

“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.

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ALSO THE LIVES OF

D. L. MOODY, I. D. SANKEY, P. P. BLISS, REV. JOSEPH COOK,
AND FRANCES E. WILLARD.

BY M. LAIRD SIMONS,

Author of “Companion Articles to the Pictorial Home Bible;” Editor of “Sunday Half-Hours with the Great Preachers;” and “Duyckinck’s Cyclopedie of American Literature.”

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COMPASSION OF CHRIST.

"And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, and he healed their sick." MATTHEW 14:14.

I want to call your attention this evening to just one word—Compassion. Some time ago I took up the Concordance, and ran through the life of Christ to see what it was that moved him to compassion; for we read often in his life, while he was down here, that he was moved with compassion. I was deeply pleased, in my own soul, as I ran through his life, and found those passages of Scripture that tell us what moved him with compassion. In the 14th chapter of Matthew and 14th verse, we find these words: "And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion towards them, and he healed their sick." He saw the great multitude, and he was moved with compassion, and he healed their sick. And in another place it says that he healed all that had need of it. There didn't any one need to tell him what was in the hearts of the people. When I stand before an audience like this I cannot read your history; but he knew the history of each one. It says in one place in Scripture, "Each heart knows its own bitterness;" and when Christ stood before a multitude like this, he knew the particular bitterness in each heart. He could read every man's biography; He knew the whole story. And as he stood before that vast multitude, the heart of the Son of God was moved with compassion; just as in the preceding verses we find him, when John's disciples had come to him with their sad story, and with broken hearts. Their beloved Master had just been beheaded by the wicked king; they had just buried the headless body, and came to Jesus to tell all their sorrow to him. It was the best thing they could do. No one could sympathize with them as Jesus could; no one had the same compassion with them that Jesus had. In all our troubles, the best thing we can do is to follow in the footsteps of John's disciples, and tell it all to him. He is a high-priest that can be touched with our infirmities. We find after this, in a little while, that he, too, had to follow in the footsteps of the disciples. He had to lay down his life for that nation; but he forgot all about that as he looked upon the multitude, and his heart was moved with compassion. He sought to do them good; He sought to heal their sick.

In Mark, 1st chapter and 41st verse, there is a story that brings out the compassion of Christ. There came to him a leper, and when he saw him his heart was moved with compassion. The poor leper was full of leprosy from head to foot; he was rotten with leprosy. I can just imagine how the leper told his whole story to Christ; and it was the very best thing he could do. He had no friends to be interested for him; he might have had a wife and family, or a loved mother, but they could not be there to plead for him. The law forbid any one speaking to him or touching him; but undoubtedly some one had some day come out and

lifted up his voice, and told him that a great prophet had arisen in Israel who could cure him of the leprosy; that he was quite sure that he could do it, because he had performed miracles equal to that, and that he could give him life if he would only ask him. This leper told his sad story. Let us bring that scene down to our own day. Suppose that any one in this assembly here tonight should find that he was a leper, and the law required him to leave home. What a scene it must have been when that poor leper left his home, left the wife of his bosom, left his own offspring, with the thought that he never was to see them again! It was worse than death; he had to go into a living sepulchre—to vanish from home, wife, from mother, father, children, friends, and live outside the walls of the city. And while he was out there, if any man should come near him, he had to cry, “Unclean, unclean, unclean!” He had to wear a certain kind of garment, so that all men should know him. You can see him outside the walls of the city. It might happen in the course of years, that some one came out and shouted at the top of his voice, and told him that his little child was dying; but he could not go to see his dying child, or comfort his wife in her affliction. There in exile he had to remain, banished from home, while his body was rotting with that terrible disease, with no loved friends to care for him, nothing to do to occupy his time. That was the condition of the poor leper; and when he heard that Jesus could cure him, he went to him and said: “Lord, if thou wilt thou canst cure me; Lord, hear my pitiful story; Lord, have mercy upon me; Lord, save me.” And Jesus was moved with compassion; and he reached out his hand and touched him. The law forbade him doing it, forbade any one touching him; but that great heart was moved, and he touched the man. And the moment he touched him the leprosy was gone; he was healed that very moment. He went home, and told his wife and family what a great blessing had come to him.

