

# “THE GOSPEL AWAKENING.”

COMPRISING THE

SERMONS AND ADDRESSES,

Prayer Meeting Talks and Bible Readings,

OF THE

GREAT REVIVAL MEETINGS,

CONDUCTED BY

MOODY AND SANKEY,

IN THE CITIES OF

Philadelphia, New York, Chicago and Boston,

WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

CHRISTIAN CONVENTIONS OF MINISTERS AND LAYMEN.

From Verbatim Reports by our own Phonographer, and those of the New York Tribune, Chicago Inter-Ocean, Boston Journal and Boston Globe.

ALSO THE LIVES OF

D. L. MOODY, I. D. SANKEY, P. P. BLISS, REV. JOSEPH COOK,  
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## STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS.

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the Wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.” 1 CORINTHIANS 1:27-29.

I want to call your attention to the 27th verse of that chapter I read to you: “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.” There is just one sentence there I would like to call your attention to: “But God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” Then in the 29th verse he tells us why he has chosen the weak things —“that no flesh may glory in his presence.”

Now, if we are to have the Word in this City of New York, we must give God all the glory. I dread coming to a new place; it takes almost a week or fortnight to come down to solid work. The people are thinking of the choir, and saying, “What a large choir!” and “So many ministers! Surely there is going to be great work now; there is such a great choir and congregation, and so many ministers.” It is not by might and power, but by God’s Spirit; and we have got to get our eyes off of all these things, and there will be no work and no blessing until this is done. Now, we have not come with any new Gospel; it is the old Gospel, the old story, and we want the old power, the power of the Holy Ghost; and, if it is anything less than that, it will all come to naught and be like a morning cloud—soon pass away. Now I can tell you, before the meetings go on any further, who will be disappointed, and who in after years will say the meetings were a failure—every man and every woman that don’t get quickened themselves. If there is a minister here in New York that doesn’t get quickened himself, he will say the work has failed; but I have never known a man who has got quickened, to say the work has failed. Nowhere that we have been has it been the case. What we want is to get down to ourselves; and if there is to be a true revival, there must be first a casting-down of ourselves before a lifting-up. It was only when Abraham was on his face in the dust before God that he would talk to him. And it is then that God lifts us up and the blessing comes. There is no true revival until God’s own people are lifted, until they are quickened. It will be superficial until then; it will be a counterfeit. If you attempt to begin work among the ungodly and unconverted before you get quickened your-

self, God won't bless you. As the Psalmist says: "When the Lord has restored to us the joy of his salvation, then we will be able to teach transgressors the way of the kingdom of God," and not until then. And when we are cold and lukewarm, and are conformed to the world, and have not the Holy Ghost resting upon us, why God is not going to revive his work. Here and there we will hear of one converted, but it won't be deep and thorough unless the Church of God is quickened.

Now, I have just come here, and I confess I have seen nothing in America like what has pleased me in Princeton. I think they have a revival there; and the President of the college told me he had not seen anything like it, and one of the Faculty told me he didn't think there had ever been anything like it in the history of Princeton. Of course I inquired into it, and I found that they had sent for different ministers to come there and had been disappointed; and they got together—the Christians did—and prayed God to bless them, and one of the Faculty asked them to pray for *him*: and right there the work broke out, and there have been about fifty quickened and brought back who had wandered from Christ; and it looks now as if all Princeton was going to be blessed.

Oh that it may commence here tonight in our hearts; that we may be quickened first, and then how quick the Lord will bless us. If you want to introduce two men to each other, you want to be near to them. If you want to introduce sinners to God, you must be near to God and to the sinner, too; and if a man is near God he will have a love for the sinner, and his heart will be near that man. But until we are brought near to God ourselves, we cannot introduce men to God. Somebody has said God uses the vessel that is nearest at hand; and if we are near to God he will use us; and if we are not, of course he cannot. Now, what we want is to be in a position that will give God all the glory. There are some things that make me tremble, at times, as if the work will all come to naught; because there is so much man-worship. Now, we have got to get rid of this man-worship, before it will be a deep work. We have got to sink self. If we can only get "I" down in the dust, and get outside of our dignity, and get self out of the way and say: "Here, Lord, use me if thou canst; and, if not, use somebody else;" or in the spirit of the wilderness preacher who said, "I must decrease, but he must increase," then the Lord will take us up and use us.

And right here, before I forget it, I want to urge the people of New York—the Christian people—not to buy anything of these people on the street. I am told that sixty-five men have come on from Philadelphia to sell photographs and medals, and I don't know what not; and they are hawking them in the streets. Why, I would almost think nobody would come into the meeting if, when coming along, they hear these men crying the photo-

graphs. I believe that Christian people who patronize these men are doing the cause of Christ a great injury. I don't know that anything is hindering the work more than these men, that are making money out of us. If you want hymn-books, go into some bookstore and buy them. Don't buy these photographs. They are no more photographs of us than they are of you: I have not had one taken for eight years. Some men complained that they had got counterfeits, and I was glad they had been cheated, because they ought not to buy them so on the street. People are apt to say of us: "Those fellows are speculating; they are just making money; they don't care anything about saving your souls." And the impression has gone abroad just on account of people patronizing these men. Oh! let me beg of you to do anything you can to keep down this man-worship. Let us look at the cross, with Christ full in view; and then we will have men coming into the kingdom of God.

