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A SERMON
PREACHED IN THE CENTENARY CHURCH,
ST. JOHN, N. B.
On Sabbath Morning, June 25th 1871,
during the Conference of Eastern
British America,
BY THE REV. JESSE T. PECK, D. D.,
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY,
And Delegate from the General Conference of
the Methodist Episcopal Church of the
United States.

The First Epistle General of St. John, fifth chapter, from the fifth verse to the end.
5. "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."
6. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.
7. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
10. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

The one startling word which includes the subject of this morning's discourse is "blood."
It seems strange that blood should be connected in any way with salvation, as to our superficial minds no things are more utterly unlike each other. Yet it must be borne in mind that blood in its proper organic position is the life—the mysterious agent which bears the vitalizing power through the body, and that out of its organic position, it is the symbol of death. It views therefore, of its importance, the relations which blood occupies to life and death, it will afford us strong help in an endeavor to interpret the remarkable words of the text.

The blood first points to sin. It is impossible for us to grasp the full idea of sin. It must be remembered that there is one rule of order which governs the administration of God throughout the universe, and that rule of order is the manifestation of God's perfect will, which demands and must have perfect obedience; so that man in sinning violates that perfect unity, disturbs the government which in every part, is essential to the perfect whole, and hence he turns order into general disorder.

The far-reaching consequences of sin in this aspect are beyond the grasp of our finite powers. The law is so vast and so pure and so rigid that our attempts to measure or fathom it are utter failures, except as we can understand the outgoings of the Infinite. Yet sin in its outgoings is as broad as the law, and its heinousness cannot be reached even by contemplating the character of God, because it is impossible for us to find in Him any such searching, in the perfections of His attributes and the glory of His character.

It may, however, improve our understanding of sin in its nature and consequences, to take up one sin and observe what has been its power to harm the race. The single sin of Eden was the sin of disobedience to the law of God, which was an external act of eating the forbidden fruit. It was not a violation of law that ended when the infraction occurred. Sin did not push itself into life and die in that one act. No, it had a power to propagate itself, to fix its virus in the soul of the parent, and transmit it to the souls of his children. What malignity there must have been in that one sin, which it could not only debase the soul in which it had its origin but must deprive all men who should come after! All men in all climes and in all nations, throughout all time. The contaminating effect of that one transgression, which in the infancy of time, passed down through all the posterity of the original pair, so that among all the generations of men there has not lived one in whom it has not reappeared. Go where you may, you find manhood with all its power and vigor depraved by it; youth with all its brightness and hope exhibits its debasing tendencies; children with all their freshness and beauty show its power to deprave, and in our nurseries and even in the mother's arms, so strong and so frequent are its manifestations that all parents know it to be there.

It would seem, in reverence to the text, that God himself had in various ways attempted to prove that this outlawing of sin could not be stayed—that it must and would go on blasting and cursing the whole human race to the end of time. Let the flood be one instance. One family was selected to continue the propagation of the race. Honored of God, faithful in obedience, no doubt the purest and the best of the race, they survived a drowning world. Yet that original sin crept through the ark, and no sooner were the waters stayed than it showed itself again, and seemed to have gained new force by the terrible crisis through which it had passed.

Behold in Abraham and his descendants another trial. He received from God supernatural grace and faith—could there not be one man through whom it would be possible for sin to pass out to his descendants? Alas! here also you shall see the slinky trail of the serpent. When Isaac was moved to describe the moral condition of the Abraham family it was a putrid mass of loathsome corruption. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores by the multitude; and they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

one sin. Behold a parentage sanctified wholly through the blood of Jesus; but the taint is in the blood, so that the children of the holiest of men are full of natural depravity; the virus of sin appears in all its malignity in their descendants. Thus brethren it is evident that if the very best of us, in our natural state should say "we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Thus by all possible tests, it is settled, sin in the sense of hereditary depravity is actually coextensive with the race; and this is but one view of the malignity and strength of sin.

Another method by which we may help our efforts to gauge the enormity of a single sin is by noting its influence in the matter of actual transgression. To know that as an inevitable result of the first rebellion sin is universal and will be till the end of time, would seem enough to determine its guilt and fearful power. But we must now advance to show its resulting actual sin as well as its natural depravity universal. It is not necessary to contend that every heir of humanity becomes of necessity an actual sinner. Look around you, note the characters and actions of men, observe their every day life, and you will see that not only do all men sin, but that all men know they "have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" "they have all gone out of the way; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." If any man should set up a claim that there were exceptions to the universal fact, yet such a claim would not be sustained, for they are not to be found in his neighborhood, nor, as far as he is able to ascertain in his state, nor in his nation, and certainly not in his own person, and his own confession must go from man to man, through all lands, civilized and nominally christian. Crowded penitentiaries, the relations imposed by police and innumerable guards against overt acts which endanger the safety of person or property, show that the integrity of this law is everywhere endangered by the depraved wills of free human beings. And in the benighted parts of the earth the degradation and glaring crimes of man show that no portion of the world is free from the curse of actual sin. There is not even a town or a place on the whole face of the globe where the pure and holy laws of God are treated, from natural impulses, with even decent respect. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain under the guilt of man's transgression. It is hence just as untruthful for a man to say "I have not sinned," as it would be to say "I have no sin;" God himself affirms that "we have sinned;" "If we say that we have not sinned we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

If then a single sin can bring such fearful consequences, if it develops such dreadful tendencies to appear thus inevitably through all the ages, sin, in itself, must be more sinful, more guilty, more contaminating and ruinous than thought can conceive. Adam touched it and was turned out of Paradise—angels touched it and were turned instantly into the air; the sin in sin universal the demand for "blood."

