

THE RENT VEIL NO. 2015

**DELIVERED ON LORD'S DAY MORNING, MARCH 25, 1888,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

“Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom.”

Matthew 27:50-51.

“Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.”

Hebrews 10:19-20.

THE DEATH of our Lord Jesus Christ was fitly surrounded by miracles. Yet it is itself so much greater a wonder than all besides that it as far exceeds them as the sun outshines the planets which surround it. It seems natural enough that the earth should quake, that tombs should be opened and that the veil of the temple should be rent, when who He only has immortality gives up the ghost. The more you think of the death of the Son of God, the more will you be amazed at it. As much as a miracle excels a common fact, so does this wonders of wonders rise above all miracles of power. That the Divine Lord, even though veiled in mortal flesh, should condescend to be subject to the power of death so as to bow His head on the Cross and submit to be laid in the tomb is among mysteries the greatest. The death of Jesus is the marvel of time and eternity, which, as Aaron's rod swallowed up all the rest, takes up into itself all lesser marvels.

Yet the rending of the veil of the temple is not a miracle to be lightly passed over. It was made of “fine twined linen, with Cherubims of cunning work.” This gives the idea of a substantial fabric, a piece of lasting tapestry, which would have endured the severest strain. No human hands could have torn that sacred covering. And it could not have been divided in the midst by any accidental cause. Yet, strange to say, on the instant when the holy Person of Jesus was rent by death, the great veil which concealed the holiest of all was “rent in two from the top to the bottom.” What did it mean? It meant much more than I can tell you now.

It is not fanciful to regard it as a solemn act of mourning on the part of the House of the Lord. In the East, men express their sorrow by rending their garments. And the temple, when it beheld its Master die, seemed struck with horror and rent its veil. Shocked at the sin of man, indignant at the murder of its Lord, in its sympathy with Him who is the true Temple of God, the outward symbol tore its holy vestment from the top to the bottom. Did not the miracle also mean that from that hour the whole system of types and shadows and ceremonies had come to an end? The ordinances of an earthly priesthood were rent with that veil.

In token of the death of the ceremonial Law, the soul of it quit its sacred shrine and left its bodily tabernacle as a dead thing. The legal dispensation is over. The rent of the veil seemed to say—“Henceforth God dwells no longer in the thick darkness of the Holy of Holies and shines forth no longer from between the cherubim. The special enclosure is broken up and there is no inner sanctuary for the earthly high priest to enter—typical atonements and sacrifices are at an end.”

According to the explanation given in our second text, the rending of the veil chiefly meant that the way into the holiest, which was not before made manifest, was now laid open to all Believers. Once in the year the high priest solemnly lifted a corner of this veil with fear and trembling and with blood and holy incense he passed into the immediate Presence of Jehovah. But the tearing of the veil laid open the secret place. The rent from top to bottom gives ample space for all to enter who are called of God's Divine Grace, to approach the Throne and to commune with the Eternal One. Upon that subject I shall try to speak this morning, praying in my inmost soul that you and I, with all other Believers, may have boldness actually to enter into that which is within the veil at this time of our assembling for worship. Oh, that the Spirit of God would lead us into the nearest fellowship which mortal men can have with the Infinite Jehovah!

First, this morning, I shall ask you to consider what has been done. The veil has been rent. Secondly, we will remember what we therefore have—we have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” Then, thirdly, we will consider

how we exercise this Divine Grace—we “enter by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.”

I. First, think of WHAT HAS BEEN DONE. In actual historical fact, the glorious veil of the temple has been rent in two from the top to the bottom. As a matter of *spiritual* fact, which is far more important to us, the separating legal ordinance is abolished. There was under the Law this ordinance—that no man should ever go into the holiest of all, with the one exception of the high priest and he but once in the year and not without blood. If any man had attempted to enter there he must have died—guilty of great presumption and of profane intrusion into the secret place of the Most High. Who could stand in the presence of Him who is a consuming fire?

This ordinance of distance runs all through the Law. For even the holy place, which was the vestibule of the Holy of Holies, was for the priests, alone. The place of the people was one of distance. At the very first institution of the Law—when God descended upon Sinai, the ordinance was—“You shall set bounds unto the people round about.” There was no invitation to draw near. Not that they desired to do so, for the mountain was together on a smoke and “even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.” “The Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze and many of them perish.”

