

THE  
COMPASSION OF GOD.

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**T**H**ERE** are many people in the world, who think God little better than a hard task-master; one who dwells in constant happiness, surrounded by creatures formed to do His bidding, and to fulfil His pleasure; and who, therefore, stands perfectly unmoved either by the cries or the groans of men. But how little do such know of the God with whom they have to do, or of that inexhaustable fulness of love and compassion dwelling in His heart! It is the grand aim of the enemy of souls to blind men to this. Oh! if he can but hide God's compassion from poor sinners; if he can but persuade them, that God has no mercy, no feeling for them; that he has doomed all to perish without any way of escape; if he can shut up souls to this, his great object is attained. It is God's love he would bury in an eternal grave, if he could. But be assured, dear reader, though it be indeed true, that He "will by no means clear the guilty" (Ex. xxxiv. 7), yet "His compassions fail not" (Lam. iii. 22); and though He be indeed a "Just God," yet is He verily a "Saviour" (Isa. xlv. 21); and hath "no pleasure in the death of him that dieth" (Ezek. xviii. 32). Hear what the word of God says:—*As I live*, saith the Lord God, I have "no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11)? And again,—"God *SO loved* the world, that he gave His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "SO loved the world"—a world which had

revolted from Him, and made a league with His enemy,—that what? He sent an archangel from His presence on a message of mercy and forgiveness to them? No! that was impossible, for justice cried aloud for vengeance, and that to be let loose, not on the highest angel in glory, but on the whole apostate world! “SO *loved* the world,”—Stupendous love! —“that He **GAVE** *His only-begotten Son*”—the dearest object of His heart—into the hands of murderers. And wherefore? “That **WHOSOEVER** believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;”—that He might associate His very enemies with Him in glory;—that He might place crowns of life on the heads of the very crucifiers of His well-beloved Son! Poor sinner! can you, will you dare, doubt the compassion of God after this? God saw your desperate condition from on high: He beheld your great enemy leading you farther and farther in revolt—carrying you on still swifter to destruction; and His heart bled at the sight, though you were His confessed foe. “God commendeth His love towards us, in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8). His bowels of compassion yearned over you, when the pit of perdition yawned beneath your feet, and when there was no one near to pity or to save. He **SO LOVED** you, that what worlds could not purchase, He freely gave; that what an eternity of suffering could never have merited, you might obtain “without money and without price.” Jesus Christ, God’s own Son, left a Father’s bosom for a manger in a stable—left the society of angels, for that of men and devils—left the joys of the paradise above, for the agonies of Gethsemane—left the honour and glory of heaven, for the shame and ignominy of the cross; and all for *you*, poor sinner; not for Himself, but *for you*! Here we see what a fulness of compassion dwells in God. For do not think one moment that Jesus endured all the untold sufferings of His meritorious life to *purchase* this compassion from God. Oh no; for in Jesus

may be seen the very expression of it. Jesus is Himself the outflowing of God's compassion. If God had not been a God of compassion, Jesus had never shed His precious blood : He might have been encircled in glory without end : "but *the Father sent the Son* to be the Saviour of the world" (John iv. 14). Jesus himself testified to the Jews,—I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but *He sent me.*" Yes! it was God in the greatness of his compassion, that gave Jesus : and Jesus came to testify of this compassion to the perishing world, and at last proved it beyond a doubt by the awful scene of Calvary. It was there God proved His compassion for ruined sinners, by lifting up his arm against the man that was His fellow (Zech. xiii. 7)—by slaying His own Son. There the word of Divine Justice punished sin, that the *sinner* may find mercy. There wrath to the uttermost fell upon the *Innocent One*, that the *guilty* may have a way of escape (Isa. liii. 5). O the depths of God's compassion for condemned sinners! The sentence has been passed,—“the soul that sinneth it SHALL die” (Ezek. xviii. 4) : all have sinned ; therefore all stood under condemnation : the time of execution was fast drawing near ; but lo ! God—the compassionate God—sent his well-beloved son to suffer in their stead ;—to pour out his blood for the washing away of all sin from those who believe.

Do you believe? This is the question. Upon it hangs your destiny. God, in his compassion, has provided a ransom for you at the price of His Son's blood. Do you *believe* it? This question must be answered *now*, or the Lord Jesus Christ Himself will hereafter give it answer in those awful words,—“I know you not” (Matt. xxv. 12). If you do not believe it, dear soul, God's compassion, as far as you are concerned, need not to have been exercised, Jesus may have stayed for ever in glory, and enjoyed, uninterruptedly, His Father's presence and love. His blood need never to have been shed ; his back never

given to the smiters : His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair : or his face exposed to shame and spitting (Isa. 1. 6). If you do not believe, God has provided no other means for your rescue : no other power in earth or heaven can save you : “ Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts iv. 12) : the sentence and the execution of it must fall on your own head. It will avail you nothing in the day of the Lord, to know that He who then shall sit as your judge, once hung upon a tree for guilty men, if you never here believed and sought refuge in Him ; for you will surely know and believe this then : but rather, it will greatly aggravate your condemnation, and your everlasting bitterness of soul. Yes ! the anguish of that hour will be greatly increased by the thought, that you had despised and rejected God’s compassion in Jesus, and had closed your heart against the belief of it. All depends on this :—“ *Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou **SHALT** be saved” (Acts xvi. 31), is the gracious declaration of God’s word, And again :—“ Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by Him all that believe are justified from all things,” Oh, if you do but believe, salvation is yours—immediate and everlasting salvation. Nothing shall ever rob you of it. Jesus Himself hath said,—“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, **HATH** everlasting life, and *shall not* come into condemnation, but **IS PASSED** from death unto life” (John v. 21). Only believe, and throw yourself just as you are—a poor helpless, condemned sinner—on the compassion of God in Christ Jesus, and all that he left heaven to purchase is yours, and that for ever :—you are “ **PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE.**”