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THE MAN-SLAYER.

A TALK FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

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No wonder the man is running so eagerly. He is fleeing for his life. Accidentally he has killed a man, and the old Jewish law gave to the nearest relative of the dead man the right to kill the one who had slaughtered him. But the law also provided a way of escape. The man-slayer might flee to any one of certain towns, called 'cities of refuge,' and once within the gates he was safe. There were six cities of refuge in Palestine, three on each side of the river Jordan. The cities were chosen carefully, so that they might be reached as easily as possible. No matter where an unfortunate man killed another unintentionally, he could reach one of the cities without crossing a river or climbing a mountain. And they were so situated that no one should need to run too great a distance.

Now I want you to notice three things:

1. The cities of refuge were always open, ready to receive those that fled to them.

2. The man-slayer who took refuge in them was perfectly safe.

3. These cities could be reached very easily.

On Good Friday, we celebrate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. We know that He died upon the cross to save us from our sins; from the sins themselves, and from the punishment due to them. But we must flee to Him for refuge. We must come to Him ourselves. I need not tell you the way to come to Him—by prayer and trust. Let us mark:

1. Jesus Christ is always ready to receive those who flee to Him. He says: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;" which means that Christ will never reject any one who asks penitently for forgiveness and help. You cannot come to Jesus at a wrong time. The other day, if you had been at the Paymaster-General's office in London, you would have seen large numbers of people anxious to get to a certain window. At it there were clerks waiting to pay pensions. The money could be paid only on that day and at fixed hours. No matter how poor a man might be, how much he might

want the cash due to him, no matter what had kept him away at the proper time, he could not get his money except on that one day. The Lord Jesus Christ might have said that He would forgive sin only on Sunday mornings. We should have had no right to complain. But any day and any hour of the day we may pray to Him, and be certain that He will listen to us. Suppose that you had grieved father and mother, and had gone to bed without asking for-

giveness; you wake in the middle of the night, when every one is asleep and the house is quite still; you feel sorry for your fault, and would like to tell father and mother so, but you cannot get up and go to their bedroom and disturb them; you must wait till the morning before you can say what is in your heart. But at once you can tell the Lord Jesus how sorry you are for your faults, and obtain His forgiveness.

2. We are safe while Jesus protects us.

home lest everything should be taken from him before he returned. Jesus has paid our debt. He has not said that He will see that we pay it ourselves. It is done with for ever.

3. We need never to go upon a journey to seek Jesus. We can speak to Him now, just where we are. He is so close to us that He can read our very thoughts. A boy came to a minister a little time ago, and told him that he felt himself a sinner and wanted

AH CHAO, COME BACK!

A MOURNING CHINESE MOTHER.

It was a dark, dreary night, not a star gleamed forth from the gloomy sky overhead; even the wind seemed rushing by with a weird, lonely sound. There was not a light to be seen anywhere, not one lamp sent out a friendly ray upon the cheerless street, the whole city seemed asleep, for the hour was midnight. Suddenly a door opened, and a woman stepped out into the still, night air. In one hand she carried a lantern, while the basket hanging upon her other arm was filled with paper money and sycee! She walked slowly along until she came to the first corner; here she stopped, and taking out several handfuls of the paper from her basket, she placed it upon the ground and set fire to it, and as it burned rapidly up, she called out in a loud, shrill voice, "Ah Chao, come back! Ah Chao, come back!" The fire having burned out, she slowly passed to the next street corner, and went through the same performance; then to the next street, and the next, and so on and on she wandered. Her piercing cry seemed to tremble with the deep, unspoken anguish of a hopeless and bursting heart; and it grew fainter and fainter, as she crept farther and farther into the dark distance. Poor mother! Ah Chao will never come back to you again.

When she reached her home in the early dawn she found only the lifeless body of her loved one, his soul had gone into the (to her) unknown future; she could not follow him, and she was almost beside herself in the blackness of darkness of her great grief.

This son was her only child; for him she had lived and toiled and saved; she had loved him with all her heart; she had fed, clothed and educated him; now that he was twelve years old she had begun to form great plans for his future. She especially hoped that he might worship and take care of her soul after her death. Now all her hopes were blighted, and her life seemed a perfect blank.

But four days ago he was quite well; he was standing with her and many of the neighbors to watch the procession of the god of the fields go by; he had seemed afraid as the idol passed, and by and by had fallen asleep. He waked up in terror, crying, "Oh, mother, the Lao-ya (the idol) has hold of my hand, and is dragging me to the temple, to burn incense." The mother, in great fear, ran out and bought two dollars' worth of incense, candles, paper money, etc., and went quickly with them to the temple to worship; all the next day she knelt before the idol pleading for the life of her child, and all



THE AVENGER OF BLOOD.

Satan cannot harm us. And on the cross Jesus has borne our punishment. I knew a man who was afraid of being put in prison for debt; and feared still more, that everything he had in the world would be taken from him, and that his wife and children would be left without fire, or food, or shelter. Two friends of his went to his creditors and made themselves responsible for all that he owed. He could walk about the streets now. He was not afraid to leave

to be forgiven. He seemed to think that he could not be pardoned except in a chapel, or at a public service, or in a class meeting. When the minister told him that Jesus was as near to him where he stood as He would be in the chapel, he could scarcely believe it. But it was true. Yes! We can always go straight to the Saviour.

They who God's face can understand,
Feel not the workings of his hand.
—Lord Houghton.

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