

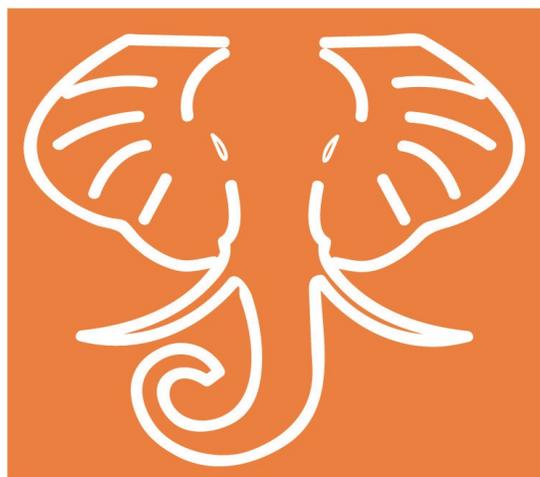
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THE
PERFECT SACRIFICE.

BY
BENJAMIN WILLS NEWTON.



Philadelphia :
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
530 ARCH STREET.

PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

THE following work was issued by the author in London, under the unassuming title of "Thoughts on Parts of the Book of Leviticus." The original work consists of an essay on each of the Offerings, together with notes on the first six chapters of Leviticus, in which the law of true offering is laid down. The present edition consists only of the essays, into which have been inserted such portions of the notes as seemed desirable for the more full presentation of the author's views. Some few foot notes have also been added by the editor from the writings of the author and from other sources. There has been no change of the author's language except in a few instances where a mere verbal correction has been made.

The author throughout recognizes, with Archbishop Magee, that the Sacrifices of the Mosaic economy "terminate in that grand and comprehensive Offering which was the primary object and the final consummation of the sacrificial institution." His aim is simply to place side by side the type and the antitype, in order that those for whom the great Sacrifice was offered may behold and rejoice in its perfectness.

Those who peruse the work with care will probably be led to admire the wisdom of God, as shown in the types which he has been pleased to use for the in-

struction of his children. It has been well said, "By them does God bring within the range of our capacity definite views of the details of Christ's work, which, perhaps, but for these pictures, we should never fully, or at least so fully, apprehend."

In his views of the significance of the Offerings the author is in essential accord with the most judicious expounders of the Mosaic ritual. Those who have attempted to unfold the meaning of the special offerings while overlooking their distinct reference to the one perfect sacrifice of Christ, have been always involved in hopeless embarrassments. What Kurtz, in his "Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament," says of the Sin and Trespass-offerings, may well be applied to the offerings in general: "There is scarcely a single question connected with the whole range of biblical theology on which there has been so much pure conjecture, and about the settlement of which theological science was so late in arriving at a correct conclusion, although the foundations for it evidently existed in the biblical text, and were not very difficult to find." We should not have had so much vain conjecture had interpreters fully understood and faithfully applied the principle of Augustine: "The New Testament is hidden in the Old; the Old Testament is unfolded in the New."

The work is now reproduced in the hope that it may be used by the Holy Spirit to promote the peace and joy of believers in Christ. It is his blessed office-work to cause believers to "know the things that are freely given to us of God." In doing this he fulfills

the word of the Lord: "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Christ is too often regarded by believers as merely their Sin-offering or their Trespass-offering. These are important and precious aspects of his work. But they do not represent fully his Perfect Sacrifice. Those who have been led by the Holy Spirit to know him also in the Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, and the Peace-offering, will find in the view thus opened to them fresh occasion for gratitude and love. When the Lord Jesus Christ is known in all the aspects of his Perfect Sacrifice, the believer will begin to comprehend more fully the blessedness of those who are "complete in him."

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THE PERFECT SACRIFICE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE first anxiety of every soul awakened to consider its relation to God concerns its own salvation. Its cry is, "What must I do to be saved?" That cry God has answered. He has said, and the words remain written forever, "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED." Our faith may be feeble; our appreciation of sin weak; our knowledge of Christ poor. We may be little able to say, that we are humbled as we should be humbled; or that we reverence God as we should reverence him; or that we value Christ as we should value him: nevertheless, whosoever with the feeblest faith casts himself on God thus

preaching peace through Jesus Christ, "HATH everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but IS PASSED from death unto life." John v. 24. His own worthless name is set aside ; it is, as it were, blotted out ; and he stands accepted in the name of Another. He is "justified freely"—"has peace with God"—"has received reconciliation."

