

a comparatively small number of our race shall be saved. For when we think of the teeming population of the world considerably above a thousand millions of human beings, and take into account the very many generations which have already passed away, and the very many more which may yet glide on before the consummation of all things, though only a comparatively small proportion of each of these generations should at last enter Heaven, their accumulated numbers would form an assembly altogether beyond our power of calculation or comprehension.

But let us never forget that there is no promiscuous admission into the celestial world—that it is only to them who order their life and conversation aright, that will be shewn the salvation of God. Though a great multitude which no man can number will enter Heaven, as great, or perhaps a far greater crowd shall go down to the place of everlasting woe. For says our Saviour, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." And if so, let us pause and consider for a moment in which of these two ways we are walking. Most, if not all of us, profess to be journeying towards Heaven, but oh, let us see that in this we are neither deceiving ourselves, nor imposing upon others by a form of Godliness while we are destitute of its power. Were the great Judge at this moment to descend and to separate his own sheep from those who, as yet, have not really entered his fold, it would, we very much fear, astonish us all to see so few on his right hand and so many on his left. And perhaps some self-abased, lowly believers now in this audience, would be agreeably surprised to find themselves where they imagined they had no right to be placed; while others of greater confidence and loftier pretensions would be sadly mortified to discover themselves excluded from the place of honor, where they thought they had every right to stand. Oh, let us beware of self-deception—with having a mere name to live, while in reality we are spiritually dead. Nothing leads to Heaven but the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and unless we have been brought into the way of life by them, we can never arrive at the abode of perfect rest. The road to destruction consists of many devious ways, some of them so much resembling the narrow way and seemingly running so parallel to it, that men often mistake the one for the other. But it signifies little by what paths sinners depart from God, for all the ways of vice lead with equal certainty to ruin. Then "enter ye in at the strait gate."

II. And the next thing requiring our attention

is that the countless multitude which St. John in vision beheld in Heaven was collected from all the different parts and tribes of the world. "I beheld" he says, "and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb." The Jews imagined that salvation and the special favor of God were forever to be confined to themselves and those who became proselytes to their forms of religious worship. And even the Apostles of our Lord obstinately clung to this selfish and exclusive notion, until their ignorance and prejudice were removed by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. But then they saw that God is no respecter of persons. Christ broke down the middle wall of partition that separated between Jew and Gentile, and by his Gospel proclaims salvation to every creature. While God's ancient people, as a nation, have hitherto rejected the Messiah, many of the Gentile kingdoms have long ago embraced him. And our text very plainly intimates that the Gospel of the grace of God shall in due time be preached to all those dark places of the earth that have not yet received it. It shall number among the trophies of its converting power men of every country and every clime. The black African, the wandering savage, and the untutored Hindoo shall own the sway of the great Redeemer. So that according to his own declaration, "Many shall come from the east and west and from the north and south and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven."

What an illustrious exhibition this gives us of the infinite value of the Redeemer's sacrifice—what a cheering proof that a rich harvest of souls shall one day be brought home to God—and that the glorious Gospel of the Saviour shall be ultimately published to every nation under Heaven. Ages indeed may pass away, and generations yet unborn may go to their fathers ere the whole world is Christianized. But the work is in progress and shall be completed in God's good time, and the hitherto unbelieving Jews brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles. And all this too may be effected much sooner than we imagine. And shall we now stand still and look on, as mere unconcerned spectators. The Almighty could easily herald the glad tidings of salvation to the remotest corners of the earth by those winged messengers who surround his throne. But he usually accomplishes the purposes of his providence and grace by human agency and natural means. And in achieving the evangelization of the world, he specially demands our prompt and cordial co-operation. Shall we deny ourselves the privilege and the honour of aiding him in the accomplishment