If so much as a beast touch the mountain it must be stoned or thrust through with a dart. The spirit of the old Law was reverent distance. Moses, and here and there a man chosen by God, might come near to Jehovah. But as for the bulk of the people, the command was, “Draw not near here.” When the Lord revealed His glory at the giving of the Law, we read—“When the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off.” All this is ended. The precept to keep back is abrogated and the invitation is, “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden.” “Let us draw near” is now the filial spirit of the Gospel. How thankful I am for this! What a joy it is to my soul! Some of God’s people have not yet realized this gracious fact, for still they worship afar off.

Very much of prayer is to be highly commended for its reverence—but it has in it a lack of childlike confidence. I can admire the solemn and stately language of worship which recognizes the greatness of God. But it will not warm my heart nor express my soul until it has also blended with the joyful nearness of that perfect love which casts out fear and ventures to speak with our Father in Heaven as a child speaks with its father on earth. My Brothers and Sisters, no veil remains. Why do you stand afar off, and tremble like a slave? Draw near with full assurance of faith. The veil is rent—access is free.

Come boldly to the Throne of Grace. Jesus has made you near, as near to God as even He Himself is. Though we speak of the holiest of all, even the secret place of the Most High, yet it is of this place of awe, even of this sanctuary of Jehovah, that the veil is rent. Therefore, let nothing hinder your entrance. Assuredly no Law forbids you. But infinite love invites you to draw near to God.

This rending of the veil signified, also, the removal of the separating sin. Sin is, after all, the great divider between God and man. That veil of blue and purple and fine twined linen could not really separate man from God—for He is, as to His omnipresence—not far from any of us. Sin is a far more effectual wall of separation—it opens an abyss between the sinner and his Judge. Sin shuts out prayer and praise and every form of religious exercise. Sin makes God walk contrary to us because we walk contrary to Him. Sin, by separating the soul from God, causes spiritual death which is both the effect and the penalty of transgression. How can two walk together except they be agreed? How can a holy God have fellowship with unholy creatures? Shall justice dwell with injustice? Shall perfect purity abide with the abominations of evil? No, it cannot be.

Our Lord Jesus Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He takes away the sin of the world and so the veil is rent. By the shedding of His most precious blood we are cleansed from all sin and that most gracious promise of the New Covenant is fulfilled—“Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” When sin is gone, the barrier is broken down, the unfathomable gulf is filled. Pardon, which removes sin and justification, which brings righteousness, makes up a deed of clearance so real and so complete that nothing now divides the sinner from his reconciled God. The Judge is now the Father—He who once must necessarily have condemned, is found justly absolving and accepting. In this double sense the veil is rent—the separating ordinance is abrogated and the separating sin is forgiven.

Next, be it remembered that the separating sinfulness is also taken away through our Lord Jesus. It is not only what we have done, but what we *are*, that keeps us apart from God. We have sin engrained in us—even those who have Divine Grace dwelling in them have to complain, “When I would do good, evil is present with me.” How can we commune with God with our eyes blinded, our ears stopped, our hearts hardened and our senses deadened by sin? Our whole nature is tainted, poisoned, perverted by evil—how can we know the Lord? Beloved, through the death of our Lord Jesus the Covenant of Grace is

established with us and its gracious provisions are on this wise—“This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord. I will put My laws into their mind and write them in their hearts.”

When this is the case, when the will of God is inscribed on the heart and the nature is entirely changed, then is the dividing veil which hides us from God taken away—“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” Blessed are all they that love righteousness and follow after it, for they are in a way in which the Righteous One can walk in fellowship with them. Spirits that are like God are not divided from God. Difference of nature hangs up a veil. But the new birth and the sanctification which follows upon it, through the precious death of Jesus, remove that veil. He that hates sin strives after holiness, and labors to perfect it in the fear of God is in fellowship with God.

It is a blessed thing when we love what God loves, when we seek what God seeks, when we are in sympathy with Divine aims and are obedient to Divine commands—for with such persons will the Lord dwell. When Divine Grace makes us partakers of the Divine nature then are we at one with the Lord and the veil is taken away.