But whilst the Scripture thus plainly points to the door by which we enter the everlasting fold, another of its objects is to instruct those who are within. We enter the fold not as sheep that have never wandered, but as sheep that have gone astray—ignorant, therefore, and weak—still exposed to temptation—still prone to wander ; and as such, needing instruction, guidance, consolation. This the Scripture is intended to supply ; and such peculiarly is the object of the book of Leviticus. It explains to those who *have* believed, the fullness and completeness of their redemption. Israel, to whom were given in types the shadows of those mercies which are made to *us* verities in Christ—Israel received the book of Leviticus, not whilst they were in

Egypt, not *before* they received the typical sign of salvation in the blood of the Passover lamb, but *after* they had quitted Egypt—*after* they had been saved from its judgment—*after* they had been recognized as the redeemed of the Lord. The midnight cry which suddenly arose from every Egyptian dwelling, was heard in none of the families of Israel. Strengthened by the food on which they had secretly fed in their houses marked with the blood of the lamb, they entered the wilderness, not as strangers to God and to his mercies, but as a people whom God had chosen for himself, to learn his ways, and to maintain his testimonies.

One of the chief and most peculiar mercies granted to them in the wilderness, was the Tabernacle—the place of “appointed meeting” between themselves and God. There, as soon as it was reared up, God instituted those sacrifices which formed the basis of Israel’s rest in *him*, and of his ability, without derogation from his holiness, to rest in *them*. SACRIFICE, therefore, is the great thought of Leviticus throughout. The altar with its holy fire seeking that whereon it might

feed—the claim of the altar duly met by accepted offering—God satisfied and honored—the worshiper protected, instructed, and blessed—these are the subjects of which the book of Leviticus treats. Believers learn in it the riches which are theirs in Christ Jesus : they learn also to see in the light of God's holiness, as well as of his grace, the nature of those short-comings and sins which need that those riches should be substituted for their poverty in the presence of God. They learn, too, how they are consecrated as his priestly servants to serve him in the midst of holy, and also in the midst of unholy things.

The commencing chapters of Leviticus present to us *five* different aspects of the sacrificial service of Christ, varied according to the variety of those needs in us, which the grace of the One Sacrifice is designed to meet. The want of that *full and unreserved devotedness* which is due on our part to God, and claimed by him, but which is by us never rendered, is met by that abounding grace which has appointed Another, perfect in devotedness and self-renunciation, to be a *Burnt-offering* in our room. The manifold deficiencies

in our personal *characters*—the presence in them of so much that should be absent, and the absence of so much that should be present, is met by the presentation of him for us, the perfectness of whose character is here typified by the excellency of the *Meat-offering*. The condition of our *nature*, which is enmity against God, because sin, essential sin dwells in it, is met by the efficacy of the *Peace-sacrifice*, whereby, notwithstanding the enmity of our nature, peace with the Holy One becomes our portion. *Sin*, even when committed in such intensity of blindness, as that we understand not the heinousness of that which we are doing, and perhaps mistake it for good—such sin is met by the *Sin-offering*: or if it be committed *knowingly*, not under the blindness of ignorance, but in the willfulness of a heart that consciously refuses to be restrained, it is met by the grace of the *Trespass-offering*. Such are the aspects under which the perfectness of the One Sacrifice is presented to us in the first chapters of Leviticus. The aspects are various, but the sacrifice is one; just as the colors of the rainbow may for instruction-sake be presented to

us separately, but the rainbow which they unitedly constitute is one. After we have learned in distinctness, we combine in unity. Nor is there any division of the perfectness of the One Sacrifice in its application to them that believe. From the first moment we believe, the perfectness of Christ's sacrifice is in all its totality ours. We may not, perhaps, either appreciate or understand all that is typified by these various offerings, yet the united value of them all is reckoned to us by God. As we "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour," we understand more, and appreciate better; but by such growth in understanding we do not *make* the blessing ours—we only apprehend that which *is* ours.

CHAPTER II.

THE BURNT OFFERINGS.

LEVITICUS I.

IT must be self-evident to all who reflect on the perfections of God, that he as the Governor of the universe must maintain those perfections unsullied, and must require that they should be duly recognized, and duly responded to by his creatures. The claims of God are never arbitrary. He only requires that which is needful to the happiness, as well as to the holiness of his creatures. The happiness of heaven is this, that God being known and his character appreciated, he is necessarily, and if I may so say, naturally loved and honored. It requires no effort in sinless beings to love and honor One who is essentially worthy of all honor, and all love. In heaven, as soon as God is known, he is loved—spontaneously loved; and we can easily conceive how the absence of such love must, in the judgment of heaven, be deemed the evidence of

deepest sin. The power of that first and greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," is well understood in heaven; and a heart that for one moment fails therein, is instantly understood to be under the plague of sin.

