Synopsis of the Books of the Bible

Leviticus

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Introduction

Drawing near to God in the sanctuary in the midst of His people

The Book of Leviticus is the way of drawing near to God, viewed as dwelling in the sanctuary, whether in respect of the means of doing so, or of the state in which men could; and therewith, consequently, especially the subject of the priesthood; that is, the means established of God for those outside the sanctuary drawing near unto Him; and the discernment of the defilements unbecoming those who were thus brought into relationship with God; the function of discerning these being, in any case that rendered it necessary, a part of the service of the priesthood. There are also in Leviticus the several convocations of the people in the feasts of Jehovah, which presented the special circumstances under which they drew near unto Him; and, lastly, the fatal consequences of infringing the principles established by God as the condition of these relationships with Him.

Here the communications of God are consequent upon His presence in His tabernacle, which is the basis of all the relationships we are speaking of. It is no longer the lawgiver giving regulations from above, to constitute a state of things, but one in the midst* of the people, prescribing the conditions of their relationship with Him. {* This is the character in which God puts Himself thus into relationship. Consequently most of the directions given suppose those to whom they apply to stand already in the relation of a people recognised of Him as His people. But the people being really without, and the tabernacle presenting the position in which God was putting Himself in order to be approached, the instructions which are given in cases supposing the people or the individuals to be thus placed, furnish those who are without with the means of drawing near to God, when they are in that position, though no previous relationship have existed. It is very important to observe this: it is the basis of the reasoning of the apostle, in Romans 3, for the admission of the Gentiles and so of any sinner whomsoever. It is true, nevertheless, that most of the directions apply to those who are already in proximity with the throne. Besides, all, in spite of themselves, have to do with it, although they do not approach it, and especially now that, as a testimony of grace, the blood is on the mercy-seat, and the revelation and testimony of glory without a veil, the result of grace and redemption, gone out. The conditions of relationship with the throne that God establishes, where He condescends to be approached by His creatures, are presented, which includes the details of those He sustains with His people. The reader will remember, as regards our drawing nigh to God, the position of the Christian is entirely changed from that of the Jew. Then (Heb. 9) the way into the holiest was not made manifest, and no one, not even the priests, could go into the presence of God within the veil; and the services were a remembrance of sins. Now, the work of Christ being accomplished, the veil is rent. It is not a people in a certain relationship with God yet always remaining without, drawing near to the altar, or, at best, some to the altar of incense. It is full grace going out to the world; and then, redemption being accomplished, and believers righteous before God, their having all perfect boldness to enter the holiest. Hence, our subject is not the character of approach, but the figures of the means by which we approach, in order to have communion with God. I need hardly add, the Father's love does not come in question. It was a throne of judgment which was in the sanctuary, and who could approach that?}

The sacrifice of Christ the means of approach

But whatever be the nearness and the privileges of the priestly position, the sacrifice of Christ is ever that which establishes the possibility and forms the basis of it. Hence the book begins with the sacrifices which represented His one perfect sacrifice. As presenting the work of Christ in its various characters and diverse application to us, these typical sacrifices have an interest that nothing can surpass. We will consider them with some little detail.

Different characters of types

The types which are presented to us in the scriptures are of different characters; partly, of some great principle of God's dealings, as Sarah and Hagar of the two covenants; partly, they are of the Lord Jesus Himself, in different characters, as sacrifice, priest, etc.; partly, of certain dealings of God, or conduct of men, in other dispensations; partly, of some great future acts of God's government.

Though no strict rule can be given, we can say in general that Genesis furnishes us with the chief examples of the first class; Leviticus, of the second, though some remarkable ones are found in Exodus; Numbers, of the third: those of the fourth class are more dispersed.

The employment of types to meet our capacity

The employment of types in the word of God is a feature in this blessed revelation not to be passed by. There is peculiar grace in it. That which is most highly elevated in our relationship with God almost surpasses, in the reality of it, our capacities and our ken, though we learn to know God Himself in it and enjoy this by the Holy Ghost. In itself, indeed, it is needful that it should surpass infinitely our capacities, because, if I may so speak, it is adapted to those of God, in respect of whom the reality takes place, and before whom it must be effectual, if profitable for us. All these profound and infinite objects of our faith, infinite in their value before God or in the demonstration of the principles on which He deals with us, become, by means of types, palpable and near to us. The detail of all the mercies and excellencies which are found in the reality or antitype are, in the type, presented close to the eye, with the accuracy of Him who judges of them as they are presented to His, but in a manner suited to ours, which meets our capacity; but for the purpose of elevating us to the thoughts which occupy Him Christ, according to the mind of God, in all His glory, is the picture presented. But we have all the lines and explanations of what is contained in it, in that which we hold in our hand — of Him who composed the great reality. Blessed be His name!

The tabernacle displays God's plans in grace, the means of meeting necessity and sin

To apply this to the sacrifices in the beginning of Leviticus, the establishment of the tabernacle embraces two points quite distinct, — the display of the plans of God in grace,* and the place of access to Him, and also the means of meeting the necessity and sin which gave occasion for its present exercise. All its structure was according to a pattern given in the mount — a pattern of heavenly things

including the intercourse between heaven and earth, and shews forth the order which finds its accomplishment in the better tabernacle not made with hands. But the economy of the tabernacle was only actually set up after the sin of the golden calf, when the jealousy of God against sin had already broken forth; and His grace was ministered from the throne in the sanctuary by offerings which met transgression, and transgression which in result barred the entrance of the priests at all times into the sanctuary, but supplied in grace all that met the need of a sinful people. {* My impression is that the tabernacle is the expression of the millennial state of things, save as to royalty, with which the temple is connected — the throne of God, in the holiest. I do not see that the veil will then be rent for those on earth, though all be founded on the sacrifice of Christ; but the high priest will go at all tunes into the holy place, and then in his robes of glory and beauty. The shew-bread and the seven-branched candlestick represent thus Israel in connection with Christ, as manifesting government, and light in the world, but in the place of priesthood with God. For us the veil is rent, and we enter with boldness into the holiest.}

The tabernacle economy set up after the sin of the golden calf

Hence also it is that the first mention we have of the tabernacle is upon the occasion of the sin of the golden calf, when Moses's anger waxed hot against the mad impiety which had rejected God, before they had received the details and ordinances of the law of Moses, or even the ten words from the mountain. Moses took the tent, and pitched it without the camp, far off from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of the congregation, though that really was not yet erected; and all that sought Jehovah went forth to the tabernacle of the congregation without the camp. It was a place of meeting for God and those among the people who sought Him. In the law there was no question of seeking God. It was the communication of God's will to a people already assembled, in the midst of whom God manifested Himself, according to certain demands of His holiness. But when evil had come in, and the people as a body had apostatised and broken the covenant, then the place of assembly, where God was to be sought, was set up. This was before the tabernacle, as regulated according to the pattern shewn in the mount, was set up; but it established the principle on which it was founded in the most striking manner.

The original order never carried out

The order of the tabernacle as originally instituted was never carried out, as the law in its original character never was brought in. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire the first day, and Aaron was forbidden the holiest save on the great day of atonement in another way. The tabernacle itself was set up according to the pattern, but the entrance to the inner sanctuary was closed. What was done referred to the state of sin, and was provisional, but a provision for sin, only not a finished work as we have it.

The meeting of Jehovah with the Mediator and the people through the Mediator

This meeting of Jehovah with the people, or the mediator, was twofold: apostolic, or sacrificial; that is, for the purpose of communicating His will; or of receiving the people in their worship, their failures, or

their need, even as Christ Himself is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession — expressions which allude to the circumstances of which we treat. Jehovah's presence in the tabernacle, for the communication of His will (with which we have to do only inasmuch as what occupies us is an example of it*), is thus spoken of in Exodus 25, 29. In chapter 25, after describing the structure of the ark and its appendages in the most holy place, it is said, "And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony which I will give thee. And there I will meet with thee [Moses], and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment with the children of Israel." This was for the mediator with Jehovah alone in secret. In chapter 29 we read, "A continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before Jehovah: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there will I meet with the children of Israel." That is where, though through a mediator, as all was now since the law was broken, Jehovah met the people, not Moses alone, with whom He communicated from between the cherubim in the most holy place. {* For prophecy is a thing apart.}

Chapter 1

God speaking out of the tabernacle, accessible by a provided mediation, sacrifice and priesthood

God speaks not from Sinai, but out of the tabernacle, where He is sought; where, according to the pattern of His glory, but according also to the need of those who seek His presence, He is in relationship with the people by mediation and sacrifice. In Sinai, in terrible glory, He demanded, and proposed terms of, obedience, and thereupon promised His favour. In this the communication was direct, but the people could not bear it. Here He is accessible to the sinner and to the saint, but by a provided mediation and priesthood. But then the centre and ground of our access to God thus is Christ's obedience and offering. This therefore is first presented to us when God speaks in the tabernacle.

The order of the sacrifices

The order of these sacrifices is first to be remarked. The order of their application is uniformly opposed to the order of their institution. There are four great classes of offerings: 1, The burnt-offering; 2, The meat-offering; 3, The peace-offering; and 4, The sin-offering. I name them in the order of their institution, but, in their application, when offered together, the sin-offerings always come first, for there it is restoration to God;* and, in approaching God by sacrifice, man must approach by the efficacy of that which takes away his sins, in that they have been borne by another. But in presenting the Lord Jesus Himself as the great sacrifice, His being made sin is a consequence of His offering Himself in perfectness to God, and though as made sin for us, still in His own perfectness, and for the divine glory, we say, His Father's glory; this is a great but blessed mystery. He gives Himself up, coming to do His Father's will, and is made for us sin, Him who knew no sin, and undergoes death. {* As to acceptance, the Christian has no more conscience of sins; but the Israelite had never learnt this; and hence, as we

have seen, his way of approaching served, as to the means, to portray the sinner's first coming to God. The import of Christ's sacrifice is often too little seen. Man must come as a sinner, and about and owning his sins. He cannot come truly otherwise, but when entered in peace into God's presence, feeble as we may be, we view it from God's side, and daily see more of the reality and value of this great fact which stands alone in the history of eternity, and on which all and eternal blessing is immutably founded. Every point and power of good and evil was there brought to an issue; the absolute enmity of man's heart against God revealed in grace; Satan's complete power over men; man (Christ) perfect in obedience and love to His Father in the very place needed when He was made sin; God perfect in justice against sin (it became Him), and perfect in love to the sinner. And this being accomplished, the perfect ground was laid in justice, and in what was accomplished and immutable, for the display of God's love and God's counsels, in what morally could not change.}

Christ the one all-perfect Sacrifice

Furthermore, our sins being put away, the source of communion is thus in the excellency of Christ Himself, and in His offering, who offers Himself to God, without spot; glorifying God by death inasmuch as sin was there before Him and death by sin; and He gives Himself wholly up to God's glory in respect of this state,* and then our presentation according to the preciousness of this on high, though the actual bearing of our sins be of absolute necessity to introduce us into this communion. In this is the difference of the great day of atonement. Then the blood was put on the mercy-seat in the holiest; but this, while giving access there on the ground of perfect cleansing through an offering of infinite value, was in respect of actual sins and defilement, not the pure sweet savour of the offering in itself to God. Yet it supposed sin. The offering would not have had its own character nor value if it had not. Hence, as presenting Christ, and our approach to God when sin has been fully dealt with and holiness tested, the burnt-offering, meat-offering, and peace-offering (in which latter our communion with God is presented to us), come first, and then the sin-offerings apart; needful, primarily needful to us, but not the expression of the personal perfectness of Christ, but of His sin-bearing, though perfectness were needed for that. {* It is to be remarked that we read of no positive sin-offerings before the law. The clothing of Adam may suppose it, and Genesis 4:7 may be taken to speak of it, but they are not professedly offered; burnt-offerings frequently. These suppose sin and death, and no coming to God but by sacrifice and death, and reconciliation through it. But the sacrifice is viewed in the perfect self-offering of Christ, so that God should be perfectly glorified in that which was infinitely precious in His sight, and all He was, righteousness, love, majesty, truth, purpose, all glorified in Christ's death so that He could freely act in His grace. Sin is supposed in it, and perfectness of self-sacrifice to God there where it was; but God glorified rather than individuals' sins borne. Hence worship according to the sweet savour of it is involved in it. A man far departed from God, as such I cannot come to God at all but on this ground, and it will remain valid for eternity and secure all things: the new heaven and earth are secured as the dwelling-place of righteousness by it. But my actual sins being put away is another thing. In one, the whole relationship of man, indeed of all things with God, is in question; in the other, my personal sins. Hence all acceptable sacrifice was of the former kind: sacrifices for sins when the relationship of a people with God was established, where every act referred to His actual presence.}

It is evident, from what I have said, that it is Christ we are to consider in the sacrifices which are about to engage our attention: the various forms of value and efficacy which attach to that one all-perfect sacrifice. It is true, we may consider the Christian in a subordinate point of view as presented to us here, for he should present his body a living sacrifice. He, by the fruits of charity, should present sacrifices of sweet savour, acceptable to our God by Jesus Christ; but our object now is to consider Christ in them.

The distinction between the sin-offerings and all the others

I have said that there are four great classes presented to us — burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, peace-offerings, and offerings for sin. These may be seen thus classed in chapter 10 of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But then there is a very essential distinction which divides these four into two separate classes — the sin-offerings, and all the others. The sin-offerings, as such, were not characterised as offerings made by fire, of a sweet savour unto Jehovah (although the fat was in most of them burnt on the altar, and in this respect the sweet savour was there, and so it is once said, chapter 4:31; for indeed the perfection of Christ was there though bearing our sins), the others were distinctly so characterised. Positive sins were seen in the sin-offerings: they were charged with sins. He that touched those of them which fully bore this character, as being for the whole people* (Lev. 16, Num. 19), was defiled. But in the case of the burnt-offering, though not brought for positive sins, sin is supposed; there blood was shed, and it was for propitiation, but burnt on the altar, and all was a sweet savour to God. It was Christ's whole sacrifice of Himself to God, and perfect as an offering in every respect, though sin, as such, was the occasion of it. By this sacrifice, in result, sin will be put away out of God's sight for ever — what joy! see John 1:29 and Hebrews 9:26. But then we brought to the consciousness of our state of sin say, He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This is a consequence, but the basis is that, besides bearing our sins, He glorified God perfectly there where He was made sin. It was as in the place of sin that His obedience was perfect and God perfectly glorified in all He is (John 13 and 17). Indeed there is but one word for sin and sin-offering in the original. They were burnt, but not on the altar; the fat, save in one case, of which we may speak hereafter, was (chap. 4). The other offerings were offerings made by fire of a sweet savour unto Jehovah — they present Christ's perfect offering of Himself to God, not the imposition of sins on the substitute by the Holy One, the Judge. {* In these cases the burning was outside the camp. It was the same as to the scape-goat, which immediately connected itself with the rest of the work.}

These two points in the sacrifice of Christ are very distinct and very precious. God has made Him to be sin for us, Him who knew no sin: but also is it true, that through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. Let us consider this latter, as first in the order presented in Leviticus, and naturally so.

The burnt-offering

The first sort of sacrifice, the most complete and characteristic of those characterised by being offerings made by fire of a sweet savour, was the burnt-offering. The offerer was to bring his offering,* in order to his acceptance with God, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and to kill it before Jehovah. {* The burnt-offerings as such were brought voluntarily; still, it seems clear that this is not the

sense of the Hebrew word "ratzon" here, but for his acceptance, to be in divine favour. It remains, just the same doctrinally true that Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God.}

The place of the tabernacle ritual: (1) The Holy of holies

First, of the place, the whole scene of the tabernacle ritual consisted of three parts: first, the holiest of all, the innermost part of the boarded space covered with tents, separated from the rest by a veil which hung before it, and within which was the ark of the covenant and the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat, and NOTHING ELSE. This was the throne of God, the type also of Christ, in whom God is revealed, the true ark of the covenant with the mercy-seat over it.

(2) The Holy place

The veil, the apostle tells us, signified that the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest while the old economy subsisted.* Immediately outside the veil — its efficacy, however entering within, and whence, indeed, on certain occasions, incense was taken in a censer and offered within — stood the golden altar of incense. In the same, or outer chamber of the tabernacle, called the holy, as distinguished from the most holy place, or holy of holies, stood, on either side, the shewbread and the candlestick — types, the former of Christ incarnate, the true bread in union with and head of the twelve tribes, on the one hand; and the latter, of the perfection* (still, I have no doubt, in connection with Israel in the latter day) of the Spirit, as giving light, on the other. The church owns Christ thus, and the Holy Ghost dwells in it, but what characterises it, as such, is the knowledge of a heavenly and glorified Christ, and the Holy Ghost, as in divine communications, present in unity in it. These figures, on the other hand, give us Christ in His earthly relation, and the Holy Ghost in His various displays of power, when God's earthly system is established. Compare Zechariah 4, and Revelation 11 where there is the testimony to, but not the actual perfection of, the candlestick; God's testimony on the earth. The Epistle to the Hebrews affords us all needed light as to how far and with what changes, these figures can be applied now. But that epistle never speaks of the proper relationships and privileges of the church and Christians. These are viewed as pilgrims on earth, an earthly people. There is no union with Christ. He is in heaven and we in need on earth; no mention of the Father's name, but only so much the more precious as to our access to God, and needed supplies of grace for our path down here. It is properly Christian; we are partakers of the heavenly calling; but it may reach out and give what is available for the remnant, slain after the church is gone. Into the holy place the body of the priests, and not merely the high priest, entered continually, but they only. We know who, and who alone, can now thus enter, even those who are made kings and priests, the true saints of God: only, we can add, that the veil that hid the holiest and barred the entrance is rent from top to bottom, not to be renewed again between us and God. We have boldness to enter into the holiest. The veil has been rent in His flesh. He is not merely bread from heaven or incarnate, but put to death, denoted by flesh and blood, and the door fully opened for us to enter in spirit where Christ is. Our ordinary privilege and title is in the holy place — type of the created heaven, as the most holy is of the heaven of heavens, as it is called. In a certain sense, as to spiritual approach and intercourse, the veil being rent, there is no separation between the two, though in the light which no man can approach unto God dwells inaccessible. In the heavenly

places we now are as priests, though only in spirit. {* This is a signal instance that the order set up in the wilderness was not the image, but only a shadow of good things to come; for the veil unrent forbad entrance, the rent veil gives us, through the cross, full boldness to go in. So that in relationship to God there was contrast. ** The number seven is the number of perfection, and twelve also, as may be seen in many passages of Scripture: the former, of absolute completeness in good or evil; the latter, of completeness in human administration.}

Christ's approach to God in the perfect offering of Himself

In approaching to this was the outside court, the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.* In entering this part, the first thing met with was the altar of burnt-offering, and between that and the tabernacle the laver, where the priests washed** when they entered into the tabernacle, or were occupied at the altar, to perform their service. It is evident that we approach solely by the sacrifice of Christ, and that we must be washed with water by the word before we can serve in the sanctuary. We have need also, as priests, of having our feet, at least, washed by our Advocate on high for our continual service there. (See John 13.)*** {* The door of the tabernacle of the congregation is not simply the veil of the holy place, but the court where they entered from without. The altar of burnt-offering was at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. ** It does not appear that the washing of the priests for their consecration was at the laver; that was according to what was within when they had got there. But it is always the word, which is figured by the water. *** In the first edition, I had added here the "renewing of the Holy Ghost," referring to Titus 3. But though the Holy Ghost surely renews the heart continually, yet I doubt the justice of the application of this passage here. The renewing seems more absolute there, anakainoseos. I might have simply left it out, perhaps, but that I would call the attention of the reader to the fact that "regeneration" is not the same word as being "born again." It is paliggenesia, not anagenneesis. It is only found again, to denote the millennium, in Matthew 19. It is in its import, the "washing of water," or being "born of water," not the reception of life by the Spirit. Water is a change of condition of what exists, not in itself receiving of life, which is being "born of the Spirit." it is the anakainosis.}

Christ also thus approached, but it was in the perfect offering of Himself, not by the offering of another. Nothing can be more touching, or more worthy of profound attention, than the manner in which Jesus thus voluntarily presents Himself, that God may be fully, completely, glorified in Him. Silent in His sufferings, we see that His silence was the result of a profound and perfect determination to give Himself up, in obedience, to this glory — a service, blessed be His name, perfectly accomplished, so that the Father rests in His love towards us.