“Yes,” says one, “I see, now, how the veil is taken away in three different fashions. But still God is God and we are but poor puny men—between God and man there must of necessity be a separating veil caused by the great disparity between the Creator and the creature. How can the finite and the Infinite commune? God is All in All and more than all. We are nothing and less than nothing—how can we meet?” When the Lord does come near to His favored ones, they own how incapable they are of enduring the excessive glory. Even the Beloved John said, “When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.”

When we have been especially conscious of the Presence and working of our Lord, we have felt our flesh creep and our blood chill. And then we have understood what Jacob meant when he said, “How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the House of God, and this is the gate of Heaven.” All this is true. For the Lord says, “You cannot see My face and live.” Although this is a much thinner veil than those I have already mentioned, yet it is a veil. And it is hard for man to be at home with God. But the Lord Jesus bridges the separating distance. Behold, the blessed Son of God has come into the world and taken upon Himself our nature! “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of the flesh and blood, He also, Himself, likewise took part of the same.”

Though He is God as God is God, yet is He as surely Man as man is man. Mark well how in the Person of the Lord Jesus we see God and man in the closest conceivable alliance. For they are united in one Person forever. The gulf is completely filled by the fact that Jesus has gone through with us even to the bitter end, to death, even to the death of the Cross. He has followed out the career of manhood even to the tomb. And thus we see that the veil which hung between the nature of God and the nature of man is rent in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. We enter into the holiest of all through *His* flesh, which links manhood to Godhead.

Now you see what it is to have the veil taken away. Solemnly note that this avails only for Believers—those who refuse Jesus refuse the only way of access to God. God is not approachable except through the rending of the veil by the death of Jesus. There was one typical way to the Mercy Seat of old and that was through the turning aside of the veil. There was no other. And there is now no other way for any of you to come into fellowship with God except through the rent veil—the death of Jesus Christ, whom God has set forth to be the propitiation for sin. Come this way and you may come freely. Refuse to come this way and there hangs between you and God an impassable veil. Without Christ you are without God and without hope. Jesus Himself assures you, “If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins.” God grant that this may not happen to any of you!

For Believers the veil is not rolled up but rent. The veil was not unhooked and carefully folded up and put away so that it might be put in its place at some future time. Oh, no! The Divine hand took it and rent it from top to bottom. It can never be hung up again. That is impossible. Between those who are in Christ Jesus and the great God there will never be another separation. “Who shall separate us from the love of God?” Only one veil was made and as that is rent, the one and only separator is destroyed. I delight to think of this. The devil himself can never divide me from God now. He may, and will attempt to shut me out from God—but the worst he could do would be to hang up a rent veil.

What would that avail but to exhibit his impotence? God has rent the veil and the devil cannot mend it. There is access between a Believer and his God. And there must be such free access forever, since the veil is not rolled up and put on one side to be hung up again in days to come. It is rent and rendered useless. The rent is not in one corner but in the midst, as Luke tells us. It is not a slight rent through which we may see a little. But it is rent from the top to the bottom. There is an entrance made for the greatest sinners. If there had only been a small hole cut through it, the lesser offenders might have crept through. But what an act of abounding mercy is this—that the veil is rent in the midst and rent from top to bottom—so that the chief of sinners may find ample passage! This also shows that for Believers there is no hindrance to the fullest and freest access to

God. Oh, for much boldness this morning, to come where God has not only set open the door but has lifted the door from its hinges—yes, removed it, post and bar and all!

I want you to notice that this veil, when it was rent, was rent by God—not by man. It was not the act of an irreverent mob. It was not the midnight outrage of a set of profane priests—it was the act of God, alone. Nobody stood within the veil. And on the outer side of it stood the priests only fulfilling their ordinary vocation of offering sacrifice. It must have astounded them when they saw that holy place laid bare in a moment. How they fled, as they saw that massive veil divided without human hand in a second of time! Who rent it? Who, but God Himself? If another had done it, there might have been a mistake about it and the mistake might need to be remedied by replacing the curtain.

