

## LOVE THAT HEALS

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**T**HERE is perhaps no Bible narrative which teems with more helpful lessons for workers in Christian Science than that of the healing of the Gadarene, recounted in the Gospels of Mark and Luke. Jesus and his disciples were crossing the sea of Galilee, and on their way they encountered a terrific storm of wind and tempest, which lashed the sea to such fury that the boat and the little company were in great jeopardy. Fear and terror took possession of the disciples, but Jesus, we read, "was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." Aroused by their appeal for help from the terror that overwhelmed them, his gentle "Peace, be still," calmed at once both the turbulence of the elements and the fear of the disciples.

This experience formed a fitting prelude to what was to follow, for as they reached the other side of the sea and landed in the country of the Gadarenes, a poor raging maniac came rushing toward the little band, a creature in such a state of self-hate and misery that no man could tame him. As he approached the Master, he ran to him, beseeching him not to torment him. Jesus had rebuked the unclean spirit, but the poor Gadarene, believing the evil to be in himself and recognizing that evil could but suffer torment in the presence of the purity and peace he felt before him, failed to see in Christ Jesus a deliverer, but only a judge and a destroyer. The Master's answer was one of perfect spiritual understanding. He saw the worship of the poor Gadarene, his ready recognition of purity and holiness, and his willingness to pay all homage to it; saw, too, with infinite compassion, the shackles of fear and hate which the belief of his unity with evil was putting upon him, and asked this question, "What is thy name?" The question was one of mighty import. To the man it was a reminder of his real nature, awakening him from the lie by which he had been deceived, perhaps recalling to his mind the well known question of his own prophet, "Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid . . . and forgettest the Lord thy maker?" It was of equal import to the false sense of evil, forcing it to see itself for what it really was and to destroy itself. As the question did its work, a great

stir took place in the human consciousness, the evil was roused to seeming activity, and voiced itself in the boastful declaration, "My name is Legion: for we are many."

Let us pause for a moment to consider what this implied to the Gadarene himself, and to those who heard it. They were Jews, and the word "Legion" brought to the Jew of that day the thought of the pomp and pride and tyranny of the crushing power of Rome, that which had overrun their country and laid it low; the power before which they had proved helpless as babes, and entirely unable to cast it off. All this, evil claimed to be its name and nature; and so far as material evidence went, the claim seemed justified. How terrible it must have been to those who heard it. What a sense of hopeless bondage it must have conveyed. But the Master knew its nothingness; he does not seem even to have contradicted it; unmoved, he waited while the truth behind his question roused the man to the knowledge of what he really was, and so to the impossibility of his being part of evil or possessed by evil; with the result that the false concept was separated from him, and evil, which a moment before had been claiming the supremacy and immovability of a Roman legion (having no self-existence), was heard pleading that if cast out it might go into its native element, into the swinishness and animality to which pride and boastful personal sense belong. Jesus merely answered, "Go," and the evil rushed to its destruction.

We are often asked at this point why the Master sent the devils into the swine, and the suggestion is made that the act was cruel and unjust. The answer is very simple. Under his rebuke pride had owned itself to be swinishness, and he bade it depart. The seemingly cruel fate of the animals did not come through him. It came from the fear and false thinking of those who were herding them. In disobedience to the Mosaic law they were keeping animals which that law declared unclean; what wonder then that they believed the power they witnessed would judge their action and deprive them of their unlawful possessions. Man has dominion over the beasts of the field. Their conviction that unclean animals were in the presence of one who destroyed uncleanness was the cause of the panic of the creatures in their care. Parallel cases nowadays are not far to seek. The mortal who engages in an unlawful business has no right to expect aught but failure. The farmer

who believes he is unlucky sees his own belief worked out in disaster on his stock; and still mortals ascribe it to the action of God.

The healing of the demoniac was complete, for when the citizens came out to see what had happened, they found the aforetime madman sitting at the feet of Jesus,—“clothed, and in his right mind.” A panic of fear of this great unknown power seems to have seized them, for they besought the Saviour to leave them. Jesus at once complied with the request, and moved toward the boat with his disciples and the Gadarene. On reaching the ship, however, he refused the latter’s petition to follow him, and sent him back to tell his own people of the good he had received. The Scripture story then closes, with only one more allusion to the Gadarenes, but that one how pregnant with encouragement, for we are told that later on Jesus returned, and the people received him gladly. Mrs. Eddy’s article entitled “The Way” (Miscellaneous Writings, p. 355) has given a rousing call to all workers for more instantaneous healing, and she shows us that this absolute demonstration of Christian Science is to be attained—as all true success must always be—by orderly, steady growth and progression. She tells us of three distinct stages in this growth, self-knowledge, humility, and love.