Christ's absolute devotedness to the Father's glory shown in two ways

This devotedness to the Father's glory could, and indeed did, shew itself in two ways: it might be in service, and of every faculty of a living man here, in absolute devotedness to God, tested by fire even unto death; or in the giving up of life itself, giving up Himself — His life unto death, for the divine glory, sin being there. Of this latter the burnt-offering speaks; of the former, I judge, the meat-offering: while both are the same in principle as entire devotedness of human existence to God — one of the

living acting man, the other the giving up of life unto death.

Christ both Victim and Offerer

So in the burnt-offering; he who offered, offered the victim up wholly to God at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Thus Christ presented Himself for the accomplishment of the purpose and glory of God where sin was. In the type the victim and the offerer were necessarily distinct, but Christ was both, and the hands of the offerer were laud on the head of the victim in sign of identity.

Let us cite some of the passages which thus present Christ to us. First, in general, whether for life or for death, thus to glorify God; but exactly as taking the place of these sacrifices, the Spirit thus speaks of the Lord, in Hebrews 10, citing Psalm 40: "Then said I, Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Christ, then, giving Himself up entirely to the will of God is what replaces these sacrifices, the antitype of the shadows of good things to come. But of His life itself He thus speaks (John 10:18): "I lay it down of myself, no one takes it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: this commandment have I received of my Father." It was obedience, but obedience in the sacrifice of Himself; and so, speaking of His death, He says, "The prince of this world [Satan] comes, and has nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father has given me commandment, so I do." So we read in Luke 9: "And it came to pass when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." "Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14).

The result of Christ's work — introduction into the glory of God

How perfect and full of grace is this way of the Lord! as constant and devoted to draw near when God should be thus glorified, and submit to the consequences of His devotedness — consequences imposed by the circumstances in which we are placed — as man was to depart from God for his pleasure. He humbles Himself to death that the majesty and the love of God, His truth and righteousness, may have their full accomplishment through the exercise of His self-devoting love. Thus man, in His person, and through His work, is reconciled to God; takes the true and due relationship to Him; God being perfectly glorified in Him as to, and (wondrous to say) in the place of, sin, and that according to all the value of what Christ has done to glorify God. It was in the place of sin, as made it for us, for there it was God had to be glorified, and there all He is came out as nowhere else, and there perfectly, in love, light, righteousness, truth, majesty, as by man's sin He had been dishonoured; only that now it was infinite in value, God Himself, not merely human defacing of God's glory. I do not here say men, but man. And the blessed result was, not merely forgiveness, but introduction into the glory of God.

The offerer's part in the sacrifice without blemish

The sacrifice was to be without blemish; the application of this to Christ is too obvious to need comment. He was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot." The offerer* was to kill the bullock before Jehovah. This completed the likeness to Christ, for, though evidently He could not kill Himself,

He laid down His life: no one took it from Him. He did it before Jehovah. This, in the ritual of the offering, was the offerer's part, the individual's, and so Christ's as man. Man saw, in Christ's death, man's judgment — the power of Caiaphas, or the power of the world. But as offered, He offered Himself before Jehovah. {* That is, it was not yet the priest's part. It may be translated, "one was to kill him." It was completing the offering, not presenting its blood in a priestly way.}

Jehovah's and the priest's part in the pure offering

And now comes Jehovah's and the priest's part. The offering was to be made the subject of the fire of the altar of God; it was cut in pieces and washed, given up, according to the purification of the sanctuary, to the trial of the judgment of God; for fire, as a symbol, signifies always the trial of the judgment of God. As to the washing with water, it made the sacrifice typically what Christ was essentially — pure. But it has this importance, that the sanctification of it and ours is on the same principle and on the same standard. He is in this sense our sanctification. We are sanctified unto obedience. He came to do the will of His Father, and so, perfect from the beginning, learns obedience by the things which He suffered; perfectly obedient always, but His obedience put ever more thoroughly to the test, so that His obedience was continually deeper and more complete, though always perfect. He learned obedience, what it was to obey, and that by growing sufferings and the sense of what was around Him, and finally by the cross.* It was new to Him as a divine Person — to us as rebels to God — and He learned it in all its extent. {* Much deep instruction is connected with this, but its development belongs to the New Testament. See Romans 12 and 6, and 1 Peter.}

The water of cleansing and its symbolical use in baptism

Furthermore, this washing of water, in our case, is by the word, and Christ testifies of Himself that man should live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. This difference evidently and necessarily exists, that as Christ had life in Himself, and was the life (see John 1:4; 1 John 1:1-2,) we, on the other hand, receive this life from Him; and while ever obedient to the written word Himself, the words which flowed from His lips were the expression of His life — the direction of ours.

We may pursue the use of this water of cleansing yet farther. It is the power of the Spirit also, exercised as by the word and will of God;* so even the commencement of this life in us. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). And so in 1 Peter 1:23, we are born of the incorruptible seed of the word. But then this finds us walking in sins and living in them, or, in another aspect, dead in them. These are really the same thing, for being alive in sins is being spiritually dead towards God; only the latter sets out with our whole state discovered; the former deals with our responsibility. In Ephesians we are viewed as dead in sins; in Romans alive in them; in Colossians chiefly the latter, but the former is touched on. The cleansing must be, therefore, by the death and resurrection of Christ; death to sin and life to God in Him. Hence, on His death, was shed forth out of His side water and blood, cleansing as well as expiating power. Death then is the only cleanser of sin as well as its expiation. "He that is dead is freed** from sin," and water thus became the sign of death, for this alone cleansed. This truth of real sanctification was necessarily hidden under the law, save in figures: for the law applied itself to man, alive, and claimed his obedience. Christ's death

revealed it. In us — that is, in our flesh — good does not dwell. Hence, in the symbolical use of water in baptism, we are told that as many of us as are baptised unto Christ, are baptised unto His death. But it is evident that we cannot stop at death in itself. In us it would be the herald and witness of condemnation, but, having life in Christ, death in Him is death to the life of sin and guilt. It is the communication of the life of Christ which enables us thus to treat the old man as dead, and ourselves as having been dead in trespasses and sins. The body is dead because of sin, and the Spirit is life because of righteousness, if Christ be in you. So we are told as to the truth of our natural state (it is not here what faith holds the old man to be if Christ be in us): "You, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he quickened together with him." When we were dead in sin, He has quickened us together with Him; and, as baptised unto His death, it is added, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It is only in the power of a new life that we can hold ourselves to be dead to sin. And, indeed, it is only by known redemption we can say so. It is when we have apprehended the power of Christ's death and resurrection, and know that we are in Him through the Holy Ghost, that we can say, I am crucified with Him; I am not in the flesh. We know then, that this cleansing, which was apprehended as a mere moral effect in Judaism, is, by the communication of the life of Christ to us, that by which we are sanctified, according to the power of His death and resurrection, and sin as a law in our members is judged. The first Adam, as a living soul, corrupted himself; the last, as a quickening Spirit, imparts to us a new life.

Christ's baptism of fire

But, if it is the communication of the life of Christ which, through redemption, is the starting-point of this judgment of sin, it is evident that that life in Him was essentially and actually pure; in us, the flesh lusts against the Spirit. He, even according to the flesh, was born of God. But He was to undergo a baptism, not merely to fulfil all righteousness as living — though perfectly pure — in a baptism of water, but a trial of all that was in Him by the baptism of fire. "I have," says He, "a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

Here, then, Christ, completely offered up to God for the full expression of His glory, undergoes the full trial of judgment. The fire tries what He is. He is salted with fire. The perfect holiness of God, in the power of His judgment, tries to the uttermost all that is in Him. The bloody sweat, and affecting supplication in the garden, the deep sorrow of the cross, in the touching consciousness of righteousness, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" — as to any lightening of the trial, an unheeded cry — all mark the full trial of the Son of God. Deep answered unto deep, — all Jehovah's waves and billows passed over Him. But as He had offered Himself perfectly to the thorough trial, this consuming fire and trying of His inmost thoughts did, could, produce nought but a sweet savour to God. It is remarkable that the word used for burning the burnt-offering is not the same as that of the sin-offering, but the same as that of burning incense.

The sacrifice of a sweet savour

In this offering, then, we have Christ's perfect offering up of Himself, and then tried in His inmost parts by fiery trial of God's judgment. The consuming of His life was a sacrifice of a sweet savour, all

infinitely agreeable to God — not a thought, not a will, but was put to the test — His life consumed in it; but all, without apparent answer to sustain, given up to God; all was purely a sweet savour to Him. But there was more than this. The greater part of what has been said would apply to the meat-offering. But the burnt-offering was to make atonement, an expression not used in chapter 2. There the personal intrinsic perfectness of Christ was tested, and the manner of His incarnation, what He was as man down here unfolded, but death was the first element of the burnt-offering, and death was by sin. There where man was (otherwise for him it could not be); where sin was; where Satan's power as death was; where God's irreversible judgment was, Christ had to glorify God, and it was a glory not otherwise to be displayed: love, righteousness, majesty, in the place of sin and death. Christ, who knew no sin, made sin for us, in perfect obedience and love to His Father goes down to death; and God is glorified there, Satan's power of death destroyed, God glorified in man according to all He is, sin being come in, in obedience and love. He was in the place of sin, and God glorified, as no creation, no sinlessness, could. All was a sweet savour in that place, and according to what God was as to it in righteousness and love.

The sweet savour of Christ's sinless sacrifice and its acceptance made ours

When Noah offered his burnt-offering, it is said, "And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour, and Jehovah said in his heart, I will no more curse the ground for man's sake, for the imaginations of man's heart are only evil continually." It had repented Him that He had made man, and grieved Him at His heart; but now, on this sweet savour, Jehovah says in His heart, "I will no more curse." Such is the perfect and infinite acceptableness of Christ's offering up of Himself to God. It is not in the sacrifice we are considering that He has the imposition of sins on Him (that was the sin-offering), but the perfectness, purity, and self-devotedness of the victim, but in being made sin, and that ascending in sweet savour to God. In this acceptability — in the sweet savour of this sacrifice — we are presented to God. All the delight which God finds in the odour of this sacrifice — blessed thought! — we are accepted in. Is God perfectly glorified in this, in all that He is? He is glorified then in receiving us. He receives us as the fruit and testimony of that in which He has been perfectly glorified, and that as revealed in redemption, in which all that He is is wrought out in revelation. Does He delight in what Christ is, in this His most perfect act? He so delights in us. Does this rise up before Him, a memorial for ever, in His presence, of delight? We, also, in the efficacy of it, are presented to Him; in one sense we are that memorial. It is not merely that the sins have been effaced by the expiatory act; but the perfect acceptability of Him who accomplished it and glorified God perfectly in it, the sweet savour of His sinless sacrifice, is our good odour of delight before God, and is ours; its acceptance, even Christ's, is ours.

Atonement made in obedience unto death

And we are to remark that, though distinct from laying our sins upon Him, yet death implied sin, and the sacrifice of Christ, as burnt-offering, had the character which resulted from sin being in question before God, namely, death. It made the trial and suffering so much the more terrible; His obedience was tested before God in the place of sin, and He was obedient unto death, not in the sense of bearing sins and putting them away, though in the same act, but in the perfection of His offering of Himself to God, and obedience tested by God; tested by being dealt with as sin, and therein, only, and a perfect sweet

savour. Hence it was atonement; and, in one sense, of a deeper kind than the bearing of sins, that is, as the test of obedience and glorifying God in it. If we have found peace in forgiveness we cannot too much study the burnt-offering. It is that one act in the history of eternity in which the basis of all that in which God has glorified Himself morally, that is, revealed Himself as He is, and of all that in which our happiness is founded (and its sphere) — for blessed be God they go together — is laid; and laid in such a way that Christ could say, Therefore doth My Father love Me; and that in total, self-sacrifice made sin before God (oh, wondrous thought!) and for us. It became Him. Where is God's righteousness against sin known? where His holiness? where His infinite love? where His moral majesty? where what became Him? where His truth? where man's sin? where His perfectness? and, absolutely, where Satan's power, but its nullity too? All in the cross, and essentially in the burnt-offering. It is not as bearing sins, but as absolutely offered to God and in atonement — blood shedding about sin.

The burnt-offering wholly for and to God

There is another point to remark in this sacrifice distinguishing it. It was wholly for and to God; for us no doubt, but still wholly to God. Of other sacrifices (not of the two first, for sin — but of these hereafter) in some form or other men partook, of this not; it was wholly for God and on the altar. It was thus the grand absolute essential sacrifice; as to its effect, connected with us, as blood-shedding was (Heb. 9:26 and John 1:29, the Lamb of God) present in it (compare Eph. 5:2). Hence, though having the stamp of sin being there in blood-shedding and propitiation, it was absolutely and wholly sweet savour, wholly to God.

Chapter 2

The humanity of Christ contrasted with ours

I now turn to the meat-offering. This presents to us the humanity of Christ; His grace and perfectness as a living man, but still as offered to God and fully tested. It was of fine flour without leaven, mingled with oil and frankincense. The oil was used in two ways; it was mingled with the flour, and the cake was anointed with it. The presenting (Christ's presenting Himself as an offering to God) even unto death, and His actually undergoing death, and shedding blood,* must have come first; for, without the perfectness of this will even unto death, and that shedding of blood by which God was perfectly glorified where sin was, nothing could have been accepted; yet Christ's perfectness as a man down here had to be proved, and that by the test of death and the fire of God. But the atoning work being wrought, and His obedience perfect from the beginning (He came to do His Father's will), all the life was perfect and acceptable as man, a sweet savour under the trial of God — His nature as man.** Abel was accepted by blood; Cain, who came in the way of nature, offering the fruit of his toil and labour, was rejected. All that we can offer of our natural hearts is "the sacrifice of fools," and is founded on what is failure in the spring of any good, on the sin of hardness of heart, which does not recognise our condition — our sin and estrangement from our God. What could be a greater evidence of hardness of heart than, under the effects and consequences of sin, driven from Eden, to come and offer offerings, and these offerings the fruit of the judicial toil of the curse consequent on sin, as if nothing at all had happened? It

was the perfection of blind hardness of heart. {* And this for a double reason: He came to meet our case, and we were in sin, and the basis of all must be blood-shedding in virtue of what God is, and His obedience all through must have this perfect character — unto death. Hence, too, there was no eating it. Sin being there, it was according to what God is, and wholly to God. Sin was before Him and He glorified as to it. ** Thus the holocaust gives what the sinful man's state according to God's glory needed; the meat-offering, the sinless perfect man in the power of the Spirit of God in obedience; for His life was obedience in love.}

Man's will and Christ's perfect obedience to His Father's will

But, on the other hand, as Adam's first act, when in blessing, was to seek his own will (and hence by disobedience he was, with his posterity such as he, in this world of misery, alienated from God in state and will), Christ was in this world of misery, devoting Himself in love, devoting Himself to do His Father's will. He came here emptying Himself. He came here by an act of devotedness to His Father, at all cost to Himself, that God might be glorified. He was in the world, the obedient man, whose will was to do His Father's will, the first grand act and source of all human obedience, and of divine glory by it. This will of obedience and devotedness to His Father's glory, stamped a sweet savour on all that He did: all He did partook of this fragrance.

It is impossible to read John's,* or indeed any of the Gospels, where what He was, His Person, specially shines forth, without meeting, at every moment, this blessed fragrance of loving obedience and self-renouncement. It is not a history — it is Himself, whom one cannot avoid seeing, — and also the wickedness of man, which violently forced its way through the coverture and holy hiding-place which love had wrought around Him, and forced into view Him who was clothed with humility — the divine Person that passed in meekness through the world that rejected Him: but it was only to give all its force and blessedness to the self-abasement, which never faltered, even when forced to confess His divinity. It was "I am," but in the lowliness and loneliness, of the most perfect and self-abased obedience; no secret desire to hold His place in His humiliation, and by His humiliation: His Father's glory was the perfect desire of His heart. It was, indeed, "I am" that was there, but in the perfectness of human obedience. This reveals itself everywhere. "It is written," was His reply to the enemy, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "It is written" was His constant reply. "Suffer it thus far," says He to John the Baptist, "thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." "That give," says He to Peter, though the children be free, "for me and for thee." This historically. In John, where, as we have said, His Person shines more forth, it is more directly expressed by His mouth: "This commandment have I received of my Father," "and I know that his commandment is life eternal." "As the Father has given me commandment, so I do." "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do." "I have kept," says He, "my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." "If a man walk in the day, he stumbles not." {* In John, the divine displayed in man, specially comes out. Hence Gospel attracts the heart, while it offends infidelity.}

The Lord's blessed humiliation revealing Him as God's Son

Many of these citations are on occasions where the careful eye sees through the blessed humiliation of the Lord, the divine nature — God — the Son, only more bright and blessed, because thus hidden; as the sun, on which man's eyes cannot gaze, proves the power of its rays in giving full light through the clouds which hide and soften its power. If God humbles Himself, He still is God; it is always He who does it. "He could not be hid." This absolute obedience gave perfect grace and savour to all He did. He appeared ever as one sent. He sought the glory of the Father that sent Him. He saved whoever came to Him, because He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him: and as they would not come without the Father's drawing, their coming was His warrant for saving them, for He was to do implicitly the Father's will. But what a spirit of obedience is here! He saves whom? whomsoever the Father gives Him — the servant of His will. Does He promise glory? "It is not mine to give, but to those for whom it is prepared of my Father." He must reward according to the Father's will. He is nothing, but to do all, to accomplish all, His Father pleased. But who could have done this, save He who could, and He who at the same time would, in such obedience, undertake to do whatever the Father would have done? The infiniteness of the work, and capacity for it, identify themselves with the perfectness of obedience, which had no will but to do that of another. Yet was He a simple, humble, lowly man, but God's Son, in whom the Father was well pleased.