I am now ready to announce my first proposition, already sufficiently discussed, we are GREAT SINNERS.
It is now our duty to enquire whether there is any hope for a race so guilty? Blood is indicated in our guilt, and the remedial purposes of grace. It is the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father. Consider the power and import of these words. The scope of a term is understood by its allusions. Christ is the anointed, and the allusion of the blood, is to the sacred offices he bears—Prophet, Priest and King. The blood shed for us is the blood of a Prophet. But the value of the Master's teachings is not in the information imparted, nor in the words, however chaste they may be; nor in their depth of science, nor in their literary merit, nor in the fact that they are great in their wisdom, yet simple and easy to be understood. But if you search for the force of the Divine teachings, it is to be found in the redeeming efficacy and atoning power which they represent. No wonder that the men who heard the words that proceeded from the lips of the Redeemer should ask, "How knoweth this man letters, not having learned?" "He taught as one having authority and not as the Scribes." Jesus said, "The words I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life. Blood fills all his teachings, and the end of the law for righteousness. Without His teachings might be superseded by higher wisdom; but having confirmed them by His blood, they are sealed as the ultimate truth, and the full force of the atonement is in the words. This explains their supernatural force and universal adaptation. Behold the blessing Prophet! We have had great Prophets—great in the purity of their lives and in intellectual power—great in their revelations of the future. No one of them however, could give the influence of sacrificial blood to his words of wisdom. It is this our Teacher shed His most precious blood to atone for sin. It was, it is true, the blood of a martyr dying for the Truth, but it was more; it was the blood of an atoning Prophet, and this explains the power of his simplest teachings. "They are spirit and they are life."

But it is also the blood of a King. When the prophet Isaiah saw in vision the coming of the Saviour, he said, "unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders; and He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," and He shall reign forever King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Yet in all these He is represented by the blood which he shed, for He is the Lord of the Gospel and the law, and the sovereign of Zion, as well as of Sinai. However strict and severe the exactions of this Kingdom, and however unalterable its decrees, yet He who comes to seek comes with bleeding head, and hands, and side, and feet. He is a Sovereign, yet he comes with offers of mercy. As a King he shall reign and prosper, and yet "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. All shall hear his voice, but the voice is the cry of blood—blood to atone, to save, speaking "better things than the

blood of Abel." So we may accept with joy the revelation that all power is given to Him in heaven and on earth; for it is the power of blood—the atoning blood of the King whose laws have been trampled under foot.
It is also the blood of a Priest. It is difficult to conceive how this can be, for we take our ideas of the priestly office from that of the old dispensation. How different all is here! Then the priest brought his sacrifice with him and together they stood at the altar. But now there is no animal sacrifice, for we are told to "behold" in the Priest also "the Lamb which taketh away (expiated) the sin of the world." When the offering of the blood of bulls and of goats, of lambs, of turtle doves and of pigeons, had fulfilled the typical office; then the great Antitype comes forth and places himself on the altar, a ransom for all. In Him we have a bleeding Prophet, a bleeding King, and a bleeding Priest—his teachings are effectively true, His power omnipotent, His sacrifice atones—and all by blood.

It is the blood of Jesus—and this means the blood of a Saviour, of one who stands in our place, who saves only by blood, his own atoning blood. It is the blood of God's Son, "the incarnate Son, the eternal Son of the infinite Father." We perplex ourselves by asking if it was possible that the Godhead could suffer or die, but without attempting questions beyond our depth, we may safely say that in the blood of Jesus was included all the merit and potential force of the Son of God. If the blood shed by Jesus in the Garden and on the Cross, had been examined under a microscope or by chemical analysis, it would have presented the same constituent elements as ordinary human arterial or venous blood, yet there was something beyond the reach of the most powerful microscope, something more potent than the mere material qualities of blood; something above and beyond all the known characteristics of the blood of man; something sufficient to satisfy the broken law of God; that which could reach from the altar up to the throne of God, that which could turn away the wrath of the Most High from guilty and condemned souls, and bring joy and salvation to the hopeless and lost. What do we mean by saying

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."
The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.
We do not mean to say that the literal blood shed by the Redeemer was sufficient in quantity to form a fountain in which the sinner might wash and be clean, no; but that there was in it a potency sufficient to satisfy the demands and requirements of God's holy law, which man has outraged, to restore it to its original oneness, to magnify and to make it honorable. It was the blood of God's Son. We can, therefore, understand the great Apostle when he said: "Feed the Church of God which he purchased with his own blood." This element of God's holy law, which man has outraged, to restore it to its original oneness, to magnify and to make it honorable. It was the blood of God's Son. We can, therefore, understand the great Apostle when he said: "Feed the Church of God which he purchased with his own blood." This element of God's holy law, which man has outraged, to restore it to its original oneness, to magnify and to make it honorable. It was the blood of God's Son. 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