Now, let us get back to the text. It is the weak things that God wants to use. We want the great, the mighty; but God takes the foolish things, the despised things, the things which are not. What for? That no flesh may glory in his sight. Now, what is that written for unless it is that we shall learn the lesson that God shall have the glory, and that we are not to take any of the glory to ourselves. "That no flesh should glory in his presence." Just the moment we are ready to take our places in the dust and give God his place, and let him have all the glory, then it is that the Spirit of God will be given to us. If we are lifted up and say, We have got such great meetings and such crowds are coming; and get to thinking about crowds and about the people, and get our minds off from God, and are not constantly in communion with him, lifting our hearts in prayer, this work will be a stupendous failure.

You will find, in all ages, God has been trying to teach his children this lesson—that he uses the weak instead of the strong. What is highly esteemed of man is an abomination to God. When God was about to deluge the earth, he wanted an ark built. What did he do—did he call an army? No; he just called one man to build the ark. In the sight of the world it was a very little thing; and yet when the deluge came it was worth more than all the world. The weak things of the world that excite our scorn and contempt are the very things that God uses. When God delivered Israel out of Egypt, he didn't send an army. We would have sent an army, or an orator. We would have sent some man who would have gone down before the king, and laid it out before him in grand style; but God didn't do that. He sent this man Moses, who had been back there in the desert forty years, a man with an impediment in his speech; and God said to Moses, "Moses, I want you to go down into Egypt and bring my people out of bondage." That is not our way. When the king looked at him he ordered him out of his presence. "Who is God, that I should obey him?" He found out who he was.

God used the little fly and the little frog. The world looks upon the frog with scorn and contempt; but Moses said, “Oh, there are a good many of them.” We may be very weak in ourselves, but see what a mighty God we have. God likes to take the weak things to confound the mighty.

When God wants to move a mountain, he does not take a bar of iron; but he takes the little worm. The fact is, we have got too much strength. We are not weak enough. It is not our strength that we want. One drop of God’s strength is worth more than all the world. There was that giant who, we are told, for forty days came out every morning and every evening. Down into that valley came the giant of Gath every morning, and he terrified all the army of Saul; the whole army were trembling; they were afraid. When Joshua was weak in himself and strong in the Lord, then they did not fear the giants. But you see Saul and his army had got their eyes off from God. When we get our eyes off from God, how mighty that giant looks. There came a young stripling up from the country—a sort of delegate of the Christian Commission. He heard of this giant, and the young boy began to inquire, “What does this mean?” And they told him, and he wanted to go right out at once to meet him. The last man we would have chosen; but God’s ways are not our ways. God will have the glory, that is the point. If it had been some great giant, then we would have given the giant all the glory. The young stripling requires no army of Saul; he just takes a few small, smooth, round stones out of the brook and puts them in his sling. He says to the giant: “You have your sword; but I have come in the name of my God.” Yes, he leaned on the strength of God. Now just look at that! We are to pass that little stone into that sling; God directs it, and the work is done. The giant of Gath falls. David was the last one we would have chosen, though he is chosen of God. What we want is to learn the lesson that we are weak, and we don’t need any strength but God’s strength. Look at Jonathan with his small army! “Why,” he says, “the Lord can save by few as well as many.” It is not these great meetings that are going to do the work. It is not by might and by power, but by the Spirit of God.

Let me just impress this upon you, that it is weakness that God wants. There was weeping once in heaven. John wept when the book of seals was brought out, and there wasn’t any one who could open the book. He might have looked upon Abel; but Abel wasn’t worthy to open the book. He might have looked upon Enoch; but Enoch wasn’t worthy. He might have looked upon Abraham; and yet the father of the faithful wasn’t worthy to open that book. There was Daniel and Elijah, and the holy men of the Old Testament; and not one of them worthy to open the book. Some of the saints of the New Testament had entered upon their reward. There was Stephen who was martyred: Stephen wasn’t able to open the book. And John