The fine flour of the meat-offering, the perfect, equal and even humanity of Jesus

Let us now see the fitting of this humanity in grace for this work. This meat-offering of God, taken from the fruit of the earth, was of the finest wheat; that which was pure, separate, and lovely in human nature was in Jesus under all its sorrows, but in all its excellence, and excellent in its sorrows. There was no unevenness in Jesus, no predominant quality to produce the effect of giving Him a distinctive character. He was, though despised and rejected of men, the perfection of human nature. The sensibilities, firmness, decision (though this attached itself also to the principle of obedience), elevation, and calm meekness which belong to human nature, all found their perfect place in Him. In a Paul I find energy and zeal; in a Peter ardent affection; in a John tender sensibilities and abstraction of thought united to a desire to vindicate what he loved, which scarce knew limit. But the quality we have observed in Peter predominates, and characterises him. In a Paul, blessed servant though he was, he does not repent, though he had repented. He had no rest in his spirit when he found not Titus, his brother. He goes off to Macedonia, though a door was opened in Troas. He wist not that it was the high priest. He is compelled to glory of himself. In him, in whom God was mighty towards the circumcision, we find the fear of man break through the faithfulness of his zeal. John, who would have vindicated Jesus in his zeal, knew not what manner of spirit he was of, and would have forbidden the glory of God, if a man walked not with them. Such were Paul, and Peter, and John.

But in Jesus, even as man, there was none of this unevenness. There was nothing salient in His character, because all was in perfect subjection to God in His humanity, and had its place, and did exactly its service, and then disappeared. God was glorified in it, and all was in harmony. When meekness became Him, He was meek; when indignation, who could stand before His overwhelming and withering rebuke? Tender to the chief of sinners in the time of grace; unmoved by the heartless

superiority of a cold Pharisee (curious to judge who He was); when the time of judgment is come, no tears of those who wept for Him moved Him to other words than, "Weep for yourselves and your children," — words of deep compassion, but of deep subjection to the due judgment of God. The dry tree prepared itself to be burned. On the cross, when His service was finished, tender to His mother, and entrusting her, in human care, to one who, so to speak, had been His friend, and leant on His bosom; no ear to recognise her word or claim when His service occupied Him for God; putting both blessedly in their place when He would shew that before His public mission He was still the Son of the Father, and though such, in human blessedness, subject to the mother that bare Him, and Joseph His father as under the law; a calmness which disconcerted His adversaries; and, in the moral power which dismayed them by times, a meekness which drew out the hearts of all not steeled by wilful opposition. What keenness of edge to separate between the evil and the good!

Jesus' perfect humanity judging all that it found in man

True, the power of the Spirit did this afterwards in calling men out together in open confession, but the character and Person of Jesus did it morally. There was a vast work done (I speak not of expiation) by Him, who, as to outward result, laboured in vain. Wherever there was an ear to hear, the voice of God spoke, by what Jesus was as a man, to the heart and conscience of His sheep. He came in by the door, and the porter opened, and the sheep heard His voice. The perfect humanity of Jesus, expressed in all His ways, and penetrating by the will of God, judged all that it found in man and in every heart. But this blessed subject has carried us beyond our direct object.

In a word, then, His humanity was perfect, all subject to God, all in immediate answer to His will, and the expression of it, and so necessarily in harmony. The hand that struck the chord found all in tune: all answered to the mind of Him whose thoughts of grace and holiness, of goodness, yet of judgment of evil, whose fulness of blessing in goodness were sounds of sweetness to every weary ear, and found in Christ their only expression. Every element, every faculty in His humanity, responded to the impulse which the divine will gave to it, and then ceased in a tranquillity in which self had no place. Such was Christ in human nature. While firm where need demanded, meekness was what essentially characterised Him as to contrast with others, because He was in the presence of God, His God, and all that in the midst of evil, — His voice was not heard in the street, — for joy can break forth in louder strains when all shall echo, "Praise his name, his glory."

The unleavened cakes, a sweet savour to God

But this faultlessness of the human nature of our Lord attaches itself to deeper and more important sources, which are presented to us in this type negatively and positively. If every faculty thus obeyed and were the instrument of the divine impulse in its place, it is evident that the will must be right — that the spirit and principle of obedience must be its spring; for it is the action of an independent will which is the principle of sin. Christ, as a divine Person, had the title of an independent will. "The Son quickens whom he will;" but He came to do His Father's will. His will was obedience, sinless therefore, and perfect. Leaven, in the word, is the symbol of corruption — "the leaven of malice and wickedness." In the cake, therefore, which was to be offered as a sweet savour to God, there was no leaven: where

leaven was, it could not be offered as a sweet savour to God. This is thrown into relief by the converse: there were cakes made with leaven, and it was forbidden to offer them as sweet savour, an offering made by fire. This occurred in two cases, one of which, the most important and significative, and sufficing to establish the principle, is noticed in this chapter.

The cakes baked with leaven required a sin-offering

When the firstfruits were offered, two cakes were offered baked with leaven, but not for an offering for a sweet savour. Burnt-offerings and meat-offerings were also offered, and for a sweet savour; but the offering of the firstfruits — not (see verse 12 of this chapter, and Lev. 23). And what were these firstfruits? The church, sanctified by the Holy Ghost. For this feast and offering of the firstfruits was the acknowledged and known type of the day of Pentecost — in fact was the day of Pentecost. We are, says the Apostle James, a kind of firstfruits of His creatures. It will be seen (Lev. 23) that, the day of Christ's resurrection, the first of the fruits was offered, ears of corn unbroken, unbruised. Clearly there was no leaven there. He rose, too, without seeing corruption. With this no sin-offering was offered, but with the leavened cakes (which represented the assembly sanctified by the Holy Ghost to God, but still living in corrupted human nature) a sin-offering was offered; for the sacrifice of Christ for us, answered for and puts away in God's sight the leaven of our corrupted nature, overcome (but not ceasing to exist) by the operation of the Holy Ghost; by reason of which nature, in itself corrupt, we could not, in the trial of God's judgment, be a sweet savour, an offering made by fire; but, by means of Christ's sacrifice, which met and answered the evil, could be offered to God, as is said in Romans, a living sacrifice. Hence it is said, not merely that Christ has answered for our sins, but that "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." God has condemned sin in the flesh, but it was in Christ as for, that is as a sacrifice for, sin, making atonement, undergoing the judgment due to it, being made sin for us because of it, but dying in doing so, so that we reckon ourselves dead. The condemnation of the sin is passed in His death, but death to it is therein come to us.

It is important for a troubled but tender and faithful conscience to remember that Christ has died, not merely for our sins,* but for our sin; for surely this troubles a faithful conscience much more than many sins past. {* Judgment in the last day is according to works, but by the state of sin we were wholly alienated from God and lost.}

As the cakes then, which represent the church, were baked with leaven, and could not be offered for a sweet savour, so the cake, which represented Christ, was without leaven, a sweet savour, and offering made by fire unto Jehovah. The trial of the Lord's judgment found a perfect will, and the absence of all evil, or spirit of independence. It was "thy will be done" which characterised the human nature of the Lord, filled with and animated by the fulness of the Godhead, but the man Jesus, the offering of God.

Leavened cakes in the peace-offering the ordained symbol of what is ever in man

There is another example of the converse of this which I may notice in passing — the peace-offerings. There Christ had His part, man also. Hence in this were found cakes made with leaven along with the others which were without it. That offering, which represented the communion of the assembly connected with the sacrifice of Christ, necessarily brought in man, and the leaven was there — ordained symbol of that leaven which is ever found in us. The assembly is called to holiness; the life of Christ in us is holiness to the Lord; but it remains ever true that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing.

The cake to be mingled with oil, symbol of the purity of the Spirit

This leads us to another great principle presented to us in this type: namely, the cake was to be mingled with oil. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and in ourselves, born simply of the flesh, we are naturally nothing but corrupted and fallen flesh — "of the will of the flesh." Though we are born of the Spirit of God, this does not uncreate the old nature. It may attenuate to any conceivable degree its active force, and control altogether its operations;* but the nature remains unchanged. The nature of Paul was as disposed to be puffed up when he had been in the third heaven, as when he had the letter of the chief priest in his robe to destroy the name of Christ if he could. I do not say the disposition had the same power, but the disposition was as bad or worse, for it was in the presence of greater good. {* We never have any excuse for any sin of act or thought, because Christ's grace is sufficient for us, and God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear. It may be that at a given moment we may not have power, but then there has been neglect.}

But the will of the flesh had no part whatever in the birth of Christ. His human nature flowed as simply from the divine will as the presence of the divine upon earth. Mary, bowing in single-eyed and exquisite obedience, displays with touching beauty the submission and bowing of her heart and understanding to the revelation of God. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord [Jehovah], be it unto me according to thy word." He knew no sin; His human nature itself was conceived of the Holy Ghost. That holy thing which was born of the virgin was to be called the Son of God. He was truly and thoroughly man, born of Mary, but He was man born of God. So I see this title, Son of God, applied to the three several estates of Christ: Son of God, Creator, in Colossians, in Hebrews, and in other passages which allude to it; Son of God, as born in the world; and declared Son of God with power as risen again from the dead.

The cake anointed with oil, the power of the Spirit

The cake* was made mingled with oil, just as the human nature of Christ had its being and character, its taste, from the Holy Ghost, of which oil is ever and the known symbol. But purity is not power, and it is in another form that spiritual power, acting in the human nature of Jesus, is expressed. {* This was in various forms, but all bringing out the two principles noticed. First, the great general truth: fine flour, oil poured on it, and frankincense; baken in the oven, cakes mingled, or wafers anointed, with oil — of course unleavened; if in a pan, flour unleavened mingled with oil; if in the frying-pan, fine flour with oil. Thus in all forms in which Christ could be looked at as Man, there was absence of sin; His human nature formed in the power and character of, and anointed also with, the Holy Ghost. For we may consider His human nature, as such in itself: oil is poured on it. I may see it tried to the uttermost: it is

still purity, and the grace and expression of the Holy Ghost, in its inward nature, in it. I may see it displayed before men, and it is in Holy Ghost power. We may see both together in essential, in inward, reality of character, in public walk, in every part (as presented to God) of that nature which was perfect and formed by Holy Ghost power: absence of all evil, and the Holy Ghost's power is manifested in it. So, when broken into pieces, every part of it was anointed with oil, to shew that if Christ's life were, so to speak, taken to pieces, every detail and element of it was in the perfectness of, and characterised by, the Holy Ghost.}

The cakes were to be anointed with oil; and it is written how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. It was not that anything was wanting in Jesus. In the first place, as God, He could have done all things, but He had humbled Himself, and was come to obey. Hence, only when called and anointed, He presents Himself in public, although His interview with the doctors in the temple shewed His relation with the Father from the beginning.

The difference between new birth and the Spirit's anointing and sealing

There is a certain analogy in our case. It is a different thing to be born of God, and sealed and anointed with the Holy Ghost. The day of Pentecost, Cornelius, the believers of Samaria on whom the apostle laid their hands — all prove this, as also many passages on the subject. We are all "the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus." But "because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." "This spake he," says John, "of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." The Holy Ghost may have produced, by a new nature, holy desires, and the love of Jesus, without the consciousness of deliverance and power — the joy of His presence in the knowledge of the finished work of Christ. As to the Lord Jesus, we know that this second act, of anointing, was accomplished in connection with the perfectness of His Person, as it could, because He was righteous in Himself, when, after His baptism by John (in which He who knew no sin placed Himself with His people, then the remnant of Israel, in the first movement of grace in their hearts, shewn in going to John, to be with them in all the path of that grace from beginning to end, its trials and its sorrows), He, sinless, was anointed by the Holy Ghost, descending in a bodily shape like a dove, and was led of the Spirit into the conflict for us, and returned conqueror in its power, in the power of the Spirit, into Galilee. I say conqueror in its power; for if Jesus had repulsed Satan simply by divine power as such, firstly, there evidently could have been no conflict; and secondly, no example or encouragement for us. But the Lord repulsed him by a principle which is our duty every day — obedience, intelligent obedience; employing the word of God, and repulsing Satan with indignation the moment he openly shews himself such.* If Christ entered into His course with the testimony and joy of a Son, He entered into a course of conflict and obedience (He might bind the strong man, but He had the strong man to bind). {* The two first temptations (Matt. 4) were the wiles of the enemy. In the last he is openly Satan.}

So we. Joy, deliverance, love, abounding peace, the Spirit of sonship, the Father known as accepting us: such is the entrance to the christian course, but the course we enter on is conflict and obedience: leave

the latter, and we fail in the former. Satan's effort was to separate these in Jesus. If Thou be the Son, use Thy power — make stones into bread — act by Thine own will. The answer of Jesus is, in sense, I am in the place of obedience — of servitude; I have no command. It is written, Man shall live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. I rest in My state of dependence.

The power of the Spirit used by Jesus to display more perfect service It was power, then, but power used in the state and in the accomplishment of obedience. The only act of disobedience which Adam could commit he did commit; but He, who could have done all things as to power, only used His power to display more perfect service, more perfect subjection. How blessed is the picture of the Lord's ways! and that, in the midst of the sorrows, and enduring the consequences of the disobedience, of man, of the nature He had taken in everything save sin. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, [seeing the state we are in,] in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Jesus, then, was in the power of the Spirit in conflict. Jesus was in the power of the Spirit in obedience. Jesus was in the power of the Spirit in casting out devils, and bearing all our infirmities. Jesus was also in the power of the Spirit in offering Himself without spot to God; but this belonged rather to the burnt-offering. In what He did do, and in what He did not do, He acted by the energy of the Spirit of God. Hence it is that He presents an example to us, followed with mingled energies, but by a power by which we may do greater things, if it be His will, than He — not be more perfect, but do greater things; and morally, as the apostle tells us, all things. On earth He was absolutely perfect in obedience, but by that itself He did not, and, in the moral sense, could not, do many things, which He can do, and manifest now, by His apostles and servants. For, exalted at the right hand of God, He was to manifest, even as man, power, not obedience; "Greater things than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father."

The Christian place of obedience as servants to Christ

This puts us in the place of obedience, for by the power of the Spirit we are servants to Christ — diversities of ministrations, but the same Lord. Hence greater works were done by the apostles, but mingled in their personal walk with all sorts of imperfections. With whom did Jesus contend, even if He was in the right? before whom manifest the fear of man? when did He repent of an act which He had done, even if afterwards there was no reason for repentance? No! there was a greater exercise of power in apostolic service, as Jesus had promised; but in vessels whose weakness shewed all the praise to be of Another, and whose obedience was carried on in conflict with another will in themselves. This was the great distinction. Jesus had never need of a thorn in the flesh, lest He should be exalted above measure. Blessed Master! Thou didst speak that Thou knewest, and testifiedst that Thou hadst seen; but to do so Thou hadst emptied, humbled Thyself, made Thyself of no reputation, and taken the form of a servant, in order to our being exalted by it.

The height, the consciousness of the height, from which He came down, the perfectness of the will in which He obeyed where He was, made no exaltation needed to Him. Yet He looked on the joy that was set before Him, and was not ashamed, for He was humbled even to this, to rejoice in having respect to the recompense of reward. And He has been highly exalted. "Because of the savour of thy good

ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth." For there was yet besides, in the meat-offering, the frankincense — the savour of all Christ's graces.

The frankincense

How much of our graces is presented to the acceptance of man, and consequently the flesh often mistaken for grace, or mixed with it, being judged of according to the judgment of man! But in Jesus all His graces were presented to God. True, man could, or ought to have discerned them as the odour of the frankincense, diffusing itself around, where all was burnt to God; but it was all burnt as a sweet savour to God. And this is perfection.

How few so present their charity to God, and bring God into their charity, exercising it for and towards Him, though in behalf of man, so that they persevere nothing the less in its exercise, though the more they love, the less they be loved! it is for God's sake. So far as this is the case, it is indeed a sweet odour to God; but this is difficult: we must be much before God. This was perfectly the case with Christ; the more faithful He was, the more despised and opposed; the more meek, the less esteemed. But all this altered nothing, because He did all to God alone: with the multitude, with His disciples, or before His unjust judges, nothing altered the perfectness of His ways, because in all the circumstances all was done to God. The incense of His service and His heart, of His affections, went ever and always up, and referred themselves to God; and surely abundant frankincense, and sweet its odour, in the life of Jesus. The Lord smelled a sweet savour, and blessing flowed forth, and not the curse, for us. This was added to the meat-offering, for in truth it was in effect produced in His life by the Spirit, but always this frankincense ascended; so of His intercession, for it was the expression of His gracious love. His prayers, as the holy expression of dependence, infinitely precious and attractive to God, were all sweet odour, as frankincense, before Him. "The house was filled with the odour of the ointment." And just as sin is taking self instead of God, this was taking God instead of self, and this is perfection. And it is power too, because then circumstances have no power over self And this is perfection in going through the world. Jesus was always Himself in all circumstances; yet for that very reason we feel them all according to God — not self. We may add, too, as Satan led to one and so slavery to him, so the other is in the power and leading of the Holy Ghost.

Honey forbidden in the sacrifice

There was yet another thing forbidden, as well as leaven, in the sacrifice — namely, honey, that which was most sweet to the natural taste, as the affections of those we love after the flesh, happy associations, and the like. It is not that these were evil. "Hast thou found honey?" says the wise man, "eat so much as is sufficient, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it." When Jonathan took a little he had found in the wood, in the day of service and the energy of faith for Israel, his eyes were lightened. But it cannot enter into a sacrifice. He who could say, "Mother, behold thy son," and "Son, behold thy mother," even in the terrible moment of the cross, when His service was finished, could also say, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"* when He was in the simplest accomplishment of His service. He was a stranger to His own mother's sons, as Levi, in the blessing of Moses, the man of God — Levi, who was offered as an offering to God of the people (Num. 8:11), "who said unto his father and his

mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant." {* In the first case in which this happens, after saying it, He goes down immediately with His disciples, and His mother John 2:12), and brethren. He could be in the midst of all that influences man naturally, yet separate from it because He was inwardly perfect. All the gospels, and personally John 19:26, shew these natural relations formed of God fully owned.}

Christ the food of the priests of God

Yet another thing remains to be observed. In the burnt-offering all was burnt to God, for Christ offered Himself wholly up to God. But the human nature of Christ is the food of the priests of God; Aaron and his sons were to eat what was not burned in the fire, of the meat-offering. Christ was the true bread, come down from heaven, to give life unto the world, that we (through faith, priests and kings) may eat thereof and not die. It was holy, for Aaron and his sons alone to eat; for who indeed ever fed on Christ but those who, sanctified by the Holy Ghost, live the life of faith, and feed on the food of faith? And is not Christ the food of our souls, as sanctified to God, yea, sanctifying us also ever to God? Do not our souls recognise in the meek and humble holy One — in Him who shines as the light of human perfectness and divine grace amongst sinful men — what feeds, nourishes, and sanctifies? Cannot our souls feel what it is to be offered to God, in tracing, by the sympathy of the Spirit of Jesus in us, the life of Jesus toward God, and before men in the world? An example to us, He presents the impress of a man living to God, and draws us after Him, and that by the attraction of what He was — Himself the force which carries on in the way He trod, while our delight and joy are in it. Are not our affections occupied and assimilated in dwelling with delight on what Jesus was here below? We admire, are humbled, and become conformed to Him through grace. Head and source of this life in us, the display of its perfection in Him draws forth and develops its energies and lowliness in us. For who could be proud in fellowship with the humble Jesus? Humble, He would teach us to take the lowest place, but that He had taken it Himself, the privilege of His perfect grace. Blessed Master, may we at least be near to and hidden in Thee!