But if the Lord has done it, it is done rightly, it is done finally, it is done irreversibly. It is God Himself who has laid sin on Christ and in Christ has put that sin away. God Himself has opened the gate of Heaven to Believers and cast up a highway along which the souls of men may travel to Himself. God Himself has set the ladder between earth and Heaven. Come to Him now, you humble ones. Behold, He sets before you an open door!

II. And now I ask you to follow me, dear Friends, in the second place, to an experimental realization of my subject. We now notice WHAT WE HAVE—“Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest.” Observe the threefold “having” in the paragraph now before us and be not content without the whole three. We have “boldness to enter in.” There are degrees in boldness. But this is one of the highest. When the veil was rent it required some boldness to look within. I wonder whether the priests at the altar did have the courage to gaze upon the Mercy Seat. I suspect that they were so struck with amazement that they fled from the altar, fearing sudden death.

It requires a measure of boldness steadily to look upon the mystery of God—“Which things the angels desire to look into.” It is well not to look with a merely curious eye into the deep things of God. I question whether any man is able to pry into the mystery of the Trinity without great risk. Some, thinking to look there with the eyes of their natural intellect, have been blinded by the light of that sun and have henceforth wandered in darkness. It needs boldness to look into the splendors of redeeming and electing love. If any did look into the holiest when the veil was rent, they were among the boldest of men. For others must have feared, lest the fate of the men of Bethshemesh would be theirs.

Beloved, the Holy Spirit invites you to look into the holy place and view it all with reverent eye for it is full of teaching to you. Understand the mystery of the Mercy Seat and of the Ark of the Covenant overlaid with gold and of the pot of manna and of the tables of stone and of Aaron’s rod that budded. Look, look boldly through Jesus Christ—but do not content yourself with looking! Hear what the text says—“Having boldness to *enter in*.” Blessed be God if He has taught us this sweet way of no longer looking from afar but of *entering* into the inmost shrine with confidence! “Boldness to enter in” is what we ought to have.

Let us follow the example of the high priest and, having entered, let us perform the functions of one who enters in. “Boldness to enter in” suggests that we act as men who are in their proper places. To stand within the veil filled the servant of God with an overpowering sense of the Divine Presence. If ever in his life he was near to God, he was certainly near to God then, when quite alone. Shut in and excluded from all the world, he had no one with him except the glorious Jehovah. O my Beloved, may we this morning enter into the holiest in this sense! Shut out from the world—both wicked and Christian—let us know that the Lord is here, most near and manifest. Oh that we may now cry out with Hagar, “Have I also here looked after Him that sees me?”

Oh, how sweet to realize by personal enjoyment the presence of Jehovah, How cheering to feel that the Lord of Hosts is with us! We know our God to be a very present help in trouble. It is one of the greatest joys out of Heaven to be able to sing—Jehovah Shammah—the Lord is here. At first we tremble in the Divine Presence, but as we feel more of the spirit of adoption, we draw near with sacred delight and feel so fully at home with our God that we sing with Moses, “Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.” Do not live as if God were as far off from you as the east is from the west. Live not far below on the earth. But live on high, as if you were in Heaven. In Heaven you will be with God. But on earth He will be with you—is there much difference?

He has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Jesus has made us near by His precious blood. Try daily to live in as great nearness to God as the high priest felt when he stood for awhile within the secret of Jehovah’s tabernacle. The high priest had a sense of communion with God. He was not only near but he spoke with God. I cannot tell what he said but I should think that on the special day the high priest unburdened himself of the load of Israel’s sin and sorrow and made known his requests unto the Lord. Aaron, standing there alone, must have been filled with memories of his own faultiness and of the idolatries and backslidings of the people.

God shone upon him and he bowed before God. He may have heard things which it was not lawful for him to utter and other things which he could not have uttered if they had been lawful. Beloved, do you know what it is to commune with God? Words are poor vehicles for this fellowship. But what a blessed thing it is! Proofs of the existence of God are altogether here superfluous to those of us who are in the habit of conversing with the Eternal One. If anybody were to write an essay to prove the existence of my wife, or my son, I certainly should not read it, except for the amusement of the thing. And proofs of the existence of God to the man who communes with God are much the same.

