

The Olive Branch

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What means this eager, anxious throng,
Which rooves with busy haste along—
What means this strange commotion pray?
These wondrous pail-rings day by day?
In accents hushed the throng reply,
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

Jesus, 'tis He who once below
Man's pathway trod 'mid pain and woe;
And bareden once, where'er He came,
Brought out their sick, and deaf, and lame.
The blind rejoiced to hear the cry,
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

Ho! all ye heavy-laden come!
Here's pardon, comfort, rest and home.
Ye wanderers from a Father's face,
Return, accept His proffered grace,
Ye tempted ones, there's refuge nigh:
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

But if you still this call refuse,
And all His wondrous love abuse,
Soon will He sadly from you turn,
Your little prayer for pardon spurn.
"Too late! too late!" will be the cry—
"Jesus of Nazareth has passed by."

For the "Olive Branch."

"JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY."

One of the many miracles performed by our Saviour, we find recorded in the 18th chapter of Luke's gospel, beginning with the 35th verse.

As Jesus was near Jericho, surrounded by a multitude of people, there, by the wayside, sat poor blind Bartimeus, who, no doubt, had heard of Jesus and the wonderful works He had accomplished and marvellous cures He had wrought; and oftentimes Bartimeus probably thought within himself, Oh, if this Jesus would only pass this way, I would ask him to cure my blindness; surely one with so much power would be able. And thus he may have had a longing desire to have Jesus pass that way. And one day, as he sat in his accustomed place, his quick ear caught the sound of persons coming toward him. At first, perhaps, he thought, these are only Roman soldiers going up to Jerusalem, they will probably give me no alms. But as he listens again, he hears the murmur of many voices, and the irregular tread of many feet, evidently not the measured tramp of Roman warriors, and upon inquiry finds that "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." What eager hopes must have filled his breast as he sat there; in what expectant suspense must he have been as the thoughts passed rapidly through his mind: May I hope for healing at His hands? Will He cure me? And he eagerly cries out: "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Some charged him that he should hold his peace; but he cried out the more, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Did Jesus pass him by? Oh, no; He heard him and stood still, commanding him to be called. So Jesus hears the cry of every helpless soul desiring spiritual eyesight. He passes none by that feel their need of His help.

Mark, in giving his account of this miracle, says that Bartimeus, "casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus." This denoted his haste and eagerness to come. So ought all repentant sinners to come like Bartimeus, in haste and earnestness. When Jesus asks him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" he replied, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." Jesus heals his blindness and says unto him these blessed words: "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

Let anxious souls take encouragement from this story. Come to Jesus and receive sight.

Friend, Jesus of Nazareth is passing by to-day. He knows all about your case, and if you wish for spiritual eyesight, just ask Him to heal you now. Cast away your garments of self-righteousness, and come unto Him. If your companions tell you "to hold your peace," heed them not, but just come to Jesus at once. Soon He will have passed by, and it will be too late.

I AM TRUSTING JESUS.

The other Sunday, when I was speaking on "Truth," a person came to me next day and said: "I want to tell you how I was saved. You remember you told about that lady who sought Christ three years and could not find Him, and when you told that, it was I. I was in that same condition, and through your story I got light." I don't think I have ever told it but what somebody got light and life. I will tell it again, for I would go up and down the world telling it if I could get a convert. One night I was preaching, and happening to cast my eyes down during the sermon, I saw two eyes just riveted upon me. Every word that fell from my lips she just seemed to catch with her own lips, and I was very anxious to go down where she was. After the sermon I went to the pew and said: "My friend, are you a Christian?" "Oh no," said she, "I wish I was. I have been seeking Christ three years and I cannot find Him." Said I: "Oh, there is a great mistake about that." Says she: "Do you not think I am in earnest? Do you think, Sir, I have not been seeking Christ?" Said I: "I suppose you think you have, but Christ has been seeking you these twenty years, and it would not take an anxious sinner and an anxious Saviour three years to meet, and if you had been really seeking Him you would have found Him long before this." "What would you do, then?" I said: "Do nothing; only believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "Oh, said she, I have heard that till my head swims. Everybody says believe I believe! believe! and I am none the wiser. I don't know what you mean by it." "Very well," said I, "I will drop the word; but just trust the Lord Jesus Christ to save." "If I say I trust Him, will He save me?" "No, you may do a thousand things, but if you really trust Him, He will save you." "Well," said she, "I trust Him, but I don't feel any different." "Ah," said I, "I have found your difficulty. You have been hunting for feeling all these three years. You have not been looking for Christ." Says she: "Christians tell how much joy they have got." "But," said I, "you want Christian experience before you get it. Instead of trusting God, you are looking for Christian experience." Then I said: "Right here, in this pew, just commit yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, and trust Him, and you will be saved"; and I held her right to that word "trust," which is the same as the word "believe" in the Old Testament. "You know what it is to trust a friend. Cannot you