Difference between eating of the meat- and peace-offerings

This is true, but there is a difference to be made here. In the peace-offerings there was also an eating of the flesh of the sacrifice besides what the priests had. Those who ate were Israelites and clean, and they ate together as a convivial feast. There was a common enjoyment, fellowship, founded on the offering of the blood and of the fat to God, that is of Christ as offered to God in death for us — the sin-offerings are assimilated in this last (Lev. 4:10, 26, 31, 35), and the partaking of those who partook of the feast was carefully connected with this. This was common and just joy, thanksgiving for blessings, or voluntarily as rejoicing in the Lord's blessing, it was "Shalom," and was fellowship in it, the fruit of redemption and grace. The case of the meat-offering was that of one, himself consecrated to God, entering into and feeding on the perfectness of Christ Himself as offering Himself to God. The priests alone ate of it as such.

The salt of the covenant of God

How vast too the grace which has introduced us into this intimateness of communion, has made us priests in the power of quickening grace, to partake of that in which God our Father delights; that which is offered to Him as a sweet savour, an offering made by fire to Jehovah; that with which the table of God is supplied! This is sealed by covenant as a perpetual, an eternal, portion. Hence the salt of the covenant of our God was not wanting in the sacrifice, in any sacrifice; the stability, the durability, the preservative energy of that which was divine, not always perhaps to us sweet and agreeable, was there — the seal, on the part of God, that it was no passing savour, no momentary delight, but eternal. For all that is of man passes; all that is of God is eternal; the life, the charity, the nature, and the grace continues. This holy separating power, which keeps us apart from corruption, is of God, partaking of the stability of the divine nature, and binding unto Him, not by what we are in will, but by the security of divine grace. It is active, pure, sanctifying to us, but it is of grace, and the energy of the divine will, and the obligation of the divine promise binds us indeed to Him, but binds by His energy and fidelity, not ours — energy which is mingled with and founded on the sacrifice of Christ, in which the covenant of God is sealed and assured infallibly, or Christ is not honoured. It is the covenant of God. Leaven and honey, our sin and natural affections, cannot find a place in the sacrifice of God, but the energy of His grace (not sparing the evil, but securing the good) is there to seal our infallible enjoyment of its effects and fruits. Salt did not form the offering, but it was never to be wanting in any — could not be in what was of God; it was indeed in every offering.

The essential characterisitic and the substance and essence of the meat-offering

We must remember in this offering, as in the former, that the essential characteristic, common indeed to all, was its being offered to God. This could not be said of Adam: in his innocence he enjoyed much from God; he returned, or should have returned, thankfulness for it; but it was enjoyment and thankfulness. He was not himself an offering to God. But this was the essence of Christ's life — it was offered to God; and hence separated from all around it, essentially separated.* He was holy, therefore, and not merely innocent: for innocence is the absence of — ignorance of — evil, not separation from it. God (who knows good and evil, but is infinitely above and separated from the evil, as it is opposite to Him) is holy. Christ was holy, and not merely innocent, being consecrated in all His will to God, and separate from the evil, and living in the energy of the Spirit of God. Also, as offered, the essence of the offering was the fine flour, oil, and frankincense, representing human nature, the Holy Ghost, and the perfume of grace. Negatively there was to be no leaven or honey: so, as to the manner, there was the mingling with oil and the anointing with oil; also, for every sacrifice, the salt of the covenant of God: here noticed, because in what concerned the grace of His human nature, what concerned man (a man offering Himself to God — not as dying, but as living, though tested even to death), it might have been supposed to be wanting, that it was as man's act just as good. But its being offered on the altar to God, burned as a sweet savour, and the three things first named, formed the substance and essence of the meat-offering. {* This was what was properly signified by salt. So every sacrifice is seasoned with salt. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt. It is what gives a divine taste, a witness of

God to everything.}

Chapter 3

The peace-offering, the communion of saints, based on what Christ was and did

The peace-offering now presents itself to our notice. It is the offering which typifies to us the communion of saints, according to the efficacy of the sacrifice, with God, with the priest who has offered it in our behalf, with one another, and with the whole body of the saints as priests to God. It comes after those which presented to us the Lord Jesus Himself in His devoting Himself to death, and His devotedness and grace in His life, but even unto death, and the testing of fire, that we may understand that all communion is based on the acceptability and sweet odour of this sacrifice; not only because the sacrifice was needed, but because therein God had all His delight.

I have already remarked that, when a sinner, that is a guilty person, approached, the sin-offering came first; for the sin must be borne and put away that he might approach as qualified to do so. But, being cleansed and clean, he approaches; and so here, according to the sweet savour of the offering of God, the perfect acceptability of Christ, who knew no sin, but consecrated Himself in a world of sin to God, that God might be perfectly glorified — and His life also, that all that God was in judgment might be also glorified — glorified by man in His Person; and hence infinite favour flow forth on them that were received and that came by Him. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." He does not say here, because I have laid it down for the sheep; that was rather the sin-offering. He speaks of the positive excellence and value of His act; for in this Man wrought all perfectness. In this all the majesty and truth, the righteousness against sin, and love of God were infinitely glorified in man, though much more than a man, and, where poor estranged man had got by sin, in Him who was made sin for us. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead." The evil which Satan had wrought was infinitely more than remedied, in the scene where the ruin was brought in; yea, by the means through which the ruin was effected. If God was dishonoured in and by man, He is a debtor in a certain sense to man in Jesus for the full display of His best and most blessed glory: though even this be all His gift to us, yet Christ making Himself man has wrought it out. But all that Christ was and did was infinitely acceptable to God; and in this we have our communion — not in the sin-offering.* Hence the peace-offerings follow here at once, though, as I have remarked, the sin-offering came first of all where the case of application arose. {* Though the perfect offering for sin is the basis of all; we should not without it have the thing to have communion in, and this point was carefully guarded in the type of the peace-offering — it could not be acceptably eaten but in connection with what was offered to God (see Lev. 7). Only it is communion in the joy of the common salvation, not special priestly delight in what Christ was for God.}

The identification of the offerer with the victim

The first act in the case of the peace-offering was the presenting and killing it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and sprinkling the blood, which formed the basis of every animal offering, the offerer being identified with the victim by laying his hands on his head.* {* The exceptions to this rule are sin-offerings of the day of atonement, and the red heifer, which confirm the great principle, or fortify a peculiar portion of it. The sprinkling of the blood was always the priest's work.}

The fat, God's food of the offering

Next, all the fat, especially of the inwards, was taken and burnt on the altar of burnt-offering to the Lord. Fat and blood were alike forbidden to be eaten. The blood was the life, and necessarily belonged essentially to God; life was from Him in an especial manner; but fat also was never to be eaten but burnt, and so offered to God. The use of this symbol, fat, is sufficiently familiar in the word. "Their heart is fat as grease." "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." "They are enclosed in their own fat, with their mouth they speak proudly." It is the energy and force of the inward will, the inwards of a man's heart. Hence, where Christ expresses His entire mortification, He declares "They could tell all His bones"; and, in Psalm 102, "By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin."

Jehovah's delight in Jesus

But here, in Jesus, all that in nature was of energy and force, all His inward parts, were a burnt-offering to God, entirely sacrificed and offered to Him for such a sweet savour. This was God's food of the offering, "the food of the offering made by fire unto Jehovah." In this Jehovah Himself found His delight; His soul reposed in it, for surely it was very good — good in the midst of evil — good in the energy of offering to Him — good in perfect obedience.

If the eye of God passed, as the dove of Noah, over this earth, swept by the deluge of sin, nowhere, till Jesus was seen in it, could His eye have rested in complacency and peace; there on Him it could. Heaven, as to the expression of its satisfaction, whatever its counsels, was closed till Jesus (the second and perfect Man, the Holy One, He who offered Himself to God, coming to do His will) was on earth. The moment He presented Himself in public service, heaven opened, the Holy Ghost descended to dwell in this His one resting-place here, and the Father's voice, impossible now to be withheld, declares from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Was this object (too great, too excellent, for the silence of heaven and the Father's love) to lose its excellence and its savour in the midst of a world of sin? Far otherwise. It was there its excellency was proved.

If He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, the movement of every spring of His heart was consecrated to God. He walked in communion, honouring His Father in all — in His life and in His death. Jehovah found continual delight in Him; and above all, in Him in His death: the food of the offering was there. Such was the great principle, but the communion of our souls with this is further given to us. The fat being burnt as a burnt-offering, the consecration to God is pursued to its full point of acceptance and grace.

The peace-offering eaten by the priests, the offering priest, the offerer and his friends

If we turn to the law of the offerings, we shall find that the rest was eaten. The breast was for Aaron and his sons, type of the whole church; the right shoulder for the priest that sprinkled the blood, more especially type of Christ, as the offering priest; the rest of the animal was eaten by him who presented it, and those invited by him. Thus there was identity and communion with the glory and good pleasure — with the delight — of Him to whom it was offered, with the priesthood and the altar, which were the instruments and means of the offering, with all God's priests, and among those immediately taking part.

The same practice existed among the heathen; hence the reasoning of the apostle as to eating things offered to idols. So, alluding to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, the purport of which is strongly associated with this type, "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" And this was so much the case, that in the desert, when it was practicable (and the analogous order needful to maintain the principle was established in the land), no one could eat of the flesh of any animal unless he first brought it to the tabernacle as an offering.* We indeed should eat in the name of the Lord Jesus, offering our sacrifices of thanksgivings, the calves of our lips, and so consecrate all we partake of, and ourselves in it, in communion with the Giver, and Him who secures us in it; but here it was a proper sacrifice. {* Life belonged to God. He only could give it. Hence, when allowed to be taken in Noah's time, the blood was reserved. There was, of course, no eating connected with death before the fall (unless the warning not to bring it in), nor allowedly before Noah. Hence, as life belonged to God, death had come in by sin, and there could be no eating of what involved death, no nourishment by it, unless the life (the blood) was offered to God. This being done, man could have his living nourishment through it. It was indeed his salvation through faith.}

God and the worshippers have the same subject of delight

Thus then the offering of Christ, as a burnt-offering, is God's delight: His soul delights and takes pleasure in it; it is of sweet savour with Him. Before the Lord, at His table so to speak, the worshippers, also coming by this perfect sacrifice, feed on it also, have perfect communion with God in the same delight in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus, in Jesus Himself thus offered, thus offering* Himself — have the same subject of delight as God, a common blessed joy in the excellency of the work of redemption of Jesus. As parents have a common joy in their offspring, enhanced by their communion in it, so, as filled with the Spirit, and themselves redeemed by Him, the worshippers have one mind with the Father in their delight in the excellency of an offered Christ. And is the Priest, who has ministered all this, the only one excluded from the joy of it? No; He has His share also. He who has offered it has part in the joy of redemption. Further, the whole church of God must be embraced in it. {* Offering has a double character distinguished in Greek by prosphero and anaphero, in Hebrew by Hikrib and Hiktir. Christ offered Himself without spot through the eternal Spirit to God; but, having done so, God laid the iniquity on Him, made Him to be sin for us, and He was offered up on the cross as an actual sacrifice.}

The joy of the Redeemer Jesus then, as priest, finds a delight in the joy of communion between God and the people, the worshippers, wrought and brought about by His means — yea, of which He is the

object. For what is the joy of a Redeemer but the joy and communion, the happiness, of His redeemed? Such then is all true worship of the saints. It is joying in God through the means of the redemption and offering of Jesus; yea, one mind with God; joying with Him in the perfect excellency of this pure and selfdevoted victim,* who has redeemed and reconciled them, and given them this communion, with the assurance that this their joy is the joy of Jesus Himself, who has wrought it and given it to them. In heaven He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and come forth and serve them. {* This expression, in a measure, brings in the meat-offering.}

The joy of the redeemed

This joy of worship necessarily associates itself also with the whole body of the redeemed, viewed as in the heavenly places. Aaron and his sons were to have their part also. Aaron and his sons were ever the type of the church, not as Christ's body (that was wholly hidden in the Old Testament) but viewed as the whole body of its members, having title to enter into the heavenly places, and offer incense — made priests to God. For these were the patterns of things in the heavens, and those who compose the church are the body of heavenly priests to God. Hence worship to God, true worship, cannot separate itself from the whole body of true believers. I cannot really come with my sacrifice unto the tabernacle of God, without finding necessarily there the priests of the tabernacle. Without the one Priest all is vain; for what without Jesus? But I cannot find Him without His whole body of manifested people. The interest of His heart takes them all in. God withal has His priests, and I cannot approach Him but in the way which He has ordained, and in association with, and in recognition of, those whom He has placed around His house, the whole body of those that are sanctified in Christ. He who walks not in this spirit is in conflict with the ordinance of God, and has no true peace-offering according to God's institution.

Communion interrupted by defilement of heart

But there were other circumstances we must remark. First, none but those that were clean could partake among the guests. We know that moral cleansing has taken the place of the ceremonial. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." God has put no difference between us and them, having purified their hearts by faith. Israelites then partook of the peace-offerings; and if an Israelite was unclean, through anything that defiled according to the law of God, he could not eat while his defilement continued.

Christians then, whose hearts are purified by faith, having received the word with joy, alone can worship really before God, having part in the communion of saints; and if the heart is defiled, that communion is interrupted. No person apparently defiled has title to share in the worship and communion of the church of God. It was a different thing, remark, to be not an Israelite, and not clean. He who was not an Israelite had never any part in the peace-offerings; he could not come nigh the tabernacle. Uncleanness did not prove he was no Israelite (on the contrary, this discipline was exercised on Israelites only); but the uncleanness incapacitated him from partaking, with those that were clean, in the privileges of this communion; for these peace-offerings, though enjoyed by the worshippers, belonged to the Lord (Lev. 7:20-21). The unclean had no title there. True worshippers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. If worship and communion be

by the Spirit, it is evident that those only who have the Spirit of Christ, and also have not grieved the Spirit (and thus rendered the communion, which is by the Spirit, impossible by the defilements of sin) can participate.

The leavened cakes offered with the peace-offering a recognition of the evil in man

Yet there was another part of this type which seemed to contradict this, but which indeed throws additional light on it. With the offerings which accompanied this sacrifice, it was ordered (chap. 7:13) that leavened cakes should be offered. For though that which is unclean is to be excluded (that which can be recognised as unclean), there is always a mixture of evil in us, and so far in our worship itself. The leaven is there (man cannot be without it); it may be a very small part of the matter, not come in to the mind, as it will be when the Spirit is not grieved, but it is there where man is. Unleavened bread was there also, for Christ is there, and the Spirit of Christ in us who are leavened, for man is there.

True worship and communion inseparable from Christ's perfect offering

There was another very important direction in this worship.* In the case of a vow, it might be eaten the second day after the burning of the fat — Jehovah's food of the offering; in the case of thanksgiving-offering, it was to be eaten the same day This identified the purity of the service of the worshippers with the offering of the fat to God. So is it impossible to separate true spiritual worship and communion from the perfect offering of Christ to God. The moment our worship separates itself from this, from its efficacy and the consciousness of that infinite acceptability of the offering of Christ to God — not the putting away of sins, without that we could not approach at all, but its intrinsic excellency as a burnt-offering, all burnt to God as a sweet savour** — it becomes carnal, and either a form, or the delight of the flesh. If the peace-offering was eaten separately from this offering of the fat, it was a mere carnal festivity, or a form of worship, which had no real communion with the delight and good pleasure of God, and was worse than unacceptable — it was really iniquity. {* It may be well to remark that the peace-offering supposes fellowship in worship, though many principles are individually applicable. ** We may add of Jesus with the Father, and that in connection even with His laying down His life, but this is not our direct subject here (see John 10:17). But there, note, it is not done as for sinners, but for God.}

When the Holy Spirit leads us into real spiritual worship, it leads us into communion with God, into the presence of God; and then, necessarily, all the infinite acceptability to Him of the offering of Christ is present to our spirit. We are associated with it: it forms an integral and necessary part of our communion and worship. We cannot be in the presence of God in communion without finding it there. It is indeed the ground of our acceptance, as of our communion.

Worship in the flesh

Apart from this then our worship falls back into the flesh; our prayers (or praying well) form what is sometimes called a gift of prayer, than which nothing often is more sorrowful (a fluent rehearsal of known truths and principles, instead of communion and the expression of praise and thanksgiving in the joy of communion, and even of our wants and desires in the unction of the Spirit); our singing, pleasure of the ear, taste in music, and expressions in which we sympathise — all a form in the flesh, and not communion in the Spirit. All this is evil; the Spirit of God owns it not; it is not in spirit and in truth; it is really iniquity.

Degrees of spiritual energy in worship

There was a difference in the value of the various kinds of this offering: in the case of a vow it might be eaten the second day; in the case of thanksgiving only the first. This typified a different degree of spiritual energy. When our worship is the fruit of unfeigned and single-eyed devotedness, it can sustain itself longer, through our being filled with the Spirit, in the reality of communion, and our worship be acceptable — the savour of that sacrifice being thus longer maintained before God, who has fellowship with the joy of His people. For the energy of the Spirit maintains His joy in His people in communion acceptable to God. When, on the other hand, it is the natural consequence of blessing already conferred, it is surely acceptable as due to God, but there is not the same energy of communion. — The thanks are rendered thus in communion with the Lord, but the communion passes away with the thanksgiving really offered.

Note we also, that we may begin in the Spirit and pass into the flesh in worship. Thus, for example, if I continue to sing beyond the real operation of the Spirit, which happens too often, my singing, which at the beginning was real melody in the heart to the Lord, will terminate in pleasant ideas and music, and so end in the flesh. The spiritual mind, the spiritual worshipper, will discover this at once when it happens. When it does happen, it always weakens the soul, and soon accustoms to formal worship and spiritual weakness; and then evil, through the power of the adversary, soon makes its appearance among the worshippers. The Lord keep us nigh to Himself to judge all things in His presence, for out of it we can judge nothing!

True worship: the expression of the excellency of Christ

It is good to bear strongly in mind this expression, "which pertain to Jehovah" (Lev. 7:20); the worship, what passes in our hearts in it, is not ours — it is God's. God has put it there for our joy, that we may participate in the offering of Christ, His joy in Christ; but the moment we make it ours, we desecrate it. Hence what remained was burnt in the fire; hence what was unclean must have nothing to do with it; hence the necessity of associating it with the fat burnt to Jehovah, that it may be really Christ in us, and so true communion, the giving forth of Christ, on whom our souls feed, towards God.

Let us remember that all our worship pertains to God, that it is the expression of the excellency of Christ in us, and so our joy, as by one Spirit, with God. He in the Father, we in Him, and He in us, is the marvellous chain of union which exists in grace as well as in glory: our worship is the outgoings and joy of heart founded on this, towards God, by Christ. So, as Himself ministering in this, the Lord says,

"I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." He surely is in joy and knows redemption is accomplished. May we be in tune with our heavenly Guide! He shall well conduct our praises, and agreeably to the Father. His ear shall be attentive when He hears this voice lead us. What perfect and deep experience of what is acceptable before God must He have, who, in redemption, has presented all according to God's mind! His mind is the expression of all that is agreeable to the Father, and He leads us, taught by Himself, though imperfect and feeble in it, in the same acceptableness. We have the mind of Christ.