But the thoughts of earth are very diverse from those of heaven. Here we are so accustomed to fall short of God's glory, and failure in glorifying him is so much regarded as the necessary law of our condition, that even believers find it difficult to look on failure in devotedness as sin—sin that needs atonement as much as their most dire transgressions. Even after we have owned the blood of the Paschal Lamb as delivering from the judgment due to our natural condition, and after we have recognized the necessity of the Holy One bearing the curse earned by our transgressions, we nevertheless fail to estimate the want of perfect devotedness as being positive sin; and hence the appreciation of our own condition, as well as of the grace that meets it, becomes proportionately enfeebled.

In order to correct this error—an error fatal to all right apprehension of God, and our relation both to his holiness and to his grace—the first lesson given to us in the Tabernacle respects the whole Burnt-offering. We might perhaps have expected on entering that place of appointed meeting with God, to hear first respecting our palpable transgressions or sins. Our minds intuitively turn to the Trespass-offering, or to the Sin-offering; for conscience without much difficulty recognizes that transgression violates our relation to a holy God. Yet neither of these offerings is presented to our regard when God first speaks from the Tabernacle of Congregation. His first commandment respected the Holocaust, or whole Burnt-offering.

The Hebrew word which is rendered in the Greek version “Holocaust” (whole Burnt-offering), and in our version “Burnt-offering,” means properly “that which ascends.” It was called “the Ascending-offering,” either because it was wholly lifted up or caused to ascend upon the altar, or because it was wholly burned on the altar and thence ascended in sweet smelling

fragrance as a sweet savor of rest before Jehovah. In other offerings part was sometimes given to the priest, sometimes to the offerer; but the Burnt-offering was *all* (the skin only excepted) rendered to God, and *all* burnt upon his altar. In the Burnt-offering, therefore, there was a distinct recognition of the righteous claim of God on the unreserved devotedness of his creatures; but it was also the confession that that claim was responded to by none. When an offerer presented a victim to be accepted in his room, the very act of substitution implied, that the offerer acknowledged himself to be destitute of the qualifications which were found in his offering: otherwise, substitution would not be needed, for the offerer would stand in his own integrity. There was the confession, too, that the absence of these qualifications involved guilt—guilt deserving death; for otherwise the offering would not have been substantially slain—“killed before Jehovah;” and lastly, there was the acknowledgment that because no unreserved devotedness had been found in him, he needed an

offering to be wholly given in his stead as "a sweet savor of rest before Jehovah."

The Burnt-offering therefore may be regarded as the type of Christ in respect of that full, unreserved devotedness of service, which caused him as the Servant of Jehovah, in all things to renounce himself, and to render every energy, and every feeling, and finally his life itself, as a whole Burnt-offering unto God. Perfect in understanding, perfect in every mental, as well as moral power, he nevertheless glorified not himself by these powers, but unreservedly devoted them to God. If he meditated, it was for God; if he spake, or if he acted, it was for him. He knew him whom he served, and he fully loved him. He appreciated the character of God—understood his counsels—knew what was needful to the maintenance of his glory, and met perfectly all its claims. Christ only could say, "I have set the Lord always before me." "My meat and my drink is to do my Father's will." "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." And when, at the close of his course of sorrow, he might have

asked the Father to deliver him from the Cross and from the wrath thereon endured—when, to use his own words, he could have prayed to the Father, and he would presently have given him more than twelve legions of angels, he refused so to pray—he asked for no such deliverance, but meekly said, “Father, glorify thy name.” Here was the unreserved devotedness unto God which the Burnt-offering typified. “He was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.” The Cross had many other significations, many other relations ; but one thing marked on it was the unshrinking obedience of him who there suffered—One indeed who had ever said, “Father, not my will, but thine, be done.”

The first act in offering the Holocaust was its solemn presentation before Jehovah. Before it was placed upon the altar, and before it was slain, it was brought in its living perfectness to the door of the Tabernacle of Congregation, and was there presented before Jehovah. There the offerer, standing as in the presence of Jehovah, identified himself with the offering by firmly leaning his hand upon its head. It was equivalent to say-

ing, "Let this offering be regarded, as if it were myself; I lean on it as my support before thee." The offering thus presented for his acceptance, was accepted for him to make "atonement for him," or literally, "to place a covering over him."*

The offering was thus presented "*for the acceptance*" of the offerer—I say for his acceptance, for such is the right translation of the words, לרצונו as they are rightly rendered by the Septuagint (*δεξιτον*) and by the Vulgate (*acceptabilis*). Indeed, our own translators have so rendered

