

THE BLOOD OF ABEL AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“And he said, What have you done? the voice of your brother’s blood cries unto me from the ground.”
Genesis 4:10.

*“And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood
of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel.”*
Hebrews 12:24.

THE first shedding of human blood was a very terrible experiment. Whether Cain’s murderous blow was premeditated or not, the sight of a bleeding human corpse must have been a terrible novelty to him. He had not been hardened by reading details of warfare, or listening to tales of murder, killing and slaying were new terrors to mankind, and he who was the ringleader in such violence must have been filled with mingled astonishment at the result of his blow, and apprehension as to its consequences.

I think I see him standing there by the corpse, for a moment stiff with affright, awe-struck at the sight of blood. Will the skies dart malignant fires upon him? Will the sodden earth produce speedy avengers from her astonished soil? What questions must have flashed through the murderer’s mind! But lo! the warm lifeblood flows in a crimson stream upon the earth, and some ghastly comfort arises to the mind of the guilty wretch as he observes the earth soak in the blood. It stands not in a pool, but the earth opens her mouth to receive and to conceal his brother’s blood. Sad memorials bespatter the herbage and crimson the soil, but still the dreadful flood is drying up, and the murderer feels a momentary joy.

Perhaps Cain went his way dreaming that the terrible matter was all over. He had done the deed, and it could not be undone, he had struck the blow, ridden himself of the presence of one who was obnoxious to him, the blood had been swallowed up by the earth, and that was the end to the business which need cause no further thought. There was no machinery in those days of police, and law, and judges, and gallows, and therefore Cain had little or nothing to fear, strong and hale man, with no one to punish him, and nobody to accuse or upbraid him, except his father and his mother, and those, possibly, too bowed with grief and too mindful of their own offense to show much resentment toward their firstborn. He may therefore have imagined that the deed was speechless and silent, and that now oblivion would cover his crime, so that he might go his way as though the deed were never done.

It was not so, however, for though that blood was silent in the seared conscience of Cain, it had a voice elsewhere. A mysterious voice went up beyond the skies, it reached the ear of the Invisible, and moved the heart of Eternal Justice, so that breaking through the veil which conceals the Infinite from man, God revealed Himself and spoke to Cain, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries unto me from the ground.” Then Cain knew that blood could not be idly spilt, that murder would be avenged, for there was a tongue in every drop of the vital essence which flowed from murdered manhood, which prevailed with God, so that He would interpose and hold a solemn inquest thereon.

Brethren, that was a more terrible experiment still which was tried at Calvary, when not the first man was slaughtered but the Son of God Himself, He who was man but yet was more than man, God manifest in the flesh, it was a dread experiment when having dragged Him before Pilate’s judgment seat and falsely condemned Him, having shouted, “Away with him, away with him,” they actually dared to take the nails and fasten the Son of God to the accursed tree, to lift up His body between earth and heaven, and there to watch its griefs till they ended in His death, when they pierced His side, and from it

flowed thereout blood and water. No doubt Pilate, who had washed his hands in water, thought that no mischief would come of it. The Scribes and Pharisees went their way, and said, "We have silenced the accusing voice. There will no more be heard in our streets the cry of Him who said, 'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.' We shall no longer be disturbed in our hypocrisy and formality by the presence of a pure and holy being, whose simple honesty shall be a stern rebuke to us. We have murdered Him, we have put Him to death without just reason, but that is the end of it. There will be no voice to that blood."

Little did they know that up to heaven the cry of Jerusalem had already gone, "His blood be on us, and on our children," was registered in the tablets of justice, and ere long Jerusalem became the treasure house of woe and a den of misery, so that the like of her destruction has not been, neither ever shall be, upon the face of the earth. Far more delightful is the fact that another and more melodious cry went up to heaven from the cross of Calvary. "Father, forgive them," resounded from the wounds of Immanuel. The blood of Abel was not voiceless, and the blood of Jesus was not dumb, it cried so as to be heard amid the thrones of heaven, and blessed be God, it spoke *for* us and not against us, it spoke not worse things, as it might well have done, but better things than that of Abel. It did not demand fiercer vengeance than that which fell upon Cain, it did not ask that we might be driven vagabonds and fugitives upon the face of the earth, and to be at last banished from God into hell forever, but it cried, "Father, forgive them," and it prevailed, and the curse was taken away, and a blessing came to the sons of men.

