ark. So we have these characters of which we read that are in the highways and hedges. After many had made excuses and wished to be excused from coming to the supper, there were those who were hunger-bitten and ragged and exposed, wayfaring men; and they were compelled to come in.

Now there is a point here I feel experimental, and for myself I can say this; that I feel the truth as we know it, not because it is my opinion, but I am compelled to do so because of my state and condition as it is made known to me. You will find you will be too bad for any religion but that religion which is

of the Holy Ghost. It is a very great mistake that some people make, some neighbours may make. They have got an idea that we are separatists and that we think ourselves too good to associate with anybody else and, therefore, there is a company of good people. If they reverse that, they will get the truth. Are there some of you who are compelled to follow the truth as it is in the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus? Compelled to do so because there is no other that can save your souls And there is something very precious in that compulsion; it is the compulsion of divine grace.

"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain," - the holy church of God, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Whatever we may be and feel of ourselves, my friends, the provision in the house of God is a living provision, a holy provision - Holiness which derives from the Holy One of Israel. You may feel it and tremble under a sense of your own defilement. I have felt to be very shaken at times in having before me the services and sacred things of God, and a sense of my unfitness. O, but there is one thing that will enable you to pursue the narrow way although you are faint and that is this, that the whole of the things of God revealed in the gospel of His grace are for sinners and nobody else. And if He came to save, not the righteousness but sinners; if you are not a sinner He did not come to seek and to save you. 'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain.'

The mountain of the house of the Lord is impregnable, and therefore, His people are impregnable, though they are the feeblest upon the face of the earth and the weakest, yet my friends, such is their union to the eternal God, that as the mountains are round about Jerusalem so is the Lord round about those that fear Him; and this will be felt in the house of God.

The things of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit are eternal, and as we have said, they are indestructible. You will feel this at times, that as in yourself it is the very opposite and you must join with the Psalmist, "My heart is withered like grass, my days are as a shadow." Yet he stood before God and that was His comfort; "But Thou, O Lord, art from everlasting to everlasting; Thy years are throughout all generations." Have you ever been brought to Zion, to the city of the living God, to this immovable mountain where everything inside is immutable and eternal; and have felt that rest in the security that there is in Christ Jesus, the Surety, the Mediator, the Substitute? 'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer.'

Well you may depend upon it that those who were compelled to come in from the highways and hedges, from the cold and from their hunger and weariness and weakness, they rejoiced when they got inside. I know there were those who were unworthy and esteemed the vanities of this world beyond the things of the sanctuary, and, therefore, they made excuses; but there are excuses that these poor needy sinners make, and I believe there are some of those excuses, in those that fear God that meet here. 'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer.' O, but they say, 'Look at my life, look at my unworthiness, look at my lack - I lack everything in a way of virtue; I am not fit, not worthy!'

Well, it is true, nobody would contradict you, the Lord would not contradict you; but then that is not the basis upon which these are brought to His holy mountain, the basis is in the glorious Host Himself; therefore, those objections are answered inside the house. If you object to your rags, then says the Word of God, "Take his filthy garments from him and give him a change of raiment." If you feel that you are not presentable because of your filthy state, bring them inside, "There is a fountain

opened for sin and for uncleanness." If you feel your ignorance, then there is one who is made of God wisdom to ignorant people. O, what sacred joy there is to a self-condemned self-destroyed sinner when the Holy Ghost compels him to come in though he may be brought with weeping and with supplication, 'And make them joyful in my house of prayer.'

"With joy they draw water from the wells of salvation"- and this joy, as we concluded this morning, is through the communications of the Holy Spirit of Christ and all that He is - and this is to be felt. The kingdom of grace, when brought into the heart by the Spirit, brings the very substance of the gospel into the soul. O, what a joy it is to receive the testimony in the conscience of divine pardon! Forgiveness it is a joyful sound to malefactors doomed to die. Forgiveness, my friends, would put joy in your heart more than anything else; and David said in the depths, "There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared."

"Make them joyful in my house of prayer." - Joyful by a sense of His gracious presence. That is not a theory; the presence of the Lord is known and felt. Some of you know that. Ultimately, in its fullness, we shall know that "In Thy presence is fullness of joy;" in a measure, that is to be known here. Do you know what the presence of the Lord is in your heart? It is a blessed experience, in secret; it is to walk with God, maybe by the wayside, in your home, in your business, in the midst of all your afflictions, responsibilities and cares; but there is a very special presence that the Lord has promised in Zion when His people are gathered together according to the divine institution of the Church and the ordinances of the Church. O to feel the Lord Jesus in your heart! In every way that constitutes your hope of glory. For Him, to dwell in your heart by His presence as your great High Priest, and to feel that vital contact with Him in heaven now exalted, who ever liveth to make intercession for sinners here below; and for that intercession to come into your conscience, and that you are accepted in the Beloved through the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work - that will give you joy.

'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer.' Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar." This altar is the Lord Jesus Christ, but His people are made kings and priests and they bring unto the house of God burnt offerings and sacrifices that shall be accepted upon this altar. Peter clarifies this point when he says, "To whom" (that is Christ) "coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Christ Jesus."