Many of you walk with God—what bliss! Fellowship with the Most High is elevating, purifying, strengthening. Enter into it boldly. Enter into His revealed thoughts, even as He graciously enters into yours—rise to His plans, as He condescends to yours. Ask to be uplifted to Him, even as He deigns to dwell with you. This is what the rent of the veil brings us when we have boldness to enter in. But, mark you, the rent veil brings us nothing until we have boldness to enter in. Why stand without? Jesus brings us near and truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Let us not be slow to take up our freedom and come boldly to the Throne.

The high priest entered within the veil of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen with blood and with incense, that he might pray for Israel—and there he stood before the Most High, pleading with Him to bless the people. O Beloved, prayer is a Divine institution and it belongs to us. But there are many sorts of prayers. There is the prayer of one who seems shut out from God's holy temple. There is the prayer of another who stands in the court of the Gentiles afar off, looking towards the temple. There is the prayer of one who gets where Israel stands and pleads with the God of the chosen. There is the prayer in the court of the priests when the sanctified man of God makes intercession.

But the best prayer of all is offered in the holiest of all. There is no fear about prayer being heard when it is offered in the holiest. The very position of the man proves that he is accepted with God. He is standing on the surest ground of acceptance and he is so near to God that his every desire is heard. There the man is seen through and through. For he is very near to God. His thoughts are read, his tears are seen, his sighs are heard. He has boldness to enter in. He may ask what he will and it shall be done unto him. As the altar sanctifies the gift, so the most holy place, entered by the blood of Jesus, secures a certain answer to the prayer that is offered therein.

God give us such power in prayer! It is a wonderful thing that the Lord should hearken to the voice of a man. Yet are there such men? Luther came out of his closet and cried, Vici—"I have conquered." He had not yet met his adversaries. But as he had prevailed with God for men he felt that he should prevail with men for God. But the high priest, if you recollect, after he had communed and prayed with God, came out and blessed the people. He put on his garments of glory and beauty which he had laid aside when he went into the holy place, for there he stood in simple white and nothing else. And now he came out wearing the breast-plate and all his precious ornaments and he blessed the people. That is what you will do if you have the boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus—you will bless the people that surround you.

The Lord has blessed you and He will make you a blessing. Your ordinary conduct and conversation will be a blessed example. The words you speak for Jesus will be like a dew from the Lord—the sick will be comforted by your words. The despondent will be encouraged by your faith. The lukewarm will be recovered by your love. You will be, practically, saying to each one who knows you, "The Lord bless you and keep you—the Lord make His face shine upon you and give you peace." You will become a channel of blessing—"Out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water." May we each one have boldness to enter in that we may come forth laden with benedictions!

If you will kindly look at the text, you will notice what I shall merely hint at—that this boldness is well grounded. I always like to see the Apostle using a "therefore"—"Having therefore boldness." Paul is often a true poet but he is always a correct logician. He is as logical as if he were dealing with mathematics rather than theology. Here he writes one of his "therefores." Why is it that we have boldness? Is it not because of our relationship to Christ which makes us "Brethren"? "Having therefore, Brethren, boldness." The feeblest Believer has as much right to enter into the holy place as Paul had. Because he is one of the brotherhood. I remember a rhyme by John Ryland, in which he says of Heaven—

*"They shall all be there, the great and the small;
Poor I shall shake hands with the blessed St. Paul."*

I have no doubt we shall have such a position and such fellowship. Meanwhile, we do shake hands with him this morning as he calls us Brethren. We are Brethren to one another because we are Brethren to Jesus. Where we see the Apostle go, we will go—yes, rather, where we see the Great Apostle and High Priest of our profession enter, we will follow. "Having therefore, boldness."

Beloved, we have now no fear of death in the most holy place. The high priest, whoever he might be, must always have dreaded that solemn day of atonement when he had to pass into the silent and secluded place. I cannot tell whether it is true, but I have read that there is a tradition among the Jews that a rope was fastened to the high priest's foot that they might draw out his corpse in case he died before the Lord. I should not wonder if their superstition devised such a thing, for it is an awful position for a man to enter into the secret dwelling of Jehovah. But we cannot die in the holy place now, since Jesus has died for us. The death of Jesus is the guarantee of the eternal life of all for whom He died. We have boldness to enter, for we shall not perish.