This morning we propose to keep our discourse to the subject of the voice of the blood of Abel and the voice of the blood of Jesus, as standing in comparison the one with the other. They both spoke. That is evident. Abel being dead yet speaks, says the apostle, and we know to our abiding comfort that the blood of Jesus pleads before the eternal throne. All blood has a voice, for God is jealous of its preservation, the blood of excellent and just men has a more heavenly speech still, but the voice of the blood of Jesus far surpasses all, and among ten thousand voices it bears the palm.

I. In the first place, JESUS' BLOOD SPEAKS BETTER THINGS IN GENERAL.

What did the blood of Abel say? Was it not the blood of *testimony*? When Abel fell to the ground beneath his brother's club, he bore witness to spiritual religion. Cain was the lover of a merely outward worship, in which faith had no place. He loved a worship of show and pomp, he garnished the altar with fruits and decked it with flowers, his was a religion of taste and elegance, a religion of his own devising, but it was devoid of a humble, believing, spiritual reference to the promised Deliverer. Abel stood there the professor of an ungarnished religion of faith in the promised sacrifice. On the altar was a lamb, bleeding from its death wound, and laid in order for burning, a ghastly spectacle not to be delighted in by taste, a thing from which the lovers of the beautiful would turn away. Abel had chosen such an offering because God had chosen it, and because it was the fit means for leading his faith to its true object, the Lord Jesus Christ. He saw by faith in the bleeding lamb the memorial of the Lord's great propitiation for sin, which could not be seen in Cain's offering of the fruits of the earth, however tasteful that offering might be.

Abel stands forth before us as the first in a cloud of witnesses, bearing brave testimony, and prepared to seal it with their lives. He died a martyr for the truth, the grandly God-like truth that God accepts men according to their faith. All honor to the martyr's blood which speaks so effectually for the precious truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ, being also a testifier and witness for the faith of God, spoke better things than Abel, because He had more to speak, and spoke from more intimate acquaintance with God. He was a fuller witness of divine truth than Abel could be, for He brought life and immortality to light, and told His people clearly of the Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ had been in the bosom of the Father, and knew the divine secret, this secret He revealed to the sons of men in His ministry, and then He sealed it by His blood. It is not to be forgotten that though the death of Christ was in chief an atonement for sin, yet it was also a testimony to the truth, for He is said to be a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people, and as a dying, bleeding martyr, it will be clear to you that this blood testifies to fuller, brighter, and more glorious truth than did the blood of Abel.

Moreover, the blood of Abel spoke good things in that it was *the proof of faithfulness*. This dear servant of the Great Master was faithful under his brother's opposition, yea, faithful unto death. It could not be said of him as the apostle said of certain others, "You have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." He resisted sin even unto blood, he was faithful in all his house as a servant, he turned not from his integrity, and counted not his life dear unto him. His blood as it fell to the ground spoke this good thing—it said, "Great God, Abel is faithful to You." But the blood of Jesus Christ testifies to yet greater faithfulness still, for it was the sequel of a spotlessly perfect life, which no act of sin had ever defiled, whereas Abel's death furnished, it is true, a life of faith, but not a life of perfection. The faithfulness of Jesus was complete from the day of His birth to the hour of His death, and inasmuch as He needed not otherwise to die, His voluntary yielding up of life was all the more an act of obedience, and the better proof of His fidelity to His trust.

Moreover, we must never forget that all that Abel's blood could say as it fell to the ground was but *the shadow* of that more glorious substance to which Jesus' death assures us. Jesus did not typify atonement, but offered it, He was not the representative of sacrifice, He was the great Sacrifice itself, and inasmuch as the substance must ever excel the shadow, the blood of Jesus Christ speaks better things than that of Abel.

It is well to add that our Lord's person was infinitely more worthy and glorious than that of Abel, and consequently His death must yield to us a more golden-mouthed discourse than the death of a mere man like Abel. He who dies at the hand of Cain is but one of our race, testifying to truth and righteousness, testifying by faith to a sacrifice to come, but He who died at the hand of Herod and of Pilate was divine, and came upon no common errand, with no ordinary message to deliver. When the glorious Son of God bowed His head and gave up the ghost, the voice that arose from His blood must necessarily have been louder, sweeter, more full, and more God-like than the voice of the martyred Abel's gore. We understand then, before coming to details, that on general principles we may be pretty clear that the blood of Jesus would speak better things than that of Abel.