Did you ever stop to think that the leprosy of sin is a thousand times worse than that Eastern leprosy? All that it could do was to destroy the body. It might eat out the eye; it might eat off the hand; it might eat off the foot—but think of the leprosy of sin! It brought angels from heaven, from the highest heights of glory down, not only into this world, but into the very pit of hell. Satan once lifted on high hallelujahs of heaven; but sin brought him out of heaven down into darkness. Look into the home of the drunkard; look into the home of the libertine; look into the home of the harlot; look into the homes of those who are living in sin! The leprosy of sin is a thousand times worse than the Eastern leprosy of the body. But if the poor sinner, all polluted with sin, will come to Christ, and say as this leper did, that we have just read about, “Lord, thou canst have compassion on me: thou canst take away this desire for sin; if thou wilt, thou canst save me,” he will save you tonight. O sinner, you had better come to him; he is the very best friend that you have. It is Jesus that we preach here tonight, the Son of God. He has come to help you; he stands in this assembly, now. We cannot see him with the bodily eye; but we can with the eye of faith; and he will

save every sinner who will come to him tonight! My dear friends, will you not come to him and ask him to have mercy and compassion upon you? If I were an artist, I would like to paint that scene, and bring out vividly that poor, filthy leper coming to the Son of God; and the Son of God reaching out his hand and touching and cleansing him.

And if I were an artist, I would like to draw another picture, and hang it up on yonder wall, that you might see it; and that is of the father that came to Christ with his beloved boy. He had been up on the mountain with Peter, James and John, and there he met Elijah the prophet, and Moses the law-giver. Heaven and earth had come together, and there he had met his Father, and he had spoken to him that memorable night on the mountain. In the morning when he came down, a crowd of people gathered round him, and some were laughing and talking; they had been trying to cast the evil spirit out of this boy, and told his pitiful story. No one knows but a father how much that man loved that boy; his heart was wrapped up in that child; but the boy was not only deaf and dumb, but he was possessed with a devil, and sometimes this devil would throw him into the fire, and sometimes into the water. And when the father came to Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Bring him unto me." And when he was coming, the devil cast him down to the ground. So every man on his way to Christ must first be cast down. There he lay foaming, wallowing, and Jesus only said, "How long has this been?" "From his birth," was the answer; "Oh, you do not know how much I have suffered with this boy! When a child he was grievously tormented; he has broken my heart." Some of you here perhaps have children who are suffering from some terrible disease, and who are breaking your hearts. You can sympathize with that father. How that father wept when he brought that poor boy! And when Jesus saw that pitiful scene, his heart was moved with compassion, and with a word he cast out the devil. I can see the boy coming home with his father, leaping, and singing, and praying. Let us learn a lesson. Mother, father, have you got a son that the devil has taken possession of? Bring him to Jesus. He delights to save; He delights to bless. All we have to do is to take him in the arms of our faith, and bring him to Jesus. I want to call your attention to a difference between the father we read of in the 9th chapter of Mark, and the poor leper in the 1st chapter. The leper says: "If thou wilt, thou canst make me whole." There was the "if" in the right place. The other said: "If thou canst, have compassion." He put the "if" in the wrong place. The Lord said: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible." Let us believe that the Son of God can save our sons and our daughters. Oh, have you got a poor drunken son? Have you a poor brother who is a slave to strong drink? Come; bring him to the meeting here tomorrow night, and let your cry be: "Lord, have compassion on my darling boy, and save him."

About Jesus there was a great number of disciples as he was going near the little city of Nain; and what met his eye? Why, there was a dead man carried

out, and I cannot help but think of that passage. When I was preaching to the men last Sunday night, a poor man fell dead; and while we were preaching he was carried out. And here there was a dead man being carried out of the city of Nain, and there was a great company of the friends accompanying that widow, to lay away her only child, her only son. He was an only son, it says; and his mother was a widow. The father, the head of the house, had died perhaps long before, and long before that mother had watched over that husband, and at last she closed his eyes in death. It was a terrible blow, and now death had come again. You who are mothers can see how through all that sickness that mother was not willing to let the neighbors come in and watch over that boy. For weeks, you can see a light burning in that little cottage in Nain. There is that mother; she is watching over that boy, her only son. How she loved him! You that are mothers can sympathize with her. You that are mothers can enter into full sympathy with her. You can see how hard it was to lose that only son. She will never look into that beautiful face again. She will never look into those beautiful eyes again. They have been closed; she has closed them with her own loving hands. She has imprinted the last kiss upon that lovely cheek. Now they lay him upon the coffin, or upon the bier, and perhaps four men take him up just as they did the man with the palsy, and they bear him away to his resting-place; and there is a great multitude coming out of Nain. All Nain is moved. The widow was loved very much, and there was a great multitude attending her. And now we see them as they are coming out of the gate of the city. The disciples look, and they see a great crowd coming out of Nain, and the two crowds, the two great multitudes, come together; and the Son of God looks upon that scene. We read often where he looked toward heaven and sighed. He had followers on his right hand, followers on his left hand, followers behind him, and followers before him. He saw the woe and suffering in this wretched world; he looked upon that weeping mother. Death had got its captive. And shall not the Son of God look upon that widow? He saw those tears trickling down her cheeks, and the great heart of the Son of God was moved. He would not suffer that son to pass. He commanded the young men to rest the bier. "Young man, I say unto thee, arise!" and the dead heard the voice of the Son of God, and he arose. I can imagine him saying, "Blessed be God, I am alive."