said he began to cry as he looked around, and there wasn't one worthy to open the book. But pretty soon a voice said: "Don't weep; the Lion of the tribe of Judah is able to open the seals;" and John began to look around to see the Lion, and lo, it was a Lamb! Instead of having strength, we want weakness. It is the Lion—the Lamb of Calvary. He sealed the Lion of hell; he overcame the Lion; he conquered him. What we want tonight is to ask God to give us weakness, not strength; then these obstacles, why how small they look! When we are walking with God, all these obstacles, how they flee away. Go up in a balloon and look down upon some giant, and how small he looks. Go up into some mountain and look down upon some giant, and how small he looks! But get on a level, and how large he looks! God takes the weak things to confound the mighty. When he wanted twelve men to introduce his gospel, whom did he take? Did he call the wise and mighty? No; he called a few ignorant Galilean fishermen. It was those men the power of God rushed in upon. They were weak in themselves, but strong in God. So tonight, if there is a band weak in themselves but strong in God, what a work they can do! No other strength is worth having but the strength of God. When God wanted Germany to be blessed, he gave power to one man. The Spirit came upon Martin Luther, and all Germany was blessed. When darkness and superstition was settling over Scotland, the Spirit of God came upon John Knox; and he moved all Scotland. You can go where you will in Scotland today, and everywhere you will hear the name and feel the influence of John Knox in that country. You can go into England today, and you will feel the influence of Wesley and Whitefield, grand men and mighty. They relied not upon their own strength, for the Spirit of the Living God was upon them. They were mighty in God. Look at that man Gideon. He marshaled his army of 30,000 men to give battle to the Philistines. God said: "Gideon, your army is too great. My people would be lifted up, and they would take the glory upon themselves." God said to Gideon: "You just say to the men who are fearful and afraid, 'Go home.'" And the Lord reduced the army 20,000, leaving only 10,000 men. But God said: "Gideon, you have got too many; if those 10,000 men get victory, they will say, 'Look what we have done.' Just take them down to the water, and we will try them again. Those that drink it up one way and those that lap it up another, they shall be separated." Then God took away all but three hundred. God said that was enough. "If I get a victory with those three hundred, I will get the glory." I would rather have three hundred men in New York whose hearts are right with God, than a host who take upon themselves the glory which belongs to the Lord.

I have no doubt but that some here will say: "There are so many obstacles in the way, I don't believe we are going to succeed. You won't suc-

ceed in New York; it is a very hard place, New York is.” If God is with us, we are going to succeed. If we take God out of our plans, we are going to fail; and we ought to fail. Is not the God of our fathers strong enough to take this city and shake it as a little child? There is not a skeptic in the city of New York but what the power of God can reach. When we were in Philadelphia, we almost failed for a few weeks. The crowds were so great, that many of those who attended the meetings spent most of their time in watching the people. We could not get their eyes toward the Cross, for a long time. By-and-by, when the holidays came on, the numbers began to fall off, and it was the best thing for us. It was what we wanted, so that men could think of God.

Now, my friends, do not think that anything is small that God handles. Look at that little cloud up there, not bigger than a man’s hand. But that cloud was large enough to water all Palestine; and the land that had thirsted for three years and six months got all the water out of that cloud that it wanted. Plenty large enough if God is in it. Let me say, before we close, that what we want is to get hold of God. Now, there are a great many people that lend their ears to other people. They never hear for themselves; they want you people to use their ears for them. Let us each go up for ourselves, and pray to God that we may get a blessing for ourselves. If the Spirit of the Lord God comes upon us, it will take all eternity to tell the result. If the Spirit of God comes upon us afresh, I have no more doubt about the success of the meetings than I have that we exist. If we are cold and indifferent, then the work will be superficial; it will not be lasting, and will not be such as many of you are praying for. Let us ask God that we may receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit. Let the prayer be: “O God, quicken me! O God, give me a fresh baptism! Instil in me the blessing of Thy salvation.” God said to Elijah, just before he went away, “Go call Elisha to take thy place.” If God calls us to do a work, he can qualify us to do it. When the time drew near for Elijah to be taken from Elisha, Elijah said to Elisha, “I will go down and see the prophet.” It had been revealed to Elisha that Elijah was going to be taken away. Elisha wanted to be anointed near the place he was called to fill. They traveled together until they reached Bethel; and then Elijah said, “You stay here, and I will go down to Jericho and see how the prophets are getting along down there.” But Elisha kept close to him, and they walked arm-in-arm to Jericho. When they reached Jericho, Elijah said, “You just stay here and I will go over to Jordan.” They were on a tour of inspection of the theological seminaries. But Elisha still kept close to his companion, and as they were talking together, Elijah asked: “What can I do for you, Elisha? What is your petition?” “Well,” says Elisha, “I want a double portion of your spirit.” Well, that was a pretty bold petition.

He was asking great things. That is what God wants us to do—ask great things. They come to the waters of the Jordan; and Elisha takes off his mantle, the waters spread, and they pass through safely, dry shod. While they were talking, there suddenly comes a chariot from heaven to bear Elijah away to glory. And Elisha takes up the mantle of Elijah, and Elisha goes back to Jordan; and when they saw the mantle of Elijah they cried out, “The spirit of Elijah rests upon Elisha.” The mighty spirit of Elijah rests upon us tonight. Let us go to our closets, let us go to our homes, and let us cry to the God of Elijah—“Here I am, God; use me!”—that we may be ready for all his services. Oh, that we may be weak in ourselves, that we may give all the honor and glory to Jesus, and if we do this we will see how quick he will use it.