II. Now we will enter the very heart of our text, while we remember that **THE BLOOD OF JESUS SPEAKS BETTER THINGS TO GOD** than the blood of Abel did.

The blood of Abel cried in the ears of the Lord, for thus He said to Cain, "The voice of your brother's blood cries unto *me* from the ground." That cry did not go round to seek a mediator, but went directly to the judgment seat of God, and laid an accusation against the murderer. Now what did Abel's blood say to God? Standing by the spot where Abel fell, and marking the ground all crimson with clotted gore, what would the blood seem to you to say? What would be your own reflection? What would you conceive that the blood said to God? It said just this, "O God, one of Your own creatures, the product of Your matchless skill, has been dashed in pieces, and barbarously destroyed. A living, sensitive body formed by art and skill, such as only You could show, has been wantonly broken. The potter will not bear, that the vessel which has been fashioned upon the wheel with much cost and labor should be wantonly broken, but here is a body far more costly, far more wonderful than anything which human art could create, and this has been destroyed. Great God, the Creator of all things, will You look on this with patience, will You bear to see the work of Your own hands most cruelly destroyed?"

Was there not much in this cry? Then that blood would plead still further, "O God, Your creature has been destroyed without cause. No just reason of provocation has been given, no offense has been committed which could deserve so terrible a stroke, but one of Your feeble creatures who has a claim upon Your kind protection has been wantonly and needlessly slain—his blood appeals to You! You Judge of all the earth, will You let the weak be trodden down by the strong, and will You suffer the innocent to be smitten by the fierce hand of the wicked?" You see the cry gathers force. At first it is, "O God, Your creature has been destroyed," next it is, "O God, Your subject has been maltreated by one of his fellow subjects, by one who has become Your enemy, will You not interfere?" Yet the blood of Abel said more than this, it said, "O God, the blood shed here was shed for You." It seemed to say, "If it were not for love of You this blood had not been shed! If these drops had not been consecrated by devotion, if

this blood had not flowed in the veins of a man who loved God with all his heart it had not been poured out upon the ground. O God,” cries every drop, “I fell upon the ground for You—will You endure this? Shall a creature that You have made yield up its life with pain and anguish for You, and will You be like a cold, motionless, unmoved, immovable statue, and look on without emotion? Will You not bestir Yourself, O God? Shall blood be shed on Your own behalf, shed unjustly too, the blood of Your own loving, righteous creature, and will You not interfere?”

What force there is in such a voice! Yet the blood added to this, “O God, I have been shed in defiance of You,” for the stroke which came from Cain’s hand was not aimed merely at Abel, it was in spirit aimed at God, for if Cain could have done the same to God as he did to his brother Abel, he doubtless would have done it. He was of that wicked one, and therefore slew his brother, and the wickedness which was in him was *Deicidal*, he would have slain God Himself if it had been in his power, and so the blood cried, “O God, here is the gauntlet of defiance thrown down to Yourself. Cain defies You. He has struck the first blow at Yourself, he has smitten down the vanguard of the army of Your elect. Will You look on in quiet? Will You take no vengeance? Will You have no regard? Shall there be silence in heaven when there are groans and cries on earth? Shall heaven’s heart be cold when the heart of the enemy is hot with rage and fierce with rebellion? O God, will You not interpose?”

Surely this is a heaven-piercing cry, but this is not all. The blood of the proto-martyr added to all this such an appeal as the following—“O God, this is the first of human blood that has been murderously shed, and shed by an unnatural brother’s hand. Will You pass this by? Then how can You be just? Did not this blood challenge the very existence of justice in God? O God, if You do not punish this first barbarous man-slayer, who kills his brother, than all adown the ages men will riot in blood and wanton in murder, and they will say, ‘How does God know?’ He who sits in the heavens regards not, He will not so much as speak.” It were as though God should issue a license for man to shed each other’s blood, and give permission for red-handed murder to lord it over the whole creation, if the first murder should pass unnoticed by the great Judge of all.

Do you hear, my brethren, what a cry the blood of Abel must have had, and with what power it arose to heaven? But we are not left to conjecture as to the power of that cry, for we are told that God heard, and when He heard it *He* came to reckoning with Cain, and He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries to me from the ground.” Then came the withering sentence of it. The ground which had drunk in the blood became accursed to Cain, so that delve it as he might it could not yield him a bounteous harvest, plow it as he would, with all his skill and craft, it never could yield its strength to him. The original curse of the thorn and the thistle, which had fallen upon it when Adam survived, was now doubled to Cain, so that he reaped but handfuls and gathered scanty sheaves.