You know Christ never preached any funeral sermons. Here death had met its conqueror; and when he spoke the word, away went death. The Son of God was moved with compassion for that poor widow; and there isn't a poor widow in all New York but that Christ sympathizes with her. You that are widows mourning over loved ones, let me say to you Jesus is full of compassion. Let me say he is the same tonight that he was 1800 years ago, when he bound up that poor widow's heart in Nain. He will comfort you; and tonight, if you will just come to him and ask him to bind up your wounded heart, ask him to help you to bear this great affliction, the Son of God will do it. You will find that his arm

is underneath you to help you carry the burden. There isn't a poor, suffering, crushed, bruised heart in all New York but that the Son of God is in sympathy with it; and he will have compassion on you, if you only come home to him, and he will bind up that heart of yours. Yes; Jesus was moved with compassion when he saw that poor widow. They did not need to tell him the story. He saw how the heart of the mother was broken; and so he just spoke the word. He didn't take him with him. He might have taken him along with him to glorify himself; but he gave him back to the mother. He took him right out of the arms of death, and handed him back to the mother. Yes, there was a happy home in Nain that night. How surprised the mother must have been; she could hardly believe her eyes. Oh, my friends, Jesus has got the same power tonight; and he will bind up your aching hearts, if you will only just come to him.

Did you ever hear of one coming to Christ that he did not accept? He doesn't care what position in life you hold. No matter how low down, you are; no matter what your disposition has been. You may be low in your thoughts, words and actions; you may be selfish; your heart may be overflowing with corruption and wickedness; yet Jesus will have compassion upon you. He will speak comforting words to you, not treat you coldly or spurn you, as perhaps those of earth would, but will speak tender words, and words of love and affection and kindness. Just come at once. He is a faithful friend—a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. He is a brother born for adversity. Treat him like a brother, and like a friend; and you will have a heavenly balm poured upon your wretched, broken heart. He is real; he is tangible. We don't worship a myth; we don't praise an unreal being. He is an everlasting, living person; a Man sitting at the right hand of God, full of the power and majesty of heaven. He comes here tonight in the Spirit. He is present with you. Oh, accept him! and he will deliver you, and save you, and bless you. My friends, just treat him as if you saw him here in person, as if he stood here in person, the same as I do now. Come to him, then, with all your troubles, and he will bless you. If he were here, and you saw him beckoning unto you, you would come, wouldn't you? Well, you would be saved then by sight; but he wants us to take him by faith. There are those here tonight that believe he is here now. Mr. Dodge, you came here for Christ's name, didn't you? [Mr. Dodge.—“Yes.”] Isn't it Christ's name that has brought you here, Dr. Hepworth? [Dr. Hepworth.—“Yes.”] And you, Dr. Booth, didn't you come here in Christ's name? [Dr. Booth.—“Yes.”] Yes, you have come here for Christ, and are willing to confess his name. You are witnesses to his name Yes; here are two or three gather together in the name of Christ; and he is here because he has promised. Take him at his word, then, my friends. The Son of God is here tonight. Do you doubt it? Is there a man or woman in this assembly tonight that doubts it? I tell you he is here. He is just here as much as if you saw him. Press up to him. He is infinite in compassion, and will take pity upon you.

Oh, my friends, that was earthly compassion; but what conception can you

form of the compassion of Jesus? If you come and tell him your sad stories his heart will be moved. Oh, come and tell him your sins and misery. He knows what human nature is; he knows what poor, weak, frail mortals we are, and how prone we are to sin. He will have compassion upon you; he will reach out his tender hand and touch you, as he did the poor leper. You will know the touch of his loving hand. There is virtue and sympathy in it. That story of the soldier reminds me of another. A mother received a dispatch that her boy had been wounded. She resolved to go down to the front to see him; she knew that the nursing of the hospital would not be as tender as hers would be. After much solicitation she saw the doctor, and after repeated warnings from him not to touch the boy or wake him up—he had only a few days to live, at any rate, and waking him up would only hasten his death—she went to his bedside. When she saw the poor boy lying there so still and lifeless, and with the marks of his suffering so fresh upon him, she could not resist the temptation to lay her hand on his brow. Instinct told him it was his mother's loving hand, and without opening his eyes, he said, "Oh, mother, have you come?" Let Jesus touch you tonight. His is a loving, tender hand, full of sympathy and compassion. Oh, my brother (looking at a young man in one of the front rows), will you have him tonight? You will? Thank God, thank God! he says he will accept him. We have been praying two or three days for this young man; and now he says he will take Christ. Oh, bless the Lord! Let us pray; and as we pray, let us make room for Jesus in our hearts as this man has done, upon whom he has had compassion and whom he has saved.