It is very blessed in the sanctuary, in the midst of the great provision of the gospel, when from a broken and contrite heart you offer up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God by Christ Jesus. Everything is acceptable unto God through Him and no other way. His people are accepted in the Beloved, and what are these acceptable sacrifices? Why, their humble praises. "O, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever; let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy and gathered them." This is the people. Have you ever felt to be gathered among them, and therefore, have offered sacrifices of thanksgiving from your heart? That is acceptable to God through Jesus Christ the Mediator. But there is another sacrifice, and Paul exhorts the Romans to this: "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies

of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service." That is a great sacrifice. O, present your bodies, yourself, to glorify the Lord in your body and in your spirit which are His: To give yourself up unto the Lord.

*Here's my heart Lord, take and seal it,  
Seal it from thy courts above.*

*(Gadsby's 199)*

Sometimes you will feel this sacrifice and surrendering of self under the bedewing of the Holy Ghost in the assemblies of the saints, when He rends the heavens and comes down. Then His speech distils as the dew upon your branch and you are gathered up, drawn up, you are raised up upon the wings of faith and you offer yourself unto God. This is a proper offering.

'Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar.' It is a great thing, my friends, to feel the approbation of God in your conscience in divine worship. It is a very significant word as I felt it, in Luke 9; when the people knew where the Lord was, they followed Him, and He received them. O have you ever felt the Lord receive you, receive your unworthy prayers? Receive you as you have been made willing in the day of His power to forsake all and to follow Him? "He received them and spake to them of the kingdom of God, and healed all those that had need of healing;" and He does in Zion.

'Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offering and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar. All the acceptableness of divine worship is through the merits of the Lord Jesus, and again and again we shall see in the Word of God, and feel in our own hearts, the vital importance of union to Christ. So acceptable was He in His Person and in His work and in His offices and His people are as acceptable to God as He was through their union to Him. This will make you rejoice and to feel in your heart that you are joined unto the Lord Jesus; and nothing less than that juncture will satisfy your soul, because if you have not that union you are dead. It is true, we may know everything about the truth but if we have no union with Christ our knowledge is a dead knowledge. All life, all fruitfulness in the soul is by virtue of being rooted and grounded in the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

'Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar, for my house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.' That means to say all sorts of people: rich and poor, weak and strong, no colour bar; all those that are thirsty, the needy, the halt, the lame, and the blind. It is not for those who make excuses, who have no need of Christ or of His things; they are rich and increased with goods but it is for all that are empty, for lepers who need cleansing, for those who feel their death that need the power of Christ's resurrection; and His house is an house of prayer for all people.

Prayer! I thought this morning at the early prayer meeting, and have thought many times - what a mystery, what a real mystery is prayer, that the Infinite God in heaven can regard the prayer of the destitute. Poor insignificant nits, nonentities; go into a crowd in Brighton we would have difficulty to find you, and yet the Lord knows them that are His. Prayer! O the sacred privilege! first, secret prayer. O may we ever be careful, my friends that all public worship should proceed from secret

exercise! Public prayer should emanate from secret prayer. But here it is public prayer. The prayers that have gone up from between these walls since this place was built, O how the Lord has looked down from heaven upon His people gathered here! Have you ever felt that He looks down upon you? It will give you to rejoice - yes, a rejoicing, peculiar, in its manner at times. David danced before the Ark and sometimes you will have a peculiar joy as you lay your head down in the night, cover your head with the clothes and rest because the Lord only maketh you to dwell in safety. O, to live upon Him, to rest upon Him – Prayer!

'The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, yet will I gather others to Him, beside those that are gathered unto Him.' We come to another character here - the outcasts of Israel - and they are just the people to whom the gospel is preached. "It shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria; and the outcasts in the land of Egypt; and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." You will find the same people. The Lord knows them. Sometimes they view Him, His blessed footsteps and their heart goes out in joy and sincerity; "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." But here it is "They shall come which were ready to perish, and the outcasts;" and when they get to this mountain they shall worship the Lord.

'The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith....' The world casts them out, and there is a period in their exercise when they feel that the Lord of God casts them out; and they feel that they cast themselves out. But 'even them will I bring to my holy mountain....and gather the outcasts of Israel' O this precious gathering! "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." saith the Lord. This is one purpose of the ministry. In the highest sense that word in the Psalm belongs to Christ, "Gather my saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." and the Lord did come to gather those saints, and those saints are the same as the outcasts, the eunuchs, and the strangers; but 'gather them together unto Me.' And how the Lord gathers them, as their Redeemer and Saviour; and how the Holy Ghost gathers them in His work of conviction and repentance, gathers them in His leadings and teachings! Then there is a gathering unto the appointed means of the ministry.

"Gather my saints together unto Me." Have you ever felt that you are gathered; not that you have come to chapel, but that you have been gathered. Gathered up into the sanctuary of God and felt it to be the very gate of heaven?

Well my friends, this is as near an experience to heaven that you will ever enjoy upon this earth. I do sometimes envy you people that can sit and listen to the gospel. It is a very solemn thing to preach it. But may the Lord mercifully come into our midst and make these truths over in the experience of those who feel to be outside, those odd people, those awkward people, those who feel to have some crook in their lot and in all they do or think or say they opposition meet –'even them.'

One word in conclusion. May the Holy Ghost come, distinctly and personally and say to some sinner, 'Even you will I give in mine house and within my walls a name better than of sons and daughters; even you will I bring to my holy hill.' And to continue it from the beginning, Paul writing to the Ephesians says, "Even you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Amen.