* "In this way," says Kurtz, "we understand the covering of Sin in the Sacrificial worship, as a covering by which the accusing and damnatory power of sin—its power to excite the anger and wrath of God—is broken; by which, in fact, it is rendered both harmless and impotent. * * * It is so complete, effectual and overpowering a covering that all real and active force in that which is covered up is thereby rendered impossible, or slain." Katmis says, "To expiate, literally to cover up, does not mean to cause a sin not to have been committed, for that is impossible; nor to represent it as having no existence, for that would be opposed to the correctness of the law; nor to pay or compensate it by any performance; but to cover it before God, i. e., to deprive it of its power to come between us and God."

them in Lev. xxiii. 11, "He shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah *to be accepted for you.*" And again, in Exod. xxviii. 38, "And it (that is, the golden plate) shall always be upon Aaron's forehead that they may *be accepted* before the Lord." When this alteration is made, the concluding words of the following verse are brought into their proper correspondency: "He shall offer it *for his acceptance* before Jehovah and *it shall be accepted for him.*"

The mis-translation of these words has led many to imagine that the Burnt-offering was distinctively a voluntary offering: whereas, it is contrasted with voluntary offerings, as in the following passage, "a Burnt-offering or sacrifice in performing a vow or in a *free-will-offering.*" Num. xv. 2. Not only was the Burnt-offering *demand*ed by the ordinance of God from Israel unitedly, as in the daily Burnt-offering, and in the annual ceremonies of the Day of Atonement, but it was continually required of individual Israelites. See Lev. xii. and xiv. Indeed, an Israelite, who walked in the fear of God, would feel himself under perpetual obligation to bring a

Burnt-offering, whenever he became conscious of failing in right devotedness towards God—and that might be more often than the day. When seeking through the Burnt-offering *atonement*, because of *not* having loved the Lord his God with *all* his strength, he would no more think that he was bringing “a free-will-offering,” than he would think so, when bringing a sin-offering or a trespass-offering. If the latter were required when he *had* done things that were *forbidden*, the Burnt-offering was equally required when he had *not* done that which was commanded. The same Law that said, “Thou shalt *not* covet,” said also, “Thou *shalt* love.”

This presentation of the living victim in its *perfectness* (for it was to be a male—the type of strength and energy; and it was to be without blemish) is to be distinguished from its death, and from its being burned upon the altar. It was presented indeed in order that it might be slain and burned; and without its being so slain and burned, there could have been no atonement, no acceptance for the offerer. Nevertheless, the act of presentation is to be considered by itself. It

typifies the believer's recognition of the living excellency which individually characterized the Lord Jesus here—that excellency in virtue of which he was known as the “righteous Servant,” —“the faithful and the true Witness”—“the Lover of righteousness,” and “the Hater of iniquity.” The Lord Jesus had a personal, individual history of his own; and we can easily understand how, in the case of those, who, like John and Peter, knew, loved, and followed him, the thought of what Jesus personally had been, formed as real and distinct a subject of meditation as any of the results which flowed from his having been given unto death for them. They knew indeed the value of that death; they estimated the value of its results, but they knew also the value of THE PERSON who had died. They remembered, and they understood those words once and again uttered from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Indeed, their apprehension of the living service of their Master, formed one of the chief elements in their knowledge of him, and of God. Understanding the excellency of him in

whom they trusted, they appreciated the blessedness of those who, like themselves, had leaned their sinful hand upon the holy head of the Burnt-offering.

After having been thus presented, the victim was slain. If there should be in our minds a disposition to speak lightly of failure in devotedness, and to extenuate its evil, as if it were something easily to be excused in persons circumstanced as we, we find in the death of the Burnt-offering the answer which God has given to thoughts so dishonoring to himself, and so destructive of all right apprehensions of sin. The fact of the Burnt-offering being slain—*slain for atonement*, is an abiding witness, that want of devotedness to God is a sin that can only be “covered” by death—expiatory death. There are, indeed, other aspects in which we may consider sin. We may see it in the hidden depravity and uncleanness of our nature; we may trace it in the facility with which we fall ignorantly into transgression; or we may discover it in many a form of deliberate and willful disobedience; but there is no more convincing evidence of its power, to those who

are acquainted with the character of God, than that want of devotedness to him, whereby ourselves, and not God, become the chief object of our heart's devotion and love. When the disciples learned at last to know God in and through Christ, when they began to appreciate the perfect devotedness that had marked the service of their Lord, they found in their own want of likeness to him, evidences of guilt too deep to be met availingly by any thing else than atoning death. They needed not to look to their palpable transgressions for proof that they required that another should die in their room; they found it in the fact that they had *chiefly* loved themselves.