trust God as a friend?" She looked at me for five minutes, it seemed, and then said slowly: "Mr. Moody, I trust the Lord Jesus Christ this night to save my soul." Turning to the pastor of the Church she took him by the hand and repeated the declaration. Turning to an elder in the Church she said again the solemn words, and near the door, meeting another officer of the Church, she repeated for the fourth time, "I am trusting Jesus," and went off home. The next night, when I was preaching, I saw her right in front of me, "Eternity" written in her eyes, her face lighted up; and when I asked inquirers to go into another room she was the first to go in. I wondered at it, for I could see by her face that she was in the joy of the Lord. But when I got in, I found her with her arms around a young lady's neck, and I heard her say, "It is only just trusting. I stumbled over it three years, and found it all in trusting;" and the three weeks I was there she had more souls to Christ than anybody else. If I got a difficult case, I would send it to her. Oh, my friends, won't you trust Him? Let us put our trust in Him!

D. L. MOODY.

NOT BY MIGHT
NOR BY POWER
BUT BY MY SPIRIT
THE LORD.

For the "Olive Branch."

KNOCKING, KNOCKING, STILL HE'S THERE.

He whom God the Father, proclaimed His own to all the world by a voice from heaven, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" he whom John the Baptist introduces as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," even Jesus, the Christ, says: "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Christian friends, have you ever thoughtfully contemplated the Saviour in this attitude of patient waiting? Doubtless you have, and have straightway opened the door, and your heart has welled up to God in overflowing gratitude for such a Saviour. If so, you will surely delight now and at all times to have the experience so gained, recalled and renewed. You will be glad to be reminded of Jesus and to think of Him as a familiar friend; as one, the frequency of whose visits is only measured by your own sincere desire for them; as one whose very presence gives comfort, strength, joy, peace, in a word, supplies abundantly the need of the hour whatever it may be.

Think for a moment, of the strange condescension of this Saviour; that He should not merely liken Himself to us, but actually become an attendant upon our will; that He should stand at the portals of our hearts, not now and again as he might be moved thereto by compassion, or as he might be drawn by our cry in the hour of distress, but at all times, as might a faithful, loving watcher at the bedside of a dying companion—only that Jesus never tires, never abandons his post.

Think of it, that the Son of God, clothed with all the infinite attributes of God, the Creator, should so love us as to make Himself of no reputation, but take the form of a servant and bear Himself as the most devoted servant, yea, as a perfect servant, sitting and knocking and awaiting our bidding that He might enter in! Well might He say, "I am meek and lowly in heart," for whether we consider who this servant is, the "Lord of lords, and King of kings;" or who we are, in whom, that is, in whose flesh "dwelleth no good thing," are we not alike overwhelmed with a sense of the sublime humility of this act of grace! Let us then, who according to God's mercy are saved by the "washing of regeneration," be ever and ever taught by thus contemplating Jesus as one who stands ever ready to come in to us, and sup with us, and who feeds us, when we will, from the store of His unsearchable riches with "wine and milk without money and without price."

But, while it is true that the Saviour always constantly seeks us who, not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by grace, through faith, are become joint heirs with Him of an "inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away." Even in a larger sense is it true, dear reader, whoever you are, that this same loving Saviour stands waiting patiently without the door of your heart—"knocking, knocking, still He's there"—bringing with Him the gift of God which is eternal life, and only asking that He may sup with you to the salvation of your soul.

Will you not open the door? "How am I to open the door? you ask. Oh, it is very easy; the Word of God tells you how, for it says, "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Nothing to do but cease resistance, that is all. If you are but willing the door will spring open of itself. Now you are holding up against it pride, or false shame, or love of the world, or self-righteousness, or the monster barricade of unbelief. You need not cast these aside for that were an effort, but just let them drop, nor watch them as they fall, but cry out in sincerity and in truth, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." In that instant of time, dear reader, a soul, even your soul, is born into the kingdom of God; in that instant of time you are taught, as never before you knew, how to obey the mandate, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"; in that instant of time the propitiatory work of Christ on Calvary attains a new fulfillment, and once more, as ordained from the foundation of the world, a witness is born to the glory of God, the love of Christ, the power of the Holy Ghost.