This would be a constant bitter mingled with his daily bread, while over and above that, he received unto his heart a curse which made him the slave of his own dreads. He served fear and trembling as his gods, and went about the earth with darkness within him and darkness round about him, never more rejoicing, but wearing the mark of reprobation fixed upon his brow. He life was doubtless hell upon earth, and at last he was driven forever from the presence of the Most High God. Blood has a voice in it, and when it is heard against a man it brings upon him a curse untold.

Well now, brethren, it is a very sweet task to ask you to turn your minds away from the blood of Abel to the blood of Jesus. I feel persuaded that you did just now recognize the voice of Abel’s blood, and I want your minds to hear with equal distinctness the voice of Jesus Christ’s blood, for there are the same reasons for its loudness, but they are all far more emphatic.

Can you stand at Calvary and view the flowing of the Savior’s blood from hands, and feet, and side? What are your own reflections as to what that blood says to God? Think now at the cross-foot. That blood cries with a loud voice to God, and what does it say? Does it not say this? “O God, this time it is not merely a creature which bleeds, but though the body that hangs upon the cross is the creature of Your Holy Spirit, it is Your own Son who now pours out His soul unto death. O God, it is Your only-begotten One, dear to Yourself, essentially one with You, one in whom You are well-pleased, whose

obedience is perfect, whose love to You has been unwavering—it is He who dies. O God, will You despise the cries and the tears, the groans, the moans, the blood of Your own Son? Most tender Father, in whose bosom Jesus lay from the foundations of the earth, *He* dies, and will You not regard *Him*? Shall His blood fall to the ground in vain?”

Then, moreover, the voice would plead, “It is not only Your Son, but Your perfectly innocent Son, in whom was no necessity for dying, because He had no original sin which would have brought corruption on Him, who had moreover no actual sin, who throughout life had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds. O God, it is Your only-begotten, who, without a fault, is led as a lamb to the slaughter, and stands like a sheep before her shearers. Can You see it, You God of all, can You see the infinitely holy and just Son of Your heart led here to die—can You see it, and not feel the force of the blood as it cries to You?”

Was there not added to this fact that our Lord died to vindicate the honor of His Father? “For You, O God, for You He dies! He who hangs on Calvary hangs there in deference to Your own decree, in fulfillment of Your own purpose, in vindication of the honor of Your law, that You may Yourself be glorified, that Your justice may have full scope, and Your mercy may have illimitable sway. O God, the sufferer, pale in death, whose wounds are torn open with the cruel nails, and whose soul is racked with pain unutterable, dies for You. If there had been no God He need not die. If there were no law to vindicate, no truth to defend, no honor, and majesty, and justice to which to pay homage, it need not that He died. If You were content to stain Your honor or to restrain Your mercy, there were no need that He should give Himself. But it is for You, for You each pang, for You each groan, for You each drop of blood, and will You not be moved thereby?”

Brethren, is there not power in this voice? Yet over and above this the blood must have pleaded thus with God—“O God, the blood which is now being shed, thus honorable and glorious in itself, is being poured out with a motive which is divinely gracious. He who dies on this cross dies for His enemy, groans for those who make Him groan, suffers for those who thrust the dart into His soul, and then mock at the agony which they themselves have caused. O God, it is a chain for God in heaven which binds the victim to the horns of the altar, a chain of everlasting love, of illimitable goodness.”

Now, dear friends, you and I could not see a man suffer out of pure benevolence without being moved by his sufferings, and shall God be unmoved? the perfectly holy and gracious God, shall He be indifferent where you and I are stirred to deep emotion? The sight of blood makes some of us shudder, the sight of blood shed from an innocent person—shed by the hand of violence—would make our very souls chill within us, but the thought of that blood being shed with a motive so marvelous, because of a disinterested affection towards undeserving criminals—this would move us indeed, and do you dream that it did not move the heart of God?