But before the offering was placed upon the altar, another ceremony was appointed: it was to be flayed and divided into its parts. The head, representing powers of intelligence, observation, and directive control; the fat, which indicates healthfulness and vigor in the parts to which it pertains; the inwards, which typify the inward activities of thought and feeling; the legs, which denote the path practically pursued—these various

parts were all carefully distinguished from each other before they were given to the altar. In this, again, we see the importance attached in Scripture to a knowledge of what Christ was whilst living and acting here ; for it was here that he showed how all his powers, inward and outward, were wholly and always dedicated to God. Even if no results had ever flowed to us therefrom, the living dedication of Christ would not have lost its excellency. It was excellent in itself apart from all its results, and, as we learn from this type, is to be considered not carelessly, but with minute and accurate discrimination by all who would appreciate the full value of the Burnt-offering. It must be observed, however, that that living value is, at this stage of the offering, regarded as something past: the victim *had been* slain—its energies arrested by death—its life taken from the earth. In such knowledge, therefore, apart from the altar, and from the priestly ministration thereon, there would have been only sorrow—sorrow like that of the disciples who went to the sepulchre with their spices, or who journeyed to Emmaus and were sad.

They mourned over him who was gone, but they understood not the purposes of God—they had, as yet, no view of the altar—no knowledge of the manner in which the holy fire of that altar had fed on and been satisfied with the excellency of him for whom they sorrowed. But the moment their eyes were opened to understand the work which God's hand had wrought—the moment they stood, as it were, by the side of the Burnt-offering altar and understood the ministrations there, their sorrow was turned into joy. There they could consider all the sinfulness of their deficiencies, and think of God in all the fullness of his attributes, and yet rejoice in the knowledge, that all had been met by an offering that had ascended, as a sweet savor of rest, before Jehovah forever.

We can, indeed, scarcely estimate the change that took place in the apprehensions of the disciples, when first they began to think of God as accepting them in the perfectness of the offering of Christ, or to use typical language, when they became acquainted with the fire which had fed on the perfectness of the Burnt-offering. That fire

represented the searching holiness of God. Israel had beheld that holy fire in Egypt when it burned terribly against the Egyptians. Peter became conscious of its presence, when, astounded by the manifestation of Almighty power in Jesus, he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The lesson of the Burnt-offering altar he had not yet learned. There, indeed, the fire was seen unchanged as to its holiness: its relation to every thing merely human was taught in the wood given to it to be consumed: but the wood was not the only thing that was given—the Burnt-offering, also, was laid upon the altar; and the fire, as it fed thereon, although still the type of holiness, became the type of holiness *placated*. The coal from the altar could, after this, touch the lips of the unclean, and it could be said, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

The Burnt-offering was a sweet savor of rest unto Jehovah. The word "rest,"* omitted in

* "Savor of rest or sweetness," that which delights or satisfies.—AM. ED.

our version, is important, as showing how much it is the object of the whole passage to keep prominently before us the great doctrine of SATISFACTION in connection with this offering. Two things were needful in order that God might rest in his people. In the first place his violated law required a satisfaction that could be rendered only by death—atoning death; but his claim for positive perfectness must be satisfied, too. God could not rest in those to whom no righteousness attached, any more than he could rest in those whose guilt was unforgiven. Imputation of righteousness, therefore, was needed, and was granted in virtue of the same great act that gave them immunity from wrath. He who bore in their stead the stroke of judgment, did at the same moment present for them his own personal excellency to God. The offerer, as he beheld the altar breathing forth towards heaven its cloud of fragrance, saw in that fragrance something that was attributed to himself. He learned in it the blessed truth of IMPUTATION.*

* It has been said by some of late that there never can be any progress in real truth, unless we get rid

How far believers need such "imputation," it must be left to their own consciences to decide. The history of Christianity is no bright picture. The path even of real Christians has been sorrowfully marked by the want of single-eyed devotedness to God. Eager to reign as kings before the hour for the supremacy of Truth has come, and impatient of "the endurance of the kingdom of Jesus," even real Christians early despised the Apostle's chiefest honor, and shrunk from being regarded as "the filth of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things," for Christ's sake. Even the brightest instances of individual faith, when narrowly examined, show how little any among the sons of men can say—"I have set the

of the absurd doctrine of imputation. No doubt it is a doctrine peculiarly adverse