Worship accompanied by service

The "calves of our lips" is the expression of the same Spirit in which we offer our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, proving what is His good and perfect and acceptable will: such our worship, such our service, for our service should be in a certain sense our worship.

Fat and blood forbidden to be eaten

There is added to the directions of this sacrifice a commandment to eat neither fat nor blood. This evidently finds its place here, inasmuch as the peace-offerings were the sacrifices where the worshippers ate a great part. But from what we have said, the signification is evident; the life and inward energies of the heart belonged wholly to God. Life belonged to God and was to be consecrated to God; to Him alone it belonged or could belong. Life spent or taken by another was high treason against the title of God. So as to fat — that which characterised no ordinary functions, as the movements of a limb, or the like, but the energy of the nature itself expressing itself — belonged exclusively to God. Christ alone rendered it to God, because He alone offered to God what was due; and hence the burning of the fat in these and other offerings represented His offering Himself a sweet savour to God. But it was not less true that all belonged to God and belongs to God: man could not appropriate it to his use. Use might be made of it in the case of a beast dying or torn; but whenever man of his will took the life of a beast, he must recognise the title of God, and submit his will, and own the will of God as alone having claim.

Chapters 4 to 7

The sin- and trespass-offerings; their difference from the sacrifices of sweet savour

We come now to the sacrifices which were not sacrifices of sweet savour — the sin and trespass-offerings, alike in the great principle, though differing in character and detail: this difference we will notice. But first a very important principle must be noticed. The sacrifices of which we have spoken, the sacrifices of sweet savour, presented the identity of the offerer and the victim: this identity was signified by the laying on of the hands of the worshippers. But in those sacrifices the worshipper came as an offerer, whether Christ or one led by the Spirit of Christ, and so identified with Him in presenting himself to God — came of his own voluntary will, and was identified as a worshipper with

the acceptability and acceptance of his victim.

The sin-offering brought by a sinner, coming as having guilt upon him

In the case of the sin-offering, there was the same principle of identity with the victim by laying on of hands; but he who came, came not as a worshipper, but as a sinner; not as clean for communion with the Lord, but as having guilt upon him; and instead of his being identified with the acceptability of the victim, though that became subsequently true, the victim became identified with his guilt and unacceptableness, bore his sins and was treated accordingly. This was completely the case where the sin-offering was purely such. I have added, "though that became subsequently true," because in many of the sin-offerings a certain part identified them with the acceptableness of Christ, which, in Him who united in His Person the virtue of all the sacrifices, could never be lost sight of. The distinction between the identity of the victim with the sin of the guilty, and the identity of the worshipper with the acceptance of the victim, marks the difference of these sacrifices and of the double aspect of the work of Christ very clearly.

Four classes of sin and trespass offerings

I now come to the details. There were four ordinary classes of sin and trespass-offerings, besides two very important special offerings, of which we may speak hereafter: sins where natural conscience was violated; that which became evil by the ordinance of the Lord, as uncleannesses which made the worshipper inadmissible, and other things (this had a mixed character of sin and trespass, and is called by both names); wrongs done to the Lord in His holy things; and wrongs done to the neighbour by breaches of confidence and the like. The first class is in Leviticus 4; the second, attached to it, down to verse 13 of chapter 5; the third, from verse 14 to the end; the fourth, in the first seven verses of chapter 6.

Interrupted communion between God and His people distinguished from individual sin and loss

The two other remarkable examples of sin-offering were the day of expiation, and the red heifer, which demand an examination apart. The circumstances of the offering were simple. In the case of the high priest and the body of the people sinning, it is evident that all communion was interrupted. It was not merely the restoration of the individual to communion which was needed, but the restoration of communion between God and the whole people; not the forming a relation (the day of atonement effected that), but the re-establishment of interrupted communion. Hence the blood was sprinkled before the veil seven times for the perfect restoration of this communion, and the blood also put on the horns of the altar of incense.

When the sin was individual, the communion of the people in general was not interrupted, but the individual had lost his enjoyment of the blessing. The blood was sprinkled therefore, not where the priest approached — at the altar of incense; but where the individual did — at the altar of

burnt-offering. The efficacy of the sin-offering of Christ is needed, but has been once for all accomplished, for every fault; but the communion of the worshipping body of the church, though lamed and hindered, is not cut off by the individual sin; but when this is known, restoration is needed and the offering demanded.* That the Lord may punish the whole congregation, if the sin lie undetected, we know; for He did so in Achan. That is, the power belonging to a state in which God is ungrieved, is enfeebled and lost, and where conscience is awake and the heart interested in the blessing of God's people, this leads to search out the cause. But this is connected with the government of God; the imputation of sin as guilt is another matter, but sin in itself has always its own character with God. "Israel," said He, "has sinned;" but Achan only suffers when the evil is known and purged, and blessing returns, though with much greater difficulty. The truth is, that He who knows how to unite general government with particular judgment, even where there is general faithfulness, puts in evidence individual evil, or permits it not (a yet higher and happier case); and, on the other hand, can employ the sin of the individual as a means of chastening the whole. {* Only we must always remember that in Christ it has been done once for all. We have only a shadow of good things to come, and in certain points, as in this, contrast — a contrast fully developed in Hebrews 10. In Hebrews, however, it is not restoration after failure, but perfecting for ever, in the conscience, which takes the place of repeated sacrifice. The restoration of communion on failure is found in 1 John 2:1-2, founded on the righteous One being before God for us, and the propitiation made.}

God can let nothing pass

Indeed it appears to me very clear, in the case alluded to, that, though the occasion of the chastening is evident in the sin of Achan, Israel had shewn a confidence in human strength which was chastised and shewn vain in the result, as divine strength was shewn all-sufficient in Jericho. However that is, it is evident from the detail of these sin-offerings that God can let nothing pass; He can forgive all and cleanse from all, but let nothing pass. The sin hidden to a man's self is not hidden to God; and why is it hidden to himself, but that negligence, the fruit of sin, has stupified his spiritual intelligence and attention?

God judges sins according to responsibility and what becomes Himself

God judges sins according to the responsibility of those who are judged. But in the sovereign work of grace God judges of sin in those who approach Him, not according to what becomes man, but what becomes Himself. He dwelt in the midst of Israel, and Israel must be judged according to what becomes God's presence: our privileges are the measure of our responsibility. Men admit to their society what becomes themselves, and do not admit the base and corrupt, allowing their evil, because it is suited to their estate so to act. And is God alone to profane His presence by acting otherwise? Is all the evil which man's corruption leads him into to find its sanction only in the presence of God? No; God must (in order to make us happy by His presence) judge evil, all evil, according to His presence, so as to exclude it from it. Has the moral stupidity, which is the effect of sin, made us ignorant of it in ourselves? Is God to become blind because sin has made us so — to dishonour Himself and make others miserable, and all holy joy impossible everywhere, even in His presence; to let pass the evil?

Impossible. No; all is judged, and judged in the believer according to the place grace has brought him into.

God's compassion does not change His just judgment of evil

God is ignorant of nothing, and evil, however hidden to us, is evil to Him. "All things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do." He may have compassion, enlighten by His Spirit, provide a way of approach so that the greatest sinner may come, restore the soul that has wandered, take account of the degree of spiritual light, where light is honestly sought; but that does not change His judgment of evil. "The priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him. It is a trespass-offering; he has certainly trespassed against Jehovah."

Differences in the details of the sin-offerings

I have now to remark certain differences in these sin-offerings full of interest to us in the detail.

The bodies of those in which the whole people, or the high priest (which came to the same thing, for the communion of the whole body was interrupted), were concerned, were burnt without the camp; not those for individuals, nor those which were for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire, though the whole were burnt. But those for the high priest, or the whole people were: they had been made sin, and were carried out of the camp as such. The sacrifice itself was without blemish, and the fat was burnt on the altar; but, the offender having confessed his sins on its head, it was viewed as bearing these sins, and made sin of God, was taken without the camp; as Jesus (as the epistle to the Hebrews applies it) suffered without the gate, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood. This was always the case when the blood was brought into the sanctuary for sin.

One of the sacrifices, of which I do not enter into the details here, was abstractedly and altogether viewed in this light of sin, and was slain and burnt, fat and blood (part of the blood having been first sprinkled at the door of the tabernacle), and every part of it, without the camp. This was the red heifer.

In the three other sacrifices, which concerned the whole people, the bodies were burnt indeed without the camp, but the connection with the perfect acceptance of Christ in His work, as offering Himself, was preserved, in the burning of the fat on the altar of burnt-offering, and thus gave us the full sense of how He had been made sin indeed, but that it was He who knew no sin, and whose offering in His most inmost thoughts and nature was in the trial of God's judgment perfectly agreeable. But though the fat was burnt on the altar to maintain this association and the unity of the sacrifice of Christ, yet, maintaining the general character and purpose of the diversity, it is not habitually called* a sweet savour to Jehovah. {* There is one case only where it is, Lev. 4:31.}

The sacrifice of the great day of atonement

There was a difference, however, between one of the three last-mentioned sacrifices, the sacrifice of the great day of atonement, and the two others mentioned in the beginning of Leviticus 4. In the sacrifice of

the great day of expiation the blood was carried within the veil; for this was the foundation of all other sacrifices, of all relationship between God and Israel, and enabled God to dwell among them so as to receive the others. Its efficacy lasted throughout the year — for us, for ever — as the apostle reasons in the Hebrews; and on it was based all the intercourse between God and the people. Hence the blood of it was sprinkled on the mercy-seat, to be for ever before the eyes of Him, whose throne of grace, as of righteousness, that mercy-seat was thus to be. And God, by virtue of it, dwelt among the people, careless and rebellious as they were.

The efficacy of the blood of Jesus

Such also is the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. It is for ever on the mercy-seat, efficacious as the ground of the relationship between us and God. The other sin-offerings referred to were to restore the communion of those who were in this relationship. Hence, in Leviticus 4:1-21, the blood was sprinkled on the altar of incense, which was the symbol of the exercise of this communion; the residue poured out, as habitually in the sacrifices, at the altar of burnt-offering — the place of accepted sacrifice; the body, as we have seen, was burnt. In the case of the offerings for the sin and trespass of an individual the communion of the body was not directly in question or interrupted, but the individual was deprived of the enjoyment of it. Hence the altar of incense was not defiled or incapacitated, as it were, in its use; on the contrary it was continually used. The blood of these sacrifices, therefore, was put on the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, which was always the place of individual approach. Here, by Christ and the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ once offered, every individual soul approaches; and, being thus accepted, enjoys all the blessing and the privileges of which the church at large is continually in possession. But for us the veil is rent, and as to conscience of guilt we are perfected for ever. If our walk be defiled, water by the word restores the communion of our souls, and that with the Father and with His Son.

To speak of resprinkling of blood consequently upsets the real position of the Christian, and throws him back on his own imperfect state as to acceptance and righteousness. There may be a repeated remedy, but one who is on that ground drops the question of holiness, and makes continuous righteousness in Christ uncertain. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes not iniquity," is unknown in such cases; as is also that the worshipper once purged should have no more conscience of sins. Were it so, as the apostle urges, Christ must have suffered often. Without shedding of blood is no remission.

The perfect identity between the priest and the victim

But there was another circumstance in these sin-offerings for the individual. The priest who offered the blood ate the victim. Thus there was the most perfect identity between the priest, and the victim which represented the sin of the offerer. As Christ is both, the eating by the priest shews how He did thus make it His own. Only, in Christ, what was thus typified was first effected when victim, and the priesthood, as exercised for us now in heaven, comes after. Still this eating shews the heart of Christ taking it up as He does for us when we fail, not merely its being laid vicariously on Him, though then His heart took up our cause. But He cared for the sheep.

Christ's advocacy on high

The priest had not committed the sin; on the contrary, he had made atonement for it by the blood which he had sprinkled, but he identified himself completely with it. Thus Christ, giving us the most complete consolation — Himself spotless, and who has made the atonement, yet identified Himself with all our faults and sins, as the worshipper in the peace-offering was identified with the acceptance of the sacrifice. Only that now, the one offering having been made once for all, if sin is in question, it is in advocacy on high that He now takes it up, and in connection with communion, not with imputation. There is nothing more to do with sacrifice or blood sprinkling. His service is founded on it.

Sin taken away, communion restored

The fat was burnt on the altar, where the priest was identified with the sin which was on the offerer of the victim, but transferred to it. It was lost, so to speak, and gone in the sacrifice. He who drew nigh came with confession and humiliation, but, as regarded guilt and judgment, it was taken up by the priest through the victim; and, atonement having been made, reached not the judgment-seat of God, so as further to affect the relation between God and the offender. Yet here it was perpetual repetition. Communion was restored in the acceptance of the sacrifice, as the sin which hindered the communion was entirely taken away, or served only to renew (in a heart humbled into the dust, and annihilated before the goodness of God) the communion founded on goodness become infinitely more precious, and established on the renewed sense of the riches and security of that mediation there typically exhibited, but which Christ has accomplished once for all, eternally for us, as sacrifice, and makes good as to the blessings flowing from it continually on high; not to change the mind of God to us, but to secure our present communion and enjoyment, in spite of our miseries and faults, in the presence, the glory, and the love of Him who changes not.* {* There are points in the New Testament it may be well to notice here. The Hebrews views the Christian as walking down here in weakness and trial, but as perfected for ever by the work of Christ, no more conscience of sins, and the priesthood is exercised not to restore communion, but to find mercy and grace to help. 1 John speaks of communion with the Father and Son. This is interrupted by any sin, and Christ is our Advocate with the Father to restore it. The Hebrews is occupied with access to God within the veil, the conscience being perfect, and we enter with boldness, hence failure and restoration are not in question. The Father is not spoken of. In John, as I have said, it is communion and the actual state of the soul is in question. And it is so true that it is the standing in Hebrews, that if one falls away, restoration is impossible. In the tabernacle there was no going within the veil. No such standing was revealed, and priesthood and communion as far as enjoyed were mingled together, the Father unknown.}

The sin-offering stamped with the character of holiness

Some interesting circumstances remain to be observed. It is remarkable that nothing was so stamped with the character of holiness, of entire, real separation to God, as the sin-offering. In the other cases, perfect acceptance, a sweet savour, and in some cases our leavened cakes, are found therewith in the use of them; but all passed in the natural delight, so to speak, which God took in what was perfect and

infinitely excellent, though it supposed sin and judgment to be there; but here the most remarkable and exact sanctions of its holiness were enjoined (Lev. 6:26-28). There was nothing in the whole work of Jesus which so marked His entire and perfect separation to God His positive holiness, as His bearing sin. He who knew no sin alone could be made sin, and the act itself was the most utter separation to God conceivable, yea, an act which no thought of ours can fathom, to bear all, and to His glory. It was a total consecration of Himself, at all cost, to God's glory; as God, indeed, could accept nothing else. And the victim must have been as perfect as the self-offering was.

Christ as Sin-bearer and Sin-offering

As a sacrifice then for sins, and as made sin, Christ is specially holy; as indeed, now in the power of this sacrifice, a Priest present before God, making intercession, He is "holy, harmless, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens." Yet, so truly was it a bearing of sins, and viewed as made sin, that he who carried the goat before his letting loose, and he that gathered the ashes of the red heifer, and sprinkled the water of separation, were unclean until even, and must wash to come into the camp. Thus are these two great truths in the sin-offering of Christ distinctly presented to us in these sacrifices. For, indeed, how can we conceive a greater separation to God, in Christ, than His offering Himself as a victim for sin? And, on the other hand, had He not really borne our sins in all their evil, He could not have put them away really in the judgment.

Blessed for ever be His name who has done it, and may we ever learn more His perfectness in doing it!

Various aspects of Christ in the sacrifices

We have, then, in these sacrifices, Christ in His devotedness unto death; Christ in the perfection of His life of consecration to God; Christ, the basis of the communion of the people with God, who feeds, as it were, at the same table with them; and finally, Christ made sin for those who stood in need of it, and bearing their sins in His own body on the tree. We shall find that in the law of the offerings the question is chiefly as to what was to be eaten in these sacrifices, and by whom, and under what conditions.

The law of the offerings: what was to be eaten, by whom, and under what conditions

The burnt-offering and the meat-offering for a priest were to be entirely burnt. It is Christ Himself, offered wholly to God, who offers Himself. As to the burnt-offering, the fire burnt all night upon the altar and consumed the victim, the sweet-smelling savour of which ascended thus to God, even during the darkness, where man was far from Him, buried in sleep. This too is true, I doubt not, as to Israel now. God has the sweet savour of the sacrifice of Christ towards Him, while the nation forgets Him. However this may be, the only effect for us of the judgment of the holy majesty of God — the fire of the Lord, now that Christ has offered Himself, is to cause the sweet smell of this precious sacrifice to ascend towards God.

Of the other sacrifices, the meat-offering and the sin-offering, the priest ate. The first pictures the saint in his priestly character feeding on the perfectness of Christ; the last, Christ, and even those who are His, as priests, in devoted love and in sympathy with others, identifying themselves with their sin and with the work of Christ for that sin. To Him alone it was, of course, to bear that sin; but founded on His work our hearts can take it up in a priestly way before God. They are connected in grace with it according to the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ; they enjoy the grace of Christ therein. Christ entered into it directly for us, we in grace into what He did. This is, however, a solemn thing. It is only as priests that we can participate in it, and in the consciousness of what it means. The people ate of the peace-offerings, which, though they were holy, did not require that nearness to God. It was the joy of the communion of believers, based on the redemption and the acceptance of Christ. Therefore the directions for these of offerings follow those given for the sacrifices for sin and trespass, although the peace-offering comes before the sin-offering in the order of the sacrifices, because, in the former, it required to be a priest to partake of them. There are things which we do as priests; there are others which we do as simple believers.

Chapters 8 and 9

The priesthood established: Aaron, type of Christ

The sacrifices and the rules for partaking of them being thus appointed, priesthood is established (Lev. 8) according to the ordinance. Aaron and his sons are washed; Aaron is then clothed, and the tabernacle, and all that was therein, was anointed, and Aaron also, and this without blood.

In this we have, I apprehend, a bright inlet into the way in which the universe is filled with glory. When Aaron alone is anointed without blood, the tabernacle is also. The fulness of the divine power and spiritual grace and glory which is in Christ, fills the whole scene of created witness of the glory of God; that is, the energy of the Holy Ghost fills it with the claim and witnesses of the excellency of Christ. When the creature has had to do with it, then, indeed, as on the great day of atonement, it has all to be purified and reconciled with blood. But this does not undo the direct title in grace and divine excellency in Jesus. It is His on this ground too. It is His as Creator of it all. It may have contracted impurity. Redemption is the ground of the restitution of all things, and the creature is delivered from the bondage of corruption. But as His creation it all belonged to God. As the normal order it was, as created — consecrated to God (see also Col. 1:16 and 21).