Blessed be His name, we are not left to conjecture here, it so moved our heavenly Father that to this day God has come to man, and speaking to us through that blood He has said, “What have you done? Whatever you have done, however black and filthy your sin may have been, the voice of My Son’s blood cries unto Me from the ground, and now from this day forth I have taken off the curse from the earth for His sake, neither will I curse it any more. You shall be blessed in your basket and in your store, in your going out and in your coming in. I have forgiven you your iniquities, I have set a mark upon you, and no man shall hurt you, neither shall justice smite you, for in the person of My dear Son I have received and accepted you, guilty as you are. Go your way, and live happily and peaceably, for I have taken away your iniquities and cast your sins behind My back, and the day has come in the which if your sins be searched for they shall not be found, yea, if they be sought out they shall not be, says the Lord, for I have pardoned them whom I have reserved.” Abel’s blood had mighty prevalence to curse, but Jesu’s blood has prevalence to bless the sons of men.

I want you to stay a little on this thought to digest it. I wish I had the power to send it home, only the Holy Ghost, however, can do that. I want, however, just to dwell on it that you may get into the soul of it. Observe that the blood of Abel spoke to God long before Cain spoke. Cain was deaf to the voice of his brother’s blood, but God heard it.

Sinner, long before you hear the blood of Jesus, God hears it, and spares your guilty soul. Long before that blood comes into your soul to melt you to repentance, it pleads for you with God. It was not the voice of Cain that brought down vengeance, but the voice of Abel's blood, and it is not the cry of the sinner seeking mercy that is the cause of mercy, it is the cry of that blood of Jesus. I know you will tell me you cannot pray, oh what a mercy it is that the blood can, and when you cannot plead so as to prevail, the blood pleads. If you are to win mercy from God and get forgiveness, it will not be by the efficacy of your prayers and tears, but through the efficacy of that blood of God's dear Son. Cain did not ask for vengeance, but it came unsought through the blood, and you, though you feel as if you hardly dare look for mercy, yet shall find it if you can trust the blood of Jesus which speaks for you.

The Blood does not need your voice to increase its power with God, He will hear your voice, but it is because He hears the blood of Jesus first of all. It is a mercy for us that the blood of Jesus Christ speaks for the guilty, even as the blood of Abel spoke against the guilty. Jesus' blood pleads not for the innocent, if such there be, they need no plea from an atoning sacrifice. Jesus pleads for the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them, for you that have broken His laws, and despised His love, and fought against His power, the blood of Jesus pleads for such as you, for He came into the world to save sinners. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

The precious blood speaks constantly. Did you notice that word in the text? "which *speaks*," not "which did speak," but "which speaks." The blood of Jesus pleaded for the thief upon the cross, but it—

***"Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved to sin no more."***

Brother, when prevailing sin oppresses the conscience, it is a thousand mercies to know that we have even now a prevailing Savior. Years ago some of us came to Christ and we found pardon, but our faith occasionally faints, and our doubts grow strong. Come, let us go afresh to the fountain, let us look anew to the cross, for the blood speaks still. Still in effect our Lord Jesus bleeds today as much as He did eighteen hundred years ago, for the blood is just as certain in its power with God at the present moment as when the thief said, "Lord, remember me." Let us think of this and rejoice in it. My soul, when you cannot plead with God, when you dare not, when your tongue is silent, and despair gags your mouth, even then Jesus pleads. Now lay you hold upon the intercession, come and cast yourself upon Him, rest wholly in Him, He must prevail though you cannot, he must succeed though you have no power whatsoever. Come then, and link yourself with the infallible prevalent plea of the precious blood, and it is all well with you, all safe with you, and safe forever. God grant us grace to do this, each one of us, and His be the praise!

III. Furthermore, JESUS' BLOOD SPEAKS BETTER THINGS TO US IN OUR OWN HEARTS than did the blood of Abel.

I suppose most of you read the account written by the newspaper correspondents who have passed over the battlefields of Königgratz or Sadowa. How it thrilled one to read of ditches filled with blood, and of the smell from putrid corpses being so intolerable that travelers had to leave the battlefield in haste. I would not like to be Bismarck, nor the Crown Prince of Prussia, nor the King, nor anyone who had a hand in a war so sanguinary and so unjustifiable. I suppose that wholesale assassins grow used to such things, I suppose that they can read of thousands mangled by shot and shell without emotion, and even see the heaps of corpses without a shudder, but I am certain of this, that it would drive me mad. Ah! to have the blood of one person knowingly laid at my door would be enough to dash all comfort from my life, but to have the blood of tens of thousands poured out to gratify my ambition, I think must make reason reel at once. It must be an absence of conscience which makes reason to keep her throne when men have been wading through their fellows' blood for mere purposes of selfish gain.