The Gadarene is a wonderful example of steady progression. As he came storming down from his rocky dwelling, he had no knowledge of himself at all. He believed that a poor screaming devil, swollen with pride, was himself. What changed him? It was the manifestation of the Christ, which reached him through the human Jesus. He suddenly awoke, and so reached the first stage, self-knowledge. He began to see what man is, what real selfhood is, and as this spiritual understanding was awakened, error left him. Thus he reached the second stage, humility, and sat at the feet of Jesus, yearning to be clothed with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, and that holy yearning brought him sweet and sure fulfilment. For a short time he sat in quiet and learned the infinite lessons of pure and selfless love; then suddenly his Saviour was rejected by the citizens and had to leave him. He wanted to go, too; to drink in more of this deathless teaching, to see more of the loved Teacher who had shown him all he knew of good; but Jesus made a tremendous demand upon his spirituality,

upon his newly learned self-knowledge and humility,—no less than this, to let him and his disciples go on their way, and to return himself to his own town, to the scene of his utter shamelessness and degradation, to probable scorn and contempt, to the certain anger of the traders, and there to be a living witness for Truth. And yet he did it,—even did that,—so deep was the love for God and man which the great Teacher had inspired; he let them all leave him for other work and stayed to take his message to the frightened and angered inhabitants, with what patience and faithfulness we can gather when we read, as recorded by Luke, that on Jesus' return the people "gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him."

The students of Christian Science today, who see the infinite beauty of its teaching and long to recognize that perfect Love which instantaneously heals the sick, do well to ponder, not only the attitude of the Master, but that of the Gadarene, in this wonderful example of healing and regeneration. What was it that enabled the poor man to attain so swiftly these three stages which some of us seem to reach so painfully and slowly? It must have been his willingness to recognize good, his joyful adoption and acceptance of each opportunity that came in his way. We see it in his running to worship purity and spirituality, his eagerness to learn, his ready obedience in returning to his former duties.

How often we neglect the opportunities at our door, seek to end the inharmonious condition or false desires, not by overcoming but by eluding them, by separating ourselves from them, by trying to get people and things out of our way, or getting ourselves out of their way, instead of proving, right there where divine wisdom has placed us, the all-conquering power of Truth and Love. Christian Science offers no exemption from, but makes us supremely honorable in the fulfilment of, every duty and pledge we have ever taken upon us. To persist in trying to elude them is not honorable. It makes us hard, ties us up in self-seeking of the worst kind, for under the guise of a desire to progress it bids us shirk and evade as hindrances the claims of simple human affection and the duties which righteousness bids us purify and consecrate. Selfish progress is an impossibility. Love's law, "Whatever blesses one blesses all" (Science and Health, p. 206), is absolute and

insistent, and Christian Science students can thankfully recognize this fact. Love's law is uncompromising because it knows its own perfection and beneficence. If we remember, like the Gadarene, not to map out our own way, but joyfully to welcome as opportunities the duties which are already ours, and in our homes and our business relations daily immolate the false personal sense of self and others, and daily see more of the real, we shall, like him, speedily attain to self-knowledge, humility, and love.

To recognize the helpful lessons contained in this story for the practitioner, we must ponder the dear Master's attitude and see what did the instantaneous work. First, we question, Why did the Gadarene, knowing nothing of Jesus, come rushing to him? He came because he could not help coming, because the Master was so filled with calm confidence, with limitless love, that his attraction was irresistible. He drew the madman from his rocky hiding-place with cords of mighty love, gently, compellingly. He radiated such pure spirituality, *i.e.*, love, joy, peace (and how his patient needed peace!), that it drew the sufferer to his knees in unspeakable desire and longing. And then we see Jesus' wonderful capacity to discern good. He saw the possibilities of the man, the noble qualities only waiting an awakening touch; and he gave that touch and displaced the lie with the truth, as he asked, "What is thy name?" at the same time waking the man and uncovering the error. He said so little, and his sharp, clear, and incisive rebuke was addressed only to the evil, "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit."

How little Jesus always said, and how simple that little was; yet all sufficient, since the healing consciousness was there. It was the manifestation of the Christ which rebuked the error, and Jesus manifested the Christ; his thought stretched out in boundless love and compassion, and met the need fully, perfectly, and completely. A great lesson lies here for every one of us, for how often we sadly feel we have said too much and have forgotten that the Master never broke the "bruised reed." How often our rebuke falls upon our brother, condemning him as a part of the error, when we should hold up the Christ-ideal which by its white beauty and glory does the rebuking so much more wisely and painlessly than can we. We sometimes ask in sorrow why we so often seem just to miss the perfect way.

It may be because we do not trust Love enough, do not sufficiently realize that Love can certainly do the work with perfect wisdom and understanding, and so we try to hurry things on a little with our methods and our ways. We cannot heal instantaneously so long as we are not humble, not waiting on Love.