Aaron's sons; the ground of their place with God

When Aaron's sons are brought in, the altar is purified with blood, because we have got out of the mere personal excellency and title of Christ. When the sons of Aaron are clothed with the priestly garments, sacrifices are offered, beginning with the bullock for a sin-offering, and Aaron and his sons have its blood put upon ear and thumb and toe; and then Aaron and his garments, his sons and their garments with him, are sprinkled with oil and blood according to the directions given in Exodus. The blood of Christ and the Spirit are the ground on which we, associated with Him, have our place with God.

Jehovah's presence in blessing manifests His acceptance of the sacrifices

On the eighth day Jehovah was to appear and manifest the acceptance of the sacrifices offered on that day, and His presence in the glory in the midst of the people. This manifestation took place accordingly: first Aaron, standing by the sacrifice, blesses the people; and then Moses and Aaron go into the tabernacle, and come out and bless the people. That is, there is first Christ, as Priest, blessing them, in virtue of the offered sacrifice; and then Christ, as King and Priest, going in and hiding Himself for a little in the tabernacle, and then coming out and blessing the people in this twofold character. When this takes place, as it will at the coming of Jesus, the acceptance of the sacrifice will be publicly manifested, and the glory of Jehovah will appear to the people, then become true worshippers through that means.

The time of Israel's knowledge of the acceptance of the sacrifice

This is a scene of the deepest interest; but there is a remark to be made here. The church is not found in this place (though there are general principles which apply to any case of connection with God), unless it be in the persons of Moses and Aaron. The blessing comes and is made manifest; that is, the acceptance of the victim is made manifest when Moses and Aaron appear at their coming out of the tabernacle. It will be thus with Israel. When the Lord Jesus appears, and they recognise Him whom they pierced, the efficacy of this sacrifice will be manifested in favour of that nation. It will be public by the manifestation of Christ. Our knowledge of that efficacy is during the stay of Christ within the veil, or rather in heaven itself, for the veil is now rent. Israel will not know the acceptance of the sacrifice until Christ comes forth as King; for us the Holy Ghost is come forth while He is yet within, so that we have the anticipatory certitude of that reception, and are connected with Him there. And it is this which gives to the Christian his proper character.

The place of Jehovah's manifestation

Here the manifestation takes place in the court where the sacrifice was offered, and when Moses and Aaron have come to the place where God talked with the people (not where He Communed with the mediator only, that is, the ark of the testimony, where the veil was no longer on the face of him who also communed with the Lord), and answering to this figure the manifestation will be here. There is a very peculiar circumstance connected with that. There had been no sacrifice whose blood was carried into the holy place, though the body of the bullock was burnt without the camp.* A sin-offering was indeed offered, but it was such as ought to have been eaten by the priest (see Lev. 10:17-18). The relationships which had been established were comparatively external. The sin and defilement were carried clean out of the camp and done away; but there was no entering in within the veil, or meeting God there. {* It does not exactly appear whether the goat for the people (Lev. 9:3) was burnt without the camp. It is said in Leviticus 10:16 that it was burnt, and that its blood was not brought into the holy place for sin, so that they ought to have eaten it. So that if it was burnt outside the camp it was an error; the bullock for Aaron was, though the blood was not carried within the veil. Of the goat it is merely said, "offered it for sin, as the first," (Lev. 9:15). Aaron's sacrifice seems to shew that the character of

Christ's priesthood does not bring Israel into fellowship with what is within the veil, though Christ may have suffered on the cross for them. The blood was put on the altar in the court. The sons should have eaten that for the people, as for a particular fault of a people already in relationship with God. They are the offerings after the consecration of Aaron, not those of his consecration. Then there was naturally no offering for the people there. Now his hands were filled. The reader may remark, as regards the remnant of Israel (the one hundred and forty-four thousand who are on Mount Sion with the Lamb, the Sufferer in Israel, now King there), that they are on earth, but they learn the song sung in heaven, though they are not there to sing it.}

Chapter 10

The priesthood immediately comes short of the glory of God

Lastly, we have what, alas! is always the case with man. The first day the priesthood is established, it comes short of the glory of God. Nadab and Abihu offer strange fire, acting as men in nature in their relationship with God, not founding their service on the altar of sacrifice, and they die.

What the presence of God requires

The priests must on no account whatever depart from their consecration (vers. 6, 7); therefore they must be Nazarites (ver. 9), apart from that which is only the excitement of the flesh, separated unto God from all that which would let nature loose in His presence; from that which would prevent them from feeling its power — a state of abstraction in which the flesh has no place. The presence of God must have its full power, and the flesh must be silent before Him. It is only thus that they would be able to discern between that which is unclean and that which is pure — that which is profane and that which is holy. There are lawful things, real joys, which, however, do not belong to priesthood — joys which flow from God's blessings, and which do not keep the flesh in check as does His presence; for there is always a certain restraint on the heart, on nature and its activity, produced by the presence of God. But priesthood is exercised before Him.

Chapter 11

Discernment, the service and duty of the priests

Priesthood being established, there comes the discernment between holy things and profane, and the judgment of defilements (Lev. 11-15), and what was to be done for the purification of defiled persons. We see that it is this nearness of separation unto God which alone can discern thus, and such is the service and ever the duty of priests.

Discernment of what was clean in food

First, as to food, that which is allowed to be eaten. In general the principle seems to be, that anything is allowed that is clean, in this sense, first, that it is thoroughly according to its element, that is, in principle, divine order (of course here presented in a figure), as fishes having scales; secondly, that was allowed which united mature digestion to the absence of that wilful energy which goes boldly through everything. These two qualities must be united. The grossness which swallows down things as they are, or the lack of quiet firmness, rendered unclean. To be clean, it must be that which at the same time chews the cud and divides the hoof. Of birds, the carnivorous night birds and those which cannot be tamed are forbidden; creeping things also, whatever grovelled and trailed itself on the earth. In general, there was to be in their eating the discernment of what was clean.

God's judgment on what, as now connected with sin, is unclean

Then we have the judgment of God fallen on that which would have been, for unfallen man, joy and blessing. The birth of a man, connected now with sin, renders unclean; that of a woman, in whom was the transgression, being deceived, still more so.* {* Connected with this was the weakness of fallen nature (compare Gen. 1:28). All that belonged even to weakness of nature, being the effect of sin, rendered unclean under the law. This is also true spiritually. All this was the result of some manifestation or other of the life that was in the flesh. It was so with the leper; raw flesh rendered unclean, as well as any other case where this life (which had become unclean, and had been as set aside and under judgment through sin), manifested itself externally, even though weakness alone were the cause of its manifestation.}

Chapters 13 and 14

Leprosy in persons, garments and houses

Leprosy requires a little more detail. It was found in persons, in garments, in houses. Leprosy was sin acting in the flesh. The spiritual man — the priest — discerns as to it. If the raw flesh appears, he is unclean; the strength of the flesh is at work. If the man was white all over, it was only the effect, as sin entirely confessed but no longer active; he was clean. The thing spreads in man, if it be evil in the flesh. The first step is for him to confess; and to confess under full spiritual discernment, and the judgment of God who has brought to light what was acting in his nature. He makes up his mind as one judged and detected. He has no part in the assembly of God, though making part of it in one sense. He is put out, without the camp.

Leproasy in circumstances, and its treatment

Leprosy (sin) manifested itself in circumstances, in that which surrounds us, as well as in personal conduct. If it was only a spot, the garment was washed, and it was clean; if the plague spot, on the contrary, spread, the whole was burned; if the plague, though it did not spread, remained, after washing, unchanged, the whole was burned. If changed and it spread no more, the spot was torn out.

If we get thus defiled by our circumstances, and it is not in the things themselves, we need only wash and remain where we are; if a part of them be essentially bad, that it spread defilingly in our whole condition, all that part of our outward life must be given up; if, in spite of washing, sin be still found the same there, if we cannot walk therein with God, such a position must be wholly given up at any cost; if it be affected by the washing and cease to spread, the general state being unaffected, the particular thing which has defiled is to be given up.

Purification of the healed leper; its means

As to purification, the leper was first considered as being outside the camp, not belonging to it; but if the activity of the disease was stopped in him, he was healed, but not yet purified. Thus this type supposes that the flesh, instead of being active and characteristic of the state of man, is judged and arrested in its activity. It is the enjoyment of a recognised relationship with God which is to be established.* {* This difference is important; it is that between the work in us which makes a sin a judged thing in us, judged by us, and the work of Christ which supposing that, puts us in a condition for relationship with God.}

The first part of the purification relates to this position. Christ being dead and risen, man sprinkled with His blood is fit, as regards the controversy with God, and His requirements, to enter the camp of God's people; and then he can share in the efficacy of the means which they can use there, of that which is found within, in order to present himself as acceptable before the tabernacle of God. Two birds were to be taken, and one killed by some one, at the command of the priest; for the priest's office never properly began till there was blood to offer or sprinkle, though the high priest represented Israel on the great day of atonement.* The two birds, however, are identified, so that we hear no more of that which was killed, though the efficacy of the blood be everything in the work of cleansing; the second is dipped in the blood of the first. {* It was the high priest who did it, but it was not a properly priestly act. That is, it was not one going between individuals or even the people and God, but representing them as such in his own person: as Christ, His people on the cross.}

The Antitype of the two birds

Thus Christ dead is no more found; but, being raised, He sprinkles His blood, as priest, on the unclean sinner. The earthen vessel, over running water, presents to us the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, according to the all-powerful efficacy of which, in Christ as man, this work of the death of Jesus has been accomplished: through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God — God having brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. He, the sinner, was under the efficacy of Christ's work.

The actual cleansing applied to the leper

But now there is, before he can offer, the work done on himself, the actual cleansing applied to him. He who cleansed himself washed himself — a purification of water as well as of blood, which is always found; the moral judgment of sin viewed as that which excludes from God's presence, so that the sinner

is, in principle and faith, morally as well as judicially cleansed. Of the last blood is the emblem; but the water is the estimation of sin as shewn in Christ's death, and the forsaking of God. It is in virtue of the death of Christ, seen as His work for us, for the water comes out of His pierced side. He came by water and blood. The leper rids himself of anything to which impurity might have attached, or had a share in, and now he enters the camp; and the work of bringing him into communion with God in his conscience begins.* {* When it was a question of consecrating those who were recognised as to their persons (the priests), they were first washed, and the sacrifice of Christ, viewed under every aspect, was the measure of their relation with God in every way, and the basis of their communion in its inward efficacy upon the soul. But here, the sinner being viewed in his sin outside the camp, it was necessary first to lay the basis for the possibility of intercourse with God. This was done in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Then, being washed (the efficacious operation of the Spirit by the word), he can be in relationship.}

The second part of the cleansing after re-entry into the camp

This is through realising all the efficacy of the work of Christ, with reference to conscience itself — not only as to the acceptance of the person, according to God's knowledge of that acceptance, but as to the purification of the conscience, and as to a knowledge of God, based on a moral appreciation of the work of Christ in every aspect, and the excellent work of the power of the Spirit of God. This is the second part of the cleansing of the leper, that which took place after he had re-entered the camp.

It is important to recognise the work of Christ under these two aspects; its intrinsic efficacy for the acceptance of the person on the one hand; and, on the other, the purification of the conscience itself, in order that there may be communion with God, according to the price and the perfection of that work, known in the conscience as a means of drawing near to God, and as the moral condition of that nearness.

The trespass-offering for purification of the conscience

Let us now examine what took place. The first thing was the trespass-offering. The conscience must be purified, by the blood of Christ, of all that with which, as a matter of fact, it is charged, or would be chargeable in the day of judgment; and man must be consecrated to God with an intelligence which applies the value of that blood to his whole walk, his whole conduct, his whole thoughts, and upon the principle of perfect obedience. It is the judicial purification of the whole man, upon the principle of intelligent obedience — a purification acting upon his conscience, not merely an outward rule for a man freed from the present power of sin, but a purification of his conscience felt in the knowledge of good and evil, of which the blood of Christ is the measure before God. Man being a sinner, having failed, the work must take place in the conscience, which takes an humbling knowledge of it; and in becoming cleansed through the precious efficacy of the blood of Christ, does so through the sorrow for all that is contrary to the perfection of that blood, and which has required the shedding of it.

Consecration and communion

It is thus man is consecrated. The heart is first purified in the conscience. The things to which he had given way are, as it were, brought to the conscience, which takes a painful knowledge of them, according to the value of the blood of the precious Lamb of God, who, without spot, and perfect in obedience, had to suffer the agony caused by the sin from which we have to be cleansed — wretched creatures that we are.

Afterwards the heart makes progress in the power of its communion, through the knowledge of the most precious objects of its faith. As to communion — though never as to the conscience of imputation (see Heb. 10), and as to communion it is by water (see John 13 and 1 John 2). This work must go on again from time to time in the conscience, whenever there is something in our nature which is not in subjection to Christ, which is not brought captive to the obedience of Christ.

The blood and oil applied, the sin offering was offered

The blood, then, was put upon the tip of his right ear, his right hand, his right foot — his thoughts, his conduct, and his walk purified on the principle of obedience according to the measure of Christ's death, and the claim of the love displayed in it. Over that they sprinkled oil — the presence and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit as given to us, by which we are anointed and sealed — not washing (that was typified by water, the application of the word by the Spirit), but given to consecrate in knowledge and power of purpose and affection to God (with whatever gifts might be added thereto); the whole man being thus consecrated, according to the intelligence and the devotedness wrought by the Holy Spirit, to God. After that the oil was put upon his head, his whole person being thus consecrated to Him. The work was complete upon him who was to be cleansed.* After that the sin-offering was offered; that is, Christ (not only for the purification of the conscience in a practical sense, for its actual faults, but that sin might be judged in its full extent before God; for Christ was made sin for us, as well as bore our sins) thus acts on our consciences with regard to those sins — makes us estimate sin, such as it is in itself, seen in the sacrifice of Christ. {* Note here how very distinctly the ground of introduction into the new christian place is stated in its completeness. Culpability is fully met, guilt removed, cleansing by blood as to all committed sins perfect, and the Holy Ghost given, giving competency for all that was to follow. The man stood, to apply the figure, personally on christian ground. The sin-offering and the burnt-offering go further, hence only the trespass-offering is used to introduce the leper and have him anointed.}

The burnt and meal-offerings offered, the leper was clean

Then the burnt-offering with the meat-offering was offered; the former, the appreciation of the perfection of the death of Christ, seen as the devoting of Himself to God unto death, to vindicate all the rights of His majesty, and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself — in view of the existence of sin; the latter, the absolute sinlessness of Christ, His perfection, and the acting power of the Spirit in Him even to death, and full testing by it. This death was of infinite perfection in itself, as a work, for it can be said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." It was not as bearing our sins, but absolute devotedness to God and His glory, in the circumstances that sin had brought us into, and into which Christ also came by grace, that God might be fully glorified in

Him.

In the meat-offering was found, besides, all the perfectness of the grace of Christ in His life — humanity, pure without doubt, but kneaded with oil; humanity having in it all the strength, the taste, and savour of the Holy Spirit in its nature; for it is in that aspect that it is presented here, not as anointed with oil* — as power — but kneaded with oil in its substance. Now the man is clean. {* The fact of anointing the person comes after the trespass-offering. But this circumstance is of moment as shewing that it is Christ, in what He was in Person intrinsically — not the display of power, so as to say, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come amongst you," but what He was in all His blessed life in perfectness to God and in love. This is what we feed on. Note here that what is said in verse 18 does not mean, I apprehend, that the oil in itself made an atonement, but the trespass-offering, for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. But it is not the less true that the man was not there until he had been anointed with the oil; nor is a man in heart and conscience before God till he have received the Holy Ghost, though the ground and measure of all be the blood with which he is sprinkled. It is the same in verse 29. See what follows.}

The importance and the reality of reconciliation and restoration to God

And how great is the importance and the reality of the reconciliation of a soul to God, if it values all that is thus unfolded of the work of Christ, and of its application to the soul; and certainly its reconciliation does not take place without. Alas! our trifling hearts pass, perhaps lightly, over this, and the dealings of that hand of God which does marvellous things with the quiet ease which perfect grace and power give. However, we do see, sometimes, in some souls (according to the wisdom of God), the anguish and the suffering which accompany this work, when the conscience, in view of the reality of things before God, and through Christ, takes knowledge of the state of the heart, sinful and distant from God in its nature.

This is the restoration of the soul on the part of God. It is all the working of divine power, not merely as to the work and resurrection of Christ, but even as to the soul itself; for the case here under supposition is that of a man already vitally cleansed. The priest judged him already clean, but the leper was not himself restored to God in his conscience;* and the Spirit of God, for this purpose, goes over the work of Christ, and its application to the soul itself, and its relationship with the work and presence of the Holy Spirit in its work, whether in purifying the sinner, or in consecrating the man. May our gracious God render us attentive to this! happy that the work should be His, though it takes place in us as well as for us. {* This difference is important, and shews how the working of sin may be stopped, and the desires and will set right, and in a certain sense the affections, but the conscience not yet be restored; communion consequently not yet re-established, nor the blessed confidence and affections founded on it.}

Leprosy in a house — in the land

There remains to be considered leprosy in a house. In the case of the leprous person, the whole referred to the tabernacle. They were still in the wilderness: the walk in the world was what was in question. But

here the being in the land of promise is supposed. It does not refer to the cleansing of the person; it is more typical of an assembly. When defilement appears there, they take out the stones and the plaster: the external walk is quite changed, and the individuals who have corrupted this walk are taken out, and thrown amongst the unclean. If the whole be thereupon healed, the house remains; if not, it is wholly destroyed; the evil is in the assembly itself, and it was manifest, as in the case of the leper. If its source was in the stones taken away, if it was only there, the end was accomplished by taking out the stones and removing the plaster, reforming the whole external walk. Purification consisted in taking away the wicked who corrupted the public testimony — that which was manifested outside. It was not a question of restoring the conscience; the whole rests anew on the primitive efficacy of the work of Christ, which renders the assembly acceptable with God.

We shall find that the apostle Paul, in his epistles addressed to assemblies, says, "grace and peace"; and, when writing to individuals, adds "mercy." Philemon seems an exception; but the church is addressed with him.

In the case of garments it is no question about cleansing one's person, but of getting rid of defiled circumstances. We see that the case of the house is presented separate, being in the land of promise, and not in the walk of the wilderness. The same truth is found in the application, I doubt not. The assembly is in the land of promise; the individual walks in the wilderness. However, stones which corrupt the house may be found there.

Chapter 15

The inevitable existence of what is shameful

Other cases connected with the weakness of nature are mentioned, but which point out that, sin having come in, all that is of nature, of the flesh, defiles (whatever may be the excuse as to the weakness and the unavoidable character of the thing). If it cannot be avoided, it is the manifestation, or at least the inevitable existence, of that which is shameful, because it is a nature fallen and sinful.

We shall find, however, that, though being shameful, the case is supposed less morally serious than leprosy. In leprosy there was the manifestation of positive corruption, existing beforehand in the nature, which was admitted in the heart, so that a long process was necessary to purify the conscience. Here they only washed once, and they offered merely a sin-offering, and they were thereby able, in offering their burnt-offering, to enter into communion through the sweet savour of Christ.