Seeing that there had been no wars in Cain's day, and that the human heart had not been brutalized as it now is, so as to speak of war as we now do in such gentle terms, surely if he had had any conscience at all, it must have been a horrible thought to him that he had killed his brother. "I have killed a man, I have shed his blood." Surely it made him start in his sleep. How could he be quiet upon his lonely couch? That red-handed man! Guilt, a grim chamberlain, with fingers bloody red would surely draw the curtains of his bed. Would not the spectacle all come up before his mind? The talk in the field, the sudden impulse, the blow, the blood, the look of his victim as he cried for pity as one cruel stroke succeeded another, and then the sight of the ghastly body and the streaming blood, and the crimson marks on the soddened earth.

Oh, it must have been a remembrance clinging like a viper around the murderer wherever he might be! He might well build a city, as we are told he did, in order to quench these fiery remembrances. Then would the thought come upon him, "You slew him though he was your brother." "Am I my brother's keeper?" said he, but men can talk sometimes more braggingly than their heart talks in secret. The horror of brother-killing must have haunted Cain, "I slew my brother, I, the first that was born of woman slew the second-born." And then it would be suggested, "And wherefore did I slay him? What evil had he done me? What if he did offer a different sacrifice from mine, and what if God did accept *him* and not me, yet what hurt had he done me?"

The innocence of his victim, if Cain had any conscience, must have increased his uneasiness, for he would recollect how inoffensively he had kept those sheep of his, and had been like one among them, so lamb-like, that shepherd-man himself, a true sheep of God's pasture. "Yet," Cain would say, "I slew him because I hated God, the God before whose bar I am soon to stand, the God who set this mark on me." Can you picture the man who had thus to be daily schooled and upbraided by his brother's blood? It needs a poet's mind to teach him. Think how you would feel if you had killed your own brother, how the guilt would hang over you like a black cloud, and drop horror into your very soul.

Now, brethren, there is more than equal force in the cry of the blood of Jesus, only it acts differently, and it speaks better things. Let it be remembered, however, that it speaks those better things with the same force. Comforts arise from the blood of Jesus as powerful as the horrors which arose from the blood of Abel. When the sinner looks to Jesus slain, he may well say, "If I did not know that all this blood was shed for me as well as by me, my fears would multiply a thousand fold, but when I think that that precious blood is blood shed instead of mine, that it is blood which God planned and ordained should be shed for me from before the foundation of the world, when I think that that is the blood of God's own dear Son, whom He has smitten instead of smiting me, making Him bear the whole of His wrath that I might not bear it, O my God, what comforts come streaming from this blessed fountain!"

Just in proportion as thought of murder would make Cain wretched, in the same proportion ought faith to make you happy as you think upon Jesus Christ slain, for the blood of Christ, as I said at the beginning of the sermon, cannot have a less powerful voice, it must have a more powerful voice than that of Abel, and it cries therefore more powerfully for you than the blood of Abel cried against his brother Cain. Oh, then, my clamoring sins, I can hear you, but I am not afraid of you, for the blood of Jesus speaks louder than you all. Oh, then, conscience, I can hear your accusation, but I am not alarmed, for my Savior died. I come before God with perfect confidence, because sprinkled with the blood of my Substitute. If the horror of Cain with an awakened conscience might be unendurable, so the peace which comes to me through the precious blood of Jesus is indescribable and unutterable, a peace like a river, a righteousness like the waves of the sea.

Sweet peace have all they who hear the blood speaking in their souls, telling them that sin is forgiven, that God is reconciled, that we are accepted in the Beloved, and that now we are preserved in Christ Jesus, and shall never perish, neither shall any pluck us out of His hand. I trust you know, I know many of you do, the sweet power of this peace-speaking blood. Such innocent blood, ordained on purpose to give peace, is precious beyond all price. O my soul! never look for peace elsewhere, and never be afraid of finding peace here.