Our boldness arises from the perfection of His sacrifice. Read the fourteenth verse—"He has perfected forever them that are sanctified." We rely upon the sacrifice of Christ believing that He was such a perfect Substitute for us that it is not possible for us to die after our Substitute has died. And we must be accepted because He is accepted. We believe that the precious blood has so effectually and eternally put away sin from us that we are no longer obnoxious to the wrath of God. We may safely stand where sin must be smitten, if there is any sin upon us. For we are so washed, so cleaned and so fully justified that we are accepted in the Beloved. Sin is so completely lifted from us by the vicarious sacrifice of Christ that we have boldness to enter where Jehovah, Himself, dwells.

Moreover, we have this for certain—that as a priest had a right to dwell near to God—we have that privilege. For Jesus has made us kings and priests unto God and all the privileges of the office come to us with the office itself. We have a mission within the holy place. We are called to enter there upon holy business and so we have no fear of being intruders. A burglar may enter a house but he does not enter with boldness. He is always afraid lest he should be surprised. You might enter a stranger's house without an invitation but you would feel no boldness there. We do not enter the holiest as housebreakers, nor as strangers. We come in *obedience* to a call, to fulfill our office. When once we accept the sacrifice of Christ, we are at home with God. Where should a child be bold but in his father's house? Where should a priest stand but in the temple of his God for whose service he is set apart? Where should a blood-washed sinner live but with his God, to whom he is reconciled?

It is a heavenly joy to feel this boldness! We have now such a love for God and such a delight in Him that it never crosses our minds that we are trespassers when we draw near to Him. We never say, "God, my dread," but "God, my exceeding joy." His name is the music to which our lives are set—though God is a consuming fire we love Him as such—for He will only consume our dross and that we desire to lose. Under no aspect is God now distasteful to us. We delight in Him, be He what He may. So you see, Beloved, we have good grounds for boldness when we enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

I cannot leave this point until I have reminded you that we may have this boldness of entering in at *all times* because the veil is always rent and is never restored to its old place. "The Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron your brother, that he come not at all times into the Holy Place within the veil before the Mercy Seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not." But the Lord says not so to us. Dear child of God, you may at all times have "boldness to enter in." The veil is rent both day and night. Yes, let me say it—even when your eye of faith is dim—you may still enter in. When evidences are dark, still have "boldness to enter in." And even if you have unhappily sinned, remember that access is open to your penitent prayer.

Come still through the rent veil, Sinner, as you are. Though you have backslidden, though you are grieved with the sense of your wanderings—come even now! "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart," but enter at once. For the veil is not there to exclude you though doubt and unbelief may make you think it is so. The veil cannot be there, for it was rent in two from the top to the bottom.

III. My time has fled and I shall not have space to speak as I meant to do upon the last point—HOW WE EXERCISE THIS GRACE. Let me give you the notes of what I would have said.

Let us at this hour enter into the holiest. Behold the way! We come by the way of atonement—"Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." I have been made to feel really ill through the fierce and blasphemous words that have been used of late by gentlemen of the modern school concerning the precious blood. I will not defile my lips by a repetition of the thrice-accursed things which they have dared to utter while trampling on the blood of Jesus. Everywhere throughout this Divine Book you meet with the precious blood. How can he call himself a Christian who speaks in flip-pant and profane language of the blood of atonement?

My Brothers and Sisters, there is no way into the holiest, even though the veil is rent, without blood. You might suppose that the high priest of old brought the blood because the veil was there. But you have to bring it with you though the veil is gone. The way is open and you have boldness to enter. But not without the blood of Jesus. It would be an unholy boldness which would think of drawing near to God without the blood of the great Sacrifice. We have always to plead the atonement. As without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, so without that blood there is no access to God.

Next, the way by which we come is an unfailing way. Please notice that word—“by a new way.” This means by a way which is always fresh. The original Greek suggests the idea of “newly slain.” Jesus died long ago but His death is the same now as at the moment of its occurrence. We come to God, dear Friends, by a way which is always effectual with God. It never, never loses one whit of its power freshness—

***“Dear dying lamb, Your precious blood
Shall never lose its power.”***

The way is not worn away by long traffic—it is always new. If Jesus Christ had died yesterday, would you not feel that you could plead His merit today? Very well, you can plead that merit after these 19 centuries with as much confidence as at the first hour. The way to God is always newly laid. In effect, the wounds of Jesus incessantly bleed our expiation. The Cross is as glorious as though He were still upon it. So far as the freshness, vigor, and force of the atoning death is concerned, we come by a new way. Let it be always new to our hearts. Let the doctrine of atonement never grow stale but let it have dew upon your souls.