Chapter 16

The day of atonement: the purification of the sanctuary and atonement of the sins of the people

Having made provision for such defilements of the people as allowed of it, we have the revelation, first, of the general provision for the purification of the sanctuary which was in the midst of a people who defiled it, and secondly, for the atonement of the sins of the people themselves.

In general, there are two great ideas; first, that the atonement was made, so that the relationship of the people with God was maintained notwithstanding their sins; and then, in the second place, in the difficulties which surrounded the entrance of Aaron into the holy place, there was the testimony (according to the Epistle to the Hebrews itself) that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest during that dispensation.

Drawing near to God

It is important to examine this chapter under these two points of view. It stands alone. No mention is made anywhere else of what took place on that solemn day. The sacrifice of Christ, as meeting God's righteousness against sin as the ground of redemption, was typified by the passover. It was a question of drawing near unto God who revealed Himself on His throne — of cleansing defilements — of taking away the sins of those who would draw near, and of purifying their conscience. Now, while presenting to us in figure God's means of doing this, it signified indeed that the thing was not done. As to the general idea of its efficacy, the high priest drew near personally, and filled the most holy place with incense. So Christ goes in personally in the perfect savour of what He is for God. The place of God's presence was full of it.

Atonement made by blood according to the nature and majesty of the throne of God

The expression "that he die not" expresses the absolutely obligatory nature of anything which was fulfilled in Christ. Personally he appears before God, being as ointment poured forth, a sweet savour, connected with fire from the altar, that is, based on judgment and death, but only bringing out a perfect sweet odour to God: not blood for others, but fire for the testing of his perfectness; not in this case to cleanse, but to bring out the odour of this good ointment. Then he took some blood, which he put on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. Atonement or propitiation was made according to the requirement of the nature and majesty of the throne of God Himself, so that the full satisfaction made to His majesty rendered the throne of justice favourable, a place of acceptance; grace had free course, and the worshipper found the blood there before him when he drew near, and even as a testimony before the throne. Then, secondly, the high priest cleansed the tabernacle, the altar of incense, and all that was found there. But it was only that which was within.

The throne of justice made a throne of grace, and the place and its belongings cleansed

There were thus two things; the blood presented to God, the throne was a throne of grace according to righteousness — the conscience being purified, so that we enter with boldness now; and then the place

was cleansed, with all that belonged to it, according to the nature and presence of God, who dwelt there. In virtue of the sprinkling of His blood, Christ will reconcile all things in heaven and earth — but here this is only shewn as to the heavenly part — having made peace through the blood of His cross. There could be no guiltiness in the tabernacle, but it was the place of God's dwelling, and God would cleanse away the defilements, that they might not appear before Him.

The substitution of the scape-goat: sins confessed and borne by another

In the third place (but this as a distinct service) there was no cleansing of that which was outside, but the high priest confessed the sins of the people over the scape-goat, which, sent away unto a land not inhabited, bore all the sins away from God, never to be found again. It is here that the idea of substitution is presented most clearly. There are three things: the blood on the mercy-seat, the reconciliation of the sanctuary, and the sins confessed and borne by another.

It is evident that, though the scape-goat was sent away alive, he was identified as to the efficacy of the work with the death of the other. The idea of the eternal sending away of sins out of remembrance is only added to the thought of death. The glory of God was established, on one side, in the putting of the blood on the mercy-seat; and, on the other, there was the substitution of the scape-goat, of the Lord Jesus, in His precious grace, for the guilty persons whose cause He had undertaken; and, the sins of these having been borne, their deliverance was full, entire, and final. The first goat was Jehovah's lot — it was a question of His character and His majesty. The other was the lot of the people, which definitively represented the people in their sins.

Two aspects of the death of Jesus: to glorify God and to save man

These two aspects of the death of Jesus must be carefully distinguished in the atoning sacrifice He has accomplished. He has glorified God, and God acts according to the value of that blood towards all.* He has borne the sins of His people; and the salvation of His people is complete. And, in a certain sense, the first part is the most important. Sin having come in, the justice of God might, it is true, have got rid of the sinner; but where would then have been His love and His counsels of grace, pardon, and even the maintenance of His glory according to His true nature as love, while righteous and holy too? {* See John 13:31-32, and 17:1-4. And this entitles man to glory, does not merely justify him.}

I am not speaking here of the persons who were to be saved, but of the glory of God Himself. But the perfect death of Jesus — His blood put on the throne of God — has established and brought into evidence all that God is, all His glory, as no creation could have done it; His truth (for He had passed sentence of death) is made good in the highest way in Jesus; His majesty, for His Son submits to all for His glory; His justice against sin; His infinite love. God found means therein to accomplish His counsels of grace, in maintaining all the majesty of His justice and of His divine dignity; for what, like the death of Jesus, could have glorified them?

The devotedness of Jesus to God's glory giving an outlet to the love of God

Therefore this devotedness of Jesus, God's Son, to His glory — His submission, even unto death, that God might be maintained in the full glory of His rights, has given its outlet to the love of God, freedom to its action; wherefore Jesus says, "I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" His heart, full of love, was driven back, in its personal manifestation, by the sin of man, who would not have it; but through the atonement it could flow forth to the sinner, in the accomplishment of God's grace and of His counsels, unhindered; and Jesus Himself had, so to speak, rights upon that love — a position we are brought into through grace, and which has none like it. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again."

We speak with reverence of such things, but it is good to speak of them; for the glory of our God, and of Him whom He has sent, is found therein established and manifested. There is not one attribute, one trait of the divine character, which has not been manifested in all its perfection, and fully glorified in that which took place between God and Jesus Himself. That we have been saved and redeemed, and that our sins have been atoned for in that same sacrifice, according to the counsels of the grace of God, is (I presume to say it, precious and important as it is for us) the inferior part of that work, if anything whatever may be called inferior where everything is perfect: its object at least — we sinners — is inferior, if the work is equally perfect in every point of view. Nor can they indeed be separated; for if sin had not been there, where would that in God have been displayed, which has been in putting it away? Nor is it here only, though we know it here; we shall be eternally in glory, the proof and living witness as to the efficacy of Christ's work.

Having considered a little the grand principles, we may now examine the particular circumstances.

Aaron and his family, and the people

It will have been observed that there were two sacrifices; one for Aaron and his family, the other for the people. Aaron and his sons always represent the church, not in the sense of one body, but as a company of priests.

The distinction between the place of the heavenly and earthly people

Thus we have, even in the day of atonement, the distinction between those who form the church, and the earthly people who form the camp of God on the earth. Believers have their place outside the camp, where their Head has suffered as sacrifice for sin; but, in consequence, they have their place in the presence of God in the heavens, where their Head has entered. Outside the camp,* here below, answers to a heavenly portion above: they are the two positions of the ever blessed Christ. {* The camp is an earthly religious relationship with God outside the sanctuary, and established on earth with priests between men and God. This the Jews were; they cast Christ out of it; and it is now utterly rejected.}

If the professing church takes the position of the camp here below, the place of the believer is always outside. It is, indeed, what she has done; she boasts of it — but it is Jewish. Israel must indeed recognise themselves outside at last, in order to be saved and to be brought in again, through grace; because the Saviour, whom they despised in a day of blindness, has in grace borne all their sins as a

nation, owned in the remnant, for He died for that nation. We anticipate that position whilst Christ is in heaven. The heart of the remnant of Israel will indeed be brought back to Jehovah before that time; they will only enter into the power of the sacrifice when they shall look upon Him whom they pierced, and mourn for Him. Therefore was it prescribed that it should be a day to afflict their souls, and that he who did not should be cut off.

The way into the holiest closed that the people should not perish

The day of atonement supposes, moreover, according to the state of things found in the wilderness, that the people were in a state of incapacity for the enjoyment of the relations with God fully manifested. God had redeemed them, had spoken to them; but the heart of Israel, of man however favoured, was incapable of it in its natural state. Israel had made the golden calf, and Moses put a veil over his face; Nadab and Abihu had offered strange fire upon the altar of God — fire which had not been taken from the altar of burnt-offering. The way into the holiest is closed; Aaron is forbidden to enter there at all times. He never went in in his garments of glory and beauty. When he went in, it was not for communion, but for the cleansing of the sanctuary defiled by the iniquities of a people among whom God dwelt; and the day of atonement is only introduced with a prohibition of entering at all times into the holy place, and is conspicuous as taking place after the death of the sons of Aaron. He does it with a cloud of incense, lest he die. It was truly a gracious provision, in order that the people should not perish on account of their defilements; but the Holy Ghost was signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest.

The rent veil

In what, then, is our position changed? The veil is rent; and we enter, as priests, with boldness into the holiest, by a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, the flesh of Christ. We enter in without conscience of sins, because the blow which rent the veil, to shew all the glory and the majesty of the throne, and the holiness of Him who sits thereon, has taken away the sins which would have incapacitated us from entering in, or from looking within. We are even seated there in Christ our Head — the Head of His body the church.

Israel, in this dispensation, outside the holiest

In the meantime, Israel is outside. The church is seen in the Person of Christ, the High Priest, and the whole of this dispensation is the day of atonement, during which Israel's High Priest is hid within the veil. The veil which hid the import of all these figures is indeed done away in Christ, so that we have full liberty by the Spirit, but it is upon their hearts. He maintains there within, it is true, their cause through the blood which He presents; but the testimony to it is not yet presented to them outside, nor their consciences freed by the knowledge that their sins are lost for ever in a land not inhabited, where they will never be found again.

The Church's position inside with the high-priest

Now our position is, properly speaking, inside, in the person of Aaron, the blood being on the mercy-seat. We are not only justified by the scape-goat, as being without; that is done, it is clear, and once for all, for the veil is only on the heart of Israel, it is no longer between us and God. But we have gone in with the High Priest, as united to Him; we are not waiting for reconciliation till He comes out. Israel, though the forgiveness be the same, will receive these things, when the true Aaron comes out of the tabernacle. This is why that which characterised the sacrifice of Aaron and his sons was the blood put inside on the mercy-seat, and the going in of Aaron in person.

Outside, yet within

But the church is composed of persons who are here below, who have committed sins. Thus seen in the world, they are, as to their conscience, in the rank of the outside people, as well as Aaron himself, not viewed as a typical individual; and the conscience is purified by the certainty that Christ has borne all our sins in His body on the tree. Our position is within according to the value of the blood of Christ, and the perfect acceptance of His Person.

Waiting for Christ, yet united with Him

It is the same with regard to the expectation of Christ. If I consider myself as a man responsible upon earth, I expect Him for the deliverance of all things, and to put an end to all suffering, and to all the power of evil; and so individually myself, as a servant, I look to receive, at His appearing here, the testimony of His approval, as a Master, before the whole world, though if we had done all that was commanded us we have only to say we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which it is our duty to do — I speak merely of the principle. But if I think of my privileges, as a member of His body, I think of my union with Him above, and that I shall come back with Him when He shall come to appear in His glory.

In Christ, yet in our circumstances

It is well we should know how to make this distinction; without it there will be confusion in our thoughts, and in our use of many passages. The same thing is true in the personal religion of every day. I can consider myself as in Christ, and united to Him, seated in Him in heavenly places, enjoying all the privileges which He enjoys before God, His Father, and also as united to Him as Head of the body. I may also look upon myself as a poor weak being, walking individually upon the earth, having wants, faults, and temptations to overcome; and I see Christ above, whilst I am here below, Christ appearing alone for me before the throne — for me, happy in having, in the presence of God, Him who is perfect, but who has gone through the experiences of my sorrows; who is no longer in the circumstances in which I find myself — but with God for me who am in them. This is the doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews;* whilst the union of the church with Christ is more particularly taught in that to the Ephesians; in John's writings we are taught that the individual is in Him. {* The difference of 1 John 2 is this: there communion is in question, and Christ is our Advocate with the Father. Sin interrupts that communion, but the advocacy is founded on righteousness and propitiation. In Hebrews it is approach

to God which is in question, and for this we are perfected for ever, have boldness to enter into the holiest. Sin is not thus in question, but mercy and grace to help in time of need.}

Chapter 17

Preservation from defilement. God owned and honoured

After this quite special instruction of the day of atonement come some directions, not to purify from defilements, but to preserve from them either the people or the service of the priests (Lev. 17). It is to maintain them as a people holy to God, and keep them from all that would dishonour Him in their relations with Him, and themselves in their relations with others. Life belongs to God. And where it is taken, it must be offered in sacrifice and in sacrifice of course to God. The blood must be sprinkled, and the fat burned on the altar. Thus the danger of secret departure of the heart to demons was guarded against, and God's title to life, and the truth of sacrifice were maintained — all vital truths. Thus God was owned and honoured, and man's relationship with Him.

Chapter 18

Jehovah's statutes given to keep man from dishonouring himself in natural relations

Leviticus 18 keeps them from dishonouring themselves in the things which belong to nature itself — to what man ought to be in his natural relations, that he might not dishonour himself. Man ought not to do it; but, not having honoured God, he has been left to dishonour himself (compare Rom. 1). The people of God, being brought into nearness to Him, are taught on this subject. They were separated from the evil of the world they were called out of, and the reckless profligacy into which Satan had driven degraded man as his sport. Verse 6 is the great principle which is insisted on in the chapter — not to confound the intimacies of marriage with the confidence of natural relationship. Those things are forbidden into which, in the satanic and unnatural indulgence of flesh, Satan plunged man, and to which God had given them up to work all uncleanness with greediness. The comeliness of nature is maintained; what is defiling forbidden. Jehovah's statutes and judgments were to guide them: man in probation walking in them would live.

Chapters 19 and 20

Holiness to be maintained because Jehovah is holy

Leviticus 19, 20, carry us somewhat farther. They were to be holy, for Jehovah was holy. Chapter 19 takes up rather the side of good, though keeping themselves from all that was profane, or profaning what was holy; but we find what is good and kind and comely, what ought to be their conduct, in various details, in the relationship they sustain one with the other, either with regard to various dangers

to which they were exposed in their walk, in their every-day circumstances: for they had to do with God, and Jehovah was their God. The people of God were, in all their ways, to walk in a manner worthy of this relationship, and even to understand what was suitable to man, to every relationship in which they were found, according to God. Thus, though it was not here priesthood, it was the practical maintenance of this relationship with Him who dwelt among them, and to whom they drew nigh, by guarding against defilements unsuited to those who were in it. It is here we find the precept to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Separation from idols and evil becase Jehovah had sanctified the people

Leviticus 20 guards more against the evil and corruption which was found amongst the nations. In both they are called to be holy, in chapter 19 more in conformity to the character of God, in chapter 20 to keep apart from idols and evil because Jehovah had sanctified them to Himself. It insists upon purity in every respect.

Chapters 21 and 22

Holiness specially becoming the priests as set apart for Jehovah

Leviticus 21 specially presents what becomes the priests as set apart for Jehovah: this more intimate nearness supposed a conduct corresponding with it. All in their state must be fit for God's presence. So it is with us.

Leviticus 22. If there was, through weakness or neglect, anything unbecoming this nearness, they were to keep at a distance. Consequently there were things of which the priests, and those of their families in priestly separation, alone could eat. It is the same with us: there are things of the spiritual food of Christ, offered to God, upon which we can only feed, inasmuch as the heart is really separated unto Him, by the power of the Spirit. The offerings themselves must be pure, and such as become the eyes of God to whom they are presented, and a right appreciation of His majesty, and of our relationship with Him. All this indeed is found in Christ. No hardness of nature is allowed, but holiness. In what is connected with our own joy before God, holiness must be maintained in what is offered.

Practical sanctification in obedience to Jehovah's word

In Leviticus 20, where they are forbidden to follow the brutal and superstitious customs of idolatry (to which Satan had degraded man) and are warned against all impurity, which indeed was always inseparable from it, and for which the influence of the devil gave license, we have this simple and beautiful exposition of the principle which was to govern them: "Sanctify yourselves, therefore, and be ye holy: for I am Jehovah your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am Jehovah which sanctify you." They are bound to holiness and to sanctify themselves practically, because they are in the house, and the Master of it is holy. Sanctification supposed that they were in an acknowledged relationship with God, who will have the inmates of His house clean according to His own cleanness.

But then His word was to be the rule. They were to obey Him in His directions, for it was He who was separating them to Himself. This is a very instructive word as to the standard of all our thoughts with regard to that. If any are in my house, I will have them clean, because they are there; those outside are no concern of mine.* Then it was Jehovah who was separating them for that. There are interesting instructions with regard to what the priests ate, which we shall find again in the following book, and consider when we come to it. {* I do not speak of responsibility or mercy here.}

Chapter 23

The seven feasts of the Lord

We have now come to the feasts (Lev. 23). It is the full* year of the counsels of God towards His people, and the rest which was the end of those counsels. {* I add, to give the intelligence of this expression, that the word translated "feast" signifies an appointed or definite time, and which returned consequently at the revolution of the year. The series of the feasts embraced the whole year, inasmuch as they returned regularly each consecutive year. This shews too the difference of the sabbath, God's rest — only here of creation; and, I may add, of the new moon — figure I doubt not of Israel's restoration. The great new moon was in the seventh month.}

There were consequently seven — a number expressive of perfection well known in the word: the sabbath, the passover and the feast of unleavened bread, the firstfruits of harvest, Pentecost, the feast of trumpets in the seventh month, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles.