If today, O Christian, you have lost your confidence, if today you are conscious of having been false to your Lord, and of having done despite to His Spirit, if today you feel ashamed of the very name of a Christian because you have dishonored it, if today despair is ready to strangle your hope, and you are tempted to give it all up, yet come now, even now, to this precious blood. Do not think that my Savior can save merely the little sinners, He is a great Savior—mighty to save. I know your sins speak very loudly—ah! well they may, I hope you will hear their voices and hate them in the future—but they cannot speak so loudly as the blood of Jesus does. It says, “Father, Father, shall I die in vain? Father, I paid My blood for sinners, shall not sinners be saved? I was smitten for the guilty, shall the guilty be smitten too?”

The blood says, “O God, I have vindicated Your law, what more do You demand? I have honored Your justice, why should You cast the sinner into hell? O You Divine Benignity! can You take two exactions for one offense, and punish those for whom Jesus suffered? O Justice! will you here avenge? O Mercy! when the way is cleared, will you not run to guilty sinners? O Love Divine, when the pathway is opened for You, will You not show Yourself to the rebellious and the vile?” The blood shall not plead in vain, sinners shall be saved, and you and I, I hope, among them to the praise and glory of His grace.

IV. Two or three words to close with. JESUS’ BLOOD, EVEN IN MY TEXT, SPEAKS BETTER THINGS THAN THAT OF ABEL.

It speaks the same things but in a better sense. Did you notice the first text? God said unto Cain, “What have you done?” Now that is what Christ’s blood says to you, “What have you done?” My dear hearer, do you not know that your sins slew the Savior? If we have been playing with sin, and fancied it to be a very little thing, a trifle to play with and laugh at, let us correct the mistake. Our Savior hangs on the cross, and was nailed there by those sins of ours, shall we think little of them? Looking from the cross, Jesus says to us, “What have you done?” O my hearer, what have you done? You have slain your best friend and ruined yourself!

Let me come home personally to everyone. Make an inventory now of your sins. Go over the black list from your childhood till now. What have you done? Ah! Lord, done enough to make me weep forever if it were not that You have wept for me. Drops of grief can never repay the debt which is due to Your blood. Alas! I have done evil, Lord, but You have done good to me. “What have you done? What have you done?” was a dreadful accusation to Cain, it might have gone through him like a dart, but to you and to me it is the soft inquiring voice of a Father’s love bringing us to repentance. May it bring us now!

What I want mainly to indicate is this. If you notice in the second text, this blood is called “*the blood of sprinkling*.” Whether Abel’s blood sprinkled Cain or not I cannot say, but if it did it must have added to his horror to have had the blood actually upon him. But this adds to the joy in our case, for the blood of Jesus is of little value to us until it is sprinkled upon us. Faith dips the hyssop in the atoning blood and sprinkles it upon the soul, and the soul is clean. The application of the blood of Jesus is the true ground of joy, and the sure source of Christian comfort, the application of the blood of Abel must have been horror, but the application of the blood of Jesus is the root and ground of all delight.

There is another matter in the text with which I conclude. The apostle says, “We are *come* to the blood of sprinkling.” He mentions that among other things to which we have *come*. Now, from the blood of Abel every reasonable man would flee. He that has murdered his fellow desires to put a wide distance between himself and the accusing corpse. But we come to the blood of Jesus. It is a topic in which we delight as our contemplations bring us nearer and nearer to it. I ask you, dear Christian friends, to come nearer to it this morning than you have ever been. Think over the great truth of substitution. Portray to yourselves the sufferings of the Savior. Dwell in His sight, sit at the foot of Calvary, abide in the presence of His cross, and never turn away from that great spectacle of mercy and of misery. *Come* to it, be not afraid. Ho, you sinners, who have never trusted Jesus, look you hither and live! May you come to Him now!—

*“Come, guilty souls, and flee away,
Like doves to Jesus’ wounds.”*

No, do not run away from the wounds which you have made, but find shelter in them, forget the sufferings of Christ, but rest in them! Your only hope lies in trusting in Jesus, resting wholly upon Him. Think much of the griefs of your Lord, and if I might suggest to some of you who will not be coming out this afternoon, perhaps if you could spend an hour or two between services in considering the sufferings of the Savior, those considerations might be the means of bringing faith to you. Faith comes by hearing, but it is a thoughtful hearing, and hearing comes by the Word of God, but the Word must be thought over. Open the Word, read the story of the cross. Ask the Master to bless it to you, and who knows but through the divine Spirit some of you may yet hear the voice of that blood which speaks better things than that of Abel. The Lord bless every one of you for His name’s sake. Amen.

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