Then the Apostle adds, it is a “living way.” A wonderful word! The way by which the high priest went into the Holy Place was, of course, a material way and so a dead way. We come by a *spiritual* way, suitable to our spirits. The way could not help the high priest but our way helps us abundantly. Jesus says, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.” When we come to God by this Way, the Way itself leads, guides, bears, brings us near. This way gives us life with which to come.

It is a dedicated way. “Which He has consecrated for us.” When a new road is opened it is set apart and dedicated for the public use. Sometimes a public building is opened by a king or a prince and so is dedicated to its purpose. Beloved, the way to God through Jesus Christ is dedicated by Christ and ordained by Christ for the use of poor believing sinners such as we are. He has consecrated the way towards God and dedicated it for us, that we may freely use it. Surely, if there is a road set apart for me, I may use it without fear. And the way to God and Heaven, through Jesus Christ, is dedicated by the Savior for sinners. It is the King’s highway for wayfaring men, who are bound for the City of God. “Consecrated for us!” Blessed word! Therefore, let us use it.

Lastly, it is a Christly way. When we come to God, we still come through His flesh. There is no coming to Jehovah except by the incarnate God. God in human flesh is our way to God. The substitutionary death of the Word made flesh is also the way to the Father. There is no coming to God except by representation. Jesus represents us before God and we come to God through Him who is our Covenant Head, our representative and forerunner before the Throne of the Most High. Let us never try to pray without Christ—never try to sing without Christ—never try to preach without Christ. Let us perform no holy function, nor attempt to have fellowship with God in any shape or form, except through that rent which He has made in the veil by His flesh, sanctified for us and offered upon the Cross on our behalf.

Beloved, I have done when I have just remarked upon the next two verses, which are necessary to complete the sense, but which I was obliged to omit this morning since there would be no time to handle them. We are called to take holy freedoms with God. “Let us draw near,” at once, “with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Let us do so boldly, for we have a great High Priest. The twenty-first verse reminds us of this. Jesus is the great Priest and we are the sub-priests under Him and since He bids us come near to God and Himself leads the way, let us follow Him into the inner sanctuary. Because He lives, we shall live also. We shall not die in the holy place unless He dies. God will not smite us unless He smites Him. So, “having a High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.”

And then the Apostle tells us that we may not only come with boldness because our High Priest leads the way but because we ourselves are prepared for entrance. Two things the high priest had to do before he might enter. One was to be sprinkled with blood and this we have. For “our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience.” The other requisite for the priests was to have their “bodies washed with pure water.” This we have received in symbol in our Baptism and in reality in the spiritual cleansing of regeneration. To us has been fulfilled the prayer—

***“Let the water and the blood,
From Your riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.”***

We have known the washing of water by the Word and we have been sanctified by the Spirit of His Divine Grace. Therefore let us enter into the holiest. Why should we stay away? Hearts sprinkled with blood, bodies washed with pure water—these are the ordained preparations for acceptable entrance. Come near, Beloved! May the Holy Spirit be the spirit of access to you now. Come to your God and then abide with Him! He is your Father, your All in All. Sit down and rejoice in Him. Take your fill of love. Let not your communion be broken between here and Heaven. Why should it be? Why not begin today that

sweet enjoyment of perfect reconciliation and delight in God which shall go on increasing in intensity until you behold the Lord in open vision and go no more out?

Heaven will bring a great change in condition but not in our standing, if even now we stand within the veil. It will be only such a change as there is between the perfect day and the daybreak. For we have the same sun and the same light from the sun and the same privilege of walking in the light. “Until the day break and the shadows flee away, turn, My Beloved, and be like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.” Amen and Amen.

Portion of Scripture Read Before Sermon—HEBREWS 10.
HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—318, 296, 395.

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