If the sabbath be separated and reckoned by itself, the passover would be distinguished from the feast of unleavened bread, which would make the seven. I do not say this to preserve the number, but because the chapter itself speaks thus: having counted the sabbath amongst the others, it resumes and calls the others (without the sabbath) the solemn feasts. For, in one sense, it was indeed a feast; in another, it was the rest, when the whole was ended.* In general these feasts present us, then, with all the bases on which God has entered into relationship with His people; the principles on which He has gathered them around Him, in His ways with this people, upon the earth. Their bearing was wider than that, in other respects; but it is in this point of view that these circumstances, that is, these facts, are here considered. They are seen in their accomplishment upon the earth. {* The idea of these feasts is God gathering the people around Himself as a holy convocation. The solemn feasts were, then, the gathering of God's people around Him, and in detail the ways of God in gathering them thus. Hence the distinction made in this chapter. It is evident that the sabbath, the rest of God, will be the great gathering of the people of God around Him, as the centre of peace and blessing. So that the sabbath is truly a solemn feast, a holy convocation; but? also, it is evidently apart and distinct from the means and the operations which gathered the people. Hence we find it mentioned at the beginning, and reckoned amongst the solemn feasts; then the Spirit of God begins afresh (ver. 4) and gives the solemn feasts, as embracing all the ways of God in the gathering of His people, leaving out the sabbath. In reckoning the feasts, the passover and the feast of unleavened bread may be considered as one, for both were at the same time, and treated together; or, looking upon the sabbath as separate, they may be estimated as two feasts. Both these things are found in the word.}

The moral distinction of the feasts

There is another way of dividing them, by taking the words, "And Jehovah spake unto Moses"* as the title of each part: the sabbath, the passover, and the unleavened bread (vers. 1-8); the firstfruits and the Pentecost (vers. 9-22); the feast of trumpets (vers. 23-25); the day of atonement (vers. 26-32); the feast of tabernacles (ver. 33 to the end). This latter division gives us the moral distinction of the feasts; that is, the ways of God therein. Let us examine them a little more in detail. {* It is well to observe, in passing, that this formula gives, in the whole Pentateuch, the true division of the subjects. Sometimes the directions are addressed to Aaron, which supposes some internal relations based on the existence of priesthood — sometimes to Moses and Aaron; and in that case they are not purely communications and commandments to establish relations, but also directions for the exercise of functions thus established. Consequently we have in Leviticus 10, for the first time I think, "Jehovah spake unto Aaron"; — Leviticus 11 to "Moses and Aaron"; because that, whilst it treats of commandments and ordinances given for the first time, it is also a question of the discernment consequent upon relations existing between God and the people, and in which the exercise of the priesthood came in. These general principles will assist in apprehending the nature of the communications made by God to His people (see Lev. 13). Leviticus 14, as far as verse 32, consists of ordinances to settle simply what priesthood must do; verse 33, priestly discernment is again in exercise.}

The Sabbath, the passover and the feast of unleavened bread, as a whole

The very first thing presented is the sabbath, as being the end and the result of all the ways of God. The promise is left us of entering into God's rest. It is a feast to Jehovah; but the feasts, which present rather the ways of God to lead us there, begin again at the fourth verse, as we have already said (compare vers. 37, 38). This distinction being noticed, we can take the sabbath,* the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread as making a whole (vers. 1-8). Of the two latter, the unleavened bread was the feast, properly speaking; the passover was the sacrifice on which the feast was grounded. As the apostle says, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with leaven," etc. {* I shall here add a few words on the subject of the sabbath, submitting them to the spiritual thoughts of my brethren. It is well to be subject to the word. First, the participation in God's rest is what distinguishes His people — their distinctive privilege. The heart of the believer holds that fast, whatever may be the sign that God has given of it (Heb. 4). God had established it at the beginning; but there is no appearance that man ever enjoyed in fact any share in it. He did not work in the creation, nor was he set to labour or toil in the garden of Eden; he was to dress and keep it, indeed, but he had nothing to do but continually to enjoy However the day was hallowed from the beginning. Afterwards the sabbath was given as a memorial of the deliverance out of Egypt (Deut. 5:15), and the prophets specially insist on that point — that the sabbath was given as a sign of God's covenant (Ezek. 20; Ex. 31:13). It was plain that it was but the earnest of the word, "My presence shall go, and I will give thee rest" (Ex. 31:13; 33:14; Lev. 19:30). It is a sign that the people are sanctified to God (Ezek. 20:12-13-16, 20; Neh. 9:14: compare Isa. 56:2-6; 58:13; Jer. 17:22; Lam. 1:7; 2:6; Ezek. 22:8; 23:38; 44:24). Besides these passages, we see that, whenever God gives any new principle or form of relation with Himself, the sabbath is added: thus in grace to Israel (Ex. 16:23); as law (Ex. 20:10). See also, besides the verse we

are occupied with, Exodus 31:13-14; 34:21; when they are restored afresh by the patience of God through mediation (chap. 35:2), and in the new covenant of Deuteronomy already quoted in the passage. These remarks shew us what was the radical and essential importance of the sabbath, as the thought of God and the sign of the relation between His people and Himself, though, being only a sign, a solemnity, and not in itself a moral commandment; for the thing signified the association with God in His rest, and is of the highest order of truth in connecting the heart with God. But if that be of the utmost importance, it is of an equal and even higher importance to remember that the covenant between God and the Jewish people is entirely set aside for us, and that the sign of this covenant does not belong to us, although God's rest be yet quite as precious to us, and even more so; that our rest is not in this creation — a rest of which the seventh day was the sign; and moreover (which is more important still) that the Lord Jesus is Lord of the sabbath, a remark of all importance as to His Person, and null if He was to do nothing with regard to the sabbath; and that, as a fact, He has omitted all mention of it in the sermon on the mount, where He has given such a precious summary of the fundamental principles suited to the kingdom, with the addition of the name of the Father and the fact of a suffering Messiah, and the revelation of the heavenly reward, making a whole of the principles of His kingdom, and that He uniformly thwarted the thoughts of the Jews on this point; a circumstance which the evangelists (that is, the Holy Ghost) have been careful to record. The sabbath itself Jesus passed in a state of death, a terrible sign of the position of the Jews as to their covenant — for us, of the birth of much better things. It has been tried, with much trouble, to prove that the seventh day was in fact the first. A single remark demolishes the whole edifice thus reared; it is, that the word of God calls this last the first in contrast with the seventh. What is, then, the first day? It is for us the day of all days — the day of the resurrection of Jesus, by which we are begotten again unto a lively hope, which is the source of all our joy, our salvation, and that which characterises our life. Thus we shall find the rest of God in the resurrection. Morally, in this world, we begin our spiritual life by the rest, instead of finding it at the end of our labours. Our rest is in the new creation; we are the beginning, after Christ, who is the Head of it, of that new dispensation. It is clear, then, that the rest of God cannot, in our case, be connected with the sign of the rest of creation here below. Have we any authority in the New Testament for distinguishing the first day of the week from the others? For my part, I do not doubt it. It is certain we have not commandments like those of the old law; they would be quite contrary to the spirit of the gospel of grace. But the Spirit of God has marked out, in divers manners, the first day of the week, though that day is not made binding upon us in a way contrary to the nature of the economy. The Lord, being raised on that day according to His promise, appears in the midst of His disciples gathered according to His word: the week following He does the same. In the Acts the first day of the week is marked as the day on which they gathered together to break bread. In 1 Corinthians 16 Christians are exhorted to lay by of what they had earned, each first day of the week. In Revelation it is positively called the Lord's day, that is, designated in a direct manner by a distinctive name by the Holy Spirit. I am well aware that it has been sought to persuade us that John speaks of being in spirit in the millennium. But there are two fatal objections to that interpretation. First, the Greek says quite another thing, and uses the same word that is used for the Lord's supper, lordly or dominical — the dominical supper, the dominical day. Who can doubt as to the meaning of such an expression, or, consequently, can fail to admit that the first day of the week was distinguished from others (as the Lord's supper was distinguished from other suppers), not as an imposed sabbath, but as a privileged day? But the

reasoning to prove it refers to the millennium is founded on a totally false idea, in that only a minimum portion of the Revelation speaks of the millennium. The book is about the things which precede it, and in the place where the expression is found, there is decidedly no mention whatever of it, but of the existing churches, whatever withal might be their prophetic character; so that, if we hold to the word of God, we are forced to say that the first day of the week is distinguished in the word of God as being the Lord's day. We are also bound to say, if we desire to maintain the authority of the Son of man, that He is superior to the sabbath — "Lord of the sabbath"; so that in maintaining for us the authority of the Jewish sabbath as such, we are in danger of denying the authority, the dignity, and the rights of the Lord Jesus Himself, and of re-establishing the old covenant, of which it was the appointed sign, of seeking rest as the result of labour under the law. The more the true importance of the sabbath, the seventh day, is felt, the more we shall feel the importance of the consideration that it is no longer the seventh, but the first day which has privileges for us. Let us take care, on the other hand, because we are no longer under law but under grace, not to weaken the thought not only of man's rest but of God's — a governing thought in the whole of the revelation of His relationships with man. The final rest for us is rest from spiritual labours in the midst of evil, not merely from sin; a rest which we, as fellow-labourers, shall enjoy with Him who has said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."}

What was indeed necessary for the sabbath, for the rest of God, was the sacrifice of Christ, and purity; and though all these feasts lead on to the rest of God, yet these two, the passover and unleavened bread, are the basis of all, and of the rest itself for us. Christ's sacrifice and the absence of all principle of sin, form the basis of the part we have in the rest of God. God is glorified in respect of sin; sin is put away for us, out of His sight, and out of our hearts. The perfect absence of leaven marked Christ's path and nature down here, and is accomplished in us, so far as we realise Christ as our life, and recognise ourselves, though the flesh be still in us, as dead and risen with Him.* It is thus that we have seen the manna connected with the sabbath in Exodus 16. To be without leaven was the perfection of the Person of Christ living upon earth, and becomes in principle the walk upon earth of him who is partaker of His life. In the true and final sabbath, of course, all leaven will be absent from us. The sacrifice of Christ and purity of life render one capable of participating in God's rest. {* There are three points which we may notice here as to this. First in Colossians 3 God counts us dead with Christ (in Col. also risen); in Romans 6 we reckon ourselves dead to sin, and alive not in Adam, but through Him; in 2 Corinthians 4 it is practically carried out; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our flesh. Ephesians is on different ground: we are not such as have died to sin, but were dead in sins, and then a wholly new creation. Sovereign grace had put us into Christ with the same power that raised Christ from the grave to the throne of God.}

The firstfruits — Christ

After that comes power, the firstfruits; that is, the resurrection of Christ on the morrow after the sabbath — the first day of the week. It was the beginning of the true harvest — harvest gathered, by power, outside and beyond the natural life of the world. According to the Jewish law nothing of the harvest could be touched before: Christ was the beginning, the firstborn from the dead. With this first of the firstfruits were offered sacrifices for a sweet savour, but not for sin. It is clear there was no need for it.

It is Christ who has been offered to God, quite pure, and waved before God — placed fully before His eyes for us, as raised from the dead, the beginning of a new crop before God — man in a condition which not even innocent Adam was in, the Man of God's counsels, the second Man, the last Adam: not, all hanging on obedience which might fail, and did, but after God had been perfectly glorified in the place of sin, past death, past sin (for He died unto sin?, past Satan's power, past judgment, and consequently by thus wholly out of the scene where responsible man had stood, on a totally new footing with God after His finished work, and God perfectly glorified; such a work too as gave Him title to say, therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again, and made it God's righteousness to set Him at His right hand in glory.

Pentecost — firstfruits of those who are Christ's

Connected with that comes the meat-offering at the end of the seven weeks. It is no longer Christ here, but those who are His, the firstfruits of His creatures; they are considered as being upon earth, and leaven is found in them. Therefore, though offered to God, they were not burned as a sweet savour (Lev. 2:12); but with the loaves was offered a sin-offering, which answered by its efficacy to the leaven found in them. They are the saints of which Pentecost commenced the ingathering.

The provision of grace — the Church period

This feast was followed by a long space of time, in which there was nothing new in the ways of God. Only they were commanded, when they reaped the harvest, not to make clean riddance of the comers of the field. A part of the good grain was to be left in the field, after the harvest was gathered into the garner, but not to be lost; it was for those who were not enjoying the riches of God's people, but who would participate exceptionally by grace in the provision which God had made for them — in the abundance which God had granted them. This will take place at the end of this age.

The feast of trumpets

Pentecostal work being ended, another series of events begins (ver. 23) with the words referred to, "And Jehovah spake unto Moses." They blow up the trumpet in the new moon (compare Ps. 81; Num. 10:3, 10). It was the renewal of the blessing and the splendour of the people — Israel gathered as an assembly before Jehovah. It is not yet the restoration of joy and gladness, but at least the renewal of the light and reflected glory which had disappeared takes place, and enlightens their expectant eyes; and they gather the assembly to re-establish the glory.

But Israel must at least feel their sin; and in the solemn feast which follows, the affliction of the people is connected with the sacrifice of the day of atonement: Israel shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn. The nation (at least the spared remnant who become the nation) will participate in the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, and that in their state here below, repenting, and recognised of God, so that the times of refreshing will be come. This is then the repentance of the people, but in connection with the atoning sacrifice. The efficacy is in the sacrifice; their participation in it is connected with the affliction of their souls (compare Zech. 12). But Israel did nothing — it was a

sabbath — they were assembled in humiliation in the presence of God. They accept the pierced One under the sense of the sin of which they have been guilty in rejecting Him.

The feast of tabernacles

Then follows the feast of tabernacles. They offered, during seven days, offerings made by fire unto Jehovah; and on the eighth day there was again a holy convocation — an extraordinary day of a new week which went beyond the full time — including, I doubt not, the resurrection; that is, the participation of those who are raised in that joy.

It was a solemn assembly — that eighth day, the great day of the feast, on which the Lord (having declared of the then time that His hour was not yet come to shew Himself to the world — His brethren [the Jews] not believing in Him either) announced that for him who believed in Him there would be, in the meanwhile, rivers of living water which would flow from his belly; that is, the Holy Spirit, who would be a living power working in, and flowing forth from the heart, and in the expression of its intimate affections. Israel had indeed drunk of the living water out of the rock in the wilderness, the sojourn in which, now past when the feast of tabernacles is celebrated, was celebrated with joy in the memorial of that which was over, to enhance the joy of the rest into which they were ushered. But believers now meanwhile were not only to drink, for blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed; the river itself would flow from the heart; that is, the Holy Spirit in power, which they would have received through Christ before He should be manifested to the world, or they have their place in the heavenly Canaan.

The joy of the Millennium

Thus, the feast of tabernacles is the joy of the millennium, when Israel have come out of the wilderness where their sins have placed them; but to which will be added this first day of another week — the resurrection joy of those who are raised with the Lord Jesus, to which the presence of the Holy Ghost answers meanwhile.

The day of joy yet awaiting the Centre and Spring of it all

Consequently, we find that the feast of tabernacles took place after the increase of the earth had been gathered in, and, as we learn elsewhere, not only after the harvest but after the vintage also; that is, after separation by judgment, and the final execution of judgment on the earth, when heavenly and earthly saints should be all gathered in. Israel was to rejoice seven days before Jehovah.

The passover has had its antitype, Pentecost its also; but this day of joy is yet awaiting Him who is to be the centre and spring of it all, the Lord Jesus, who will rejoice in the great congregation, and whose praise will begin with Jehovah in the great assembly (Ps. 22). He had already done it in the midst of the assembly of His brethren; but now the whole race of Jacob is called to glorify Him, and all the ends of the world shall remember themselves.

The feast of tabernacles kept only in the land

The expression, solemn assembly, is not found applied to any of the feasts but this, except to the seventh day of the passover (Deut. 16), as it seems to me somewhat in the same sense. The feast of tabernacles could not be kept in the wilderness. In order to observe it, the people were to be in possession of the land, as is plain. It is also to be observed, that it never was kept according to the prescriptions of the law from Joshua till Nehemiah (Neh. 8:17). Israel had forgotten that they had been strangers in the wilderness. Joy, without the remembrance of this, tends to ruin; the very enjoyment of the blessing leads to it.

It will be remarked that, properly speaking, all the feasts are types of what is done on earth and in connection with Israel, unless we except the eighth day of tabernacles. The church period, as such, is the lapse of time from Pentecost to the seventh month. We may, and of course do, get the benefit of, at any rate, the two first; but historically the type refers to Israel.

Chapter 24

The feasts present the ways of God towards His people on the earth

The remaining chapters of this book appear to me to have a special bearing. The Spirit of God has presented, in chapter 23, the history of the ways of God towards His people upon earth from beginning to end, from Christ to the millennial rest.

God's work in relation to priesthood and apostasy

Chapter 24 presents first the internal work, so to speak, which related to priesthood alone on the one hand, and the public sin of an apostate on the other — the fruit of the alliance with an Egyptian who blasphemed Jehovah. Through the care of priesthood (whatever might be God's public ways, and the state of Israel) the gracious light of the Spirit would be maintained, and that particularly from the evening until the morning — the time during which darkness brooded over Israel.

Moreover, the incense which was on the memorial of the bread, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, was burned as a sweet smell to Jehovah, and the priests identified themselves with the tribes by eating this bread — the action of eating having the significance of continued identification.

Grace and judgment

Thus priesthood maintained the light with respect to Israel, when all was darkness in the midst of them, and the memorial of Israel was in sweet savour before God, the priesthood identifying itself with them; although the people were in the eyes of man as lost, they exist through the priesthood of Jesus on high, as a memorial before God. There is a certain sense in which the church participates in this, as is explained doctrinally in Romans 11. This is only as far as promise goes, and the being children of Abraham, not the mystery in which we are taken up as lost sinners, without promise, and placed by

sovereign grace in the same glory as the Lord Jesus. In Isaiah 54 we see that believers are reckoned to Jerusalem, in grace, though she were a widow.

Externally the judgment of cutting off and death without mercy is executed against him that had cursed.

Chapter 25

The trumpet of jubilee

Chapter 25. The land itself is held for Jehovah, as being His; it must enjoy God's rest; and moreover he who had lost his inheritance therein should find it again, according to the counsels of God, at the appointed time. The trumpet of the jubilee would sound and God would re-establish each one in his possession, according to His (God's) rights, for the land was His. Their persons also were to be free then, for the children of Israel were God's servants. It was not so with those not belonging to God's people. And although Israel have sold themselves to the stranger, He who made Himself nigh of kin has redeemed them from his hands. The day of jubilee will free the people, whatever may be the power of those who hold them captives.

Chapter 26

God's ways in patience and chastisement, and His unconditional promise

We have a touching picture of the ways of God in patience and in chastisement, if Israel walked contrary to Him. When they acknowledged their fault, then He would remember the covenant made with their fathers, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was a covenant made without condition, and with the land. Then He would remember the covenant made with their ancestors, under His name of Jehovah, when they came out of Egypt.* God will take these two titles on their restoration: Almighty, the name of His relationship with the fathers; and Jehovah, the name of His relationship with the people, viewed as taken to Himself at their coming out of Egypt.

Chapter 27

God's rights in all devoted to Him; His absolute title

The last chapter (27) treats of the rights and the appointments of God in all that relates to things which are devoted to Him through the medium of priesthood. This necessarily finds its place in that which treats of priesthood; but it has, I doubt not, a much wider meaning. The subject treated is that of him who devotes himself to God, and that of the lands belonging to Him — of the rights of Israel, whose possession it was not, and of their selling it to others.

As to Christ, He offered Himself without spot to God; He was valued at a low price. Israel by right belonged to Jehovah. As Emmanuel's land, the Israelites only enjoyed the land without being

proprietors, and they could only pledge it till jubilee; it would then return to its possessor as Emmanuel's land. Israel (looked at as the possessor of the gift of God) not having redeemed it when sold to the stranger, when the jubilee comes the land will be absolutely the Lord's; the priest will possess it. In Zechariah 11 Christ is thus valued, "whom they of the children of Israel did value."

I only point out the principle presented in the chapter, without pretending to enter into all the details of application which may suggest themselves. The principle is the important thing to enable one to understand the purpose of God; in the case of any vow, whether it be redeemed or not; or of land, whether it shall return in the day of jubilee, when God shall take possession again of His rights in the land of Israel, and cause to enter those whose right it is.

Thus the government of God, resulting in His return in grace to His unconditional promise and [earthly] purpose are given to us in chapter 26, and the absolute title of Jehovah in chapter 27. Chapter 26 is in fact a parenthesis shewing God's ways, with return to His promise in grace; chapter 25 man's redeeming, if he could, or his kinsman; chapter 27 God's absolute title.

The judgment entrusted to the priest shows plainly it is to christ as Priest and King

It is to be observed also, that the judgment is according to the judgment of the priest. But although this be attributed to the priest, it is to the king in Jeshurun (the upright) that the appreciation is entrusted. This shews plainly who is to do it, and under what character, though being according to the discernment, the grace, and the rights of priesthood. It is Christ as Priest, but Christ as King in Israel, who will order all that.