To ponder another point: Are we desiring Love's attraction, are we praying that we may be filled with Truth and Love, and thus radiate an irresistible attraction, as did Christ Jesus, that we may draw all men to Christ? Or are we afraid jealousy may criticize, afraid that this attraction may be misrepresented, may be misjudged as a desire to gain adulation to ourselves? If we are thus afraid, and because of this fear tie ourselves up in a superficial coldness instead of giving free play to Love's measureless expansion, we are selfish, and selfishness never healed the sick. The sons and daughters of God were created free; free to be as noble and tender and generously loving as their Father in heaven commanded them to be. Mrs. Eddy says, "He who clings to personality, or perpetually warns you of 'personality,' wrongs it, or terrifies people over it, and is the sure victim of his own corporeality. . . . Constantly to accuse people of being unduly personal, is like the sick talking sickness" (Retrospection and Introspection, p. 73). Let us be too honest in our motives to be tempted or afraid; let us trust Love, and let our hearts expand in such universal Christlike tenderness and compassion that men may be drawn through us with unerring wisdom to the one source of all healing, even to Love itself.

Once more let us ponder our Master's attitude to the boast of "Legion." When we ask, as Jesus did, "What is thy name?" we sometimes receive as answer this boast of error, and are appalled at the seeming multitude of devils claiming to be part of us, or of those who come to us for help, and let our activity get paralyzed with fear at the task before us. Let us, then, having clearly and incisively rebuked the lie with truth, as Jesus did, stand unmoved while Truth does the work, and we shall see no legion, but the one old lie, that there can be life and intelligence in matter, or reality in any belief that is unlike God.

As sons of God we have the right to all we need to enable us to do this,—the light of Truth, the spiritual understanding of Christ Jesus, his perfect confidence in God and in

man as God's image and likeness, and by using the same weapons we shall have the same results. Let us ponder, too, Jesus' attitude toward the Gadarene when he recognized his nakedness apart from God. When we have shown our patients the nothingness of error, they want to know the somethingness of Truth. A little while ago one of the scholars in our Sunday School heard her parents denying the error of disease, and greatly helped them by saying, "That will not do anything, will it? We have only made a hole so far." Jesus never "only made a hole," and so we find him stopping in his journey while the Gadarene sat at his feet to learn; and the Master taught so well, and he learned so readily, that he was soon ready to work alone. Here, too, we see the wisdom and the tenderness of Jesus. As long as the Gadarene needed him, he let him sit at his feet; but when he understood enough, the Master bade him go free, to work it out himself in practice.

We, too, must not be afraid if students or patients seem at first to cling to us for aid. They need the human aid only until they recognize the living Christ, and if we faithfully and persistently point away from self to the divine Principle of the deathless Christ, they will quickly leave us for that, for Tenneyson expressed an eternal truth when he wrote that "we needs must love the highest when we see it." But until they see it, it will not help them or ourselves to shake them off, in fear that they may hinder our progress and our work, or bring criticism upon us. To try to free ourselves at the expense of even temporary suffering to another is cruel and unkind; nor will it free us, for in Christian Science we learn that "Love is the liberator" (*Science and Health*, p. 225). When the right moment comes, they will hear Love's call to independent work, that call which is ever sounding to us all to rise to the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

When the Gadarene was weaned from the desire for personal aid, he and the Master alike proved the oneness of good, for whereas Christ Jesus left the country as a rejected teacher, when he returned it was as an accepted Saviour, through that one student's faithful witness. One lesson more. When Jesus was asked to go away, he went at once. He did not push his good news, or argue for his cause, but left it confidently to the living witness of his work and the power of Truth and Love. There was no

resentment or struggle; he went when they did not want him, and returned to them just as full of divine Love, just as ready to teach and help and heal when they did want him. Our message, too, is sometimes rejected by those not ready to receive it; but let us see that we leave behind us some good seed, some living witness to the power of Truth and Love, and we shall come again to reap our harvest.

And now let us gather up our crumbs from this table of Love, let us learn from the Gadarene the joyful recognition of our opportunities and willing obedience to the requirements of Christ, Truth, and from the dear Master the law of intrepid, fearless, confident, and all-victorious Love. When the writer ponders these Bible stories, and realizes how cold and lifeless they seemed to her before the inspiration of our Leader's teaching illumined them, her whole heart goes out to that patient, loving worker in one glad expression of gratitude, and she thinks of Longfellow's words,—

For others a diviner creed,  
Is living in the life they lead,  
The passing of their beautiful feet  
Blesses the pavement of the street.  
And all their looks and words repeat,  
Old Fuller's saying wise and sweet.  
Not as a vulture but a dove,  
The Holy Ghost came from above.

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## “NIGHT”

BEN. HAWORTH-BOOTH

The night of materialism wanes.—*Science and Health*, p. 562.

HALF of the land is mine, and half the sea,  
For I keep pace with day, and day with me:  
The darkness and the light  
Are dreams of wrong and right:  
And, when he sinks below the western brine,  
The sun's white throne is mine.

And in his seat I set my warrior shield,  
Or hunting-horn upon his azure field,  
Or, sailing brave as he  
On the celestial sea,  
My golden boat before the wind is driven  
O'er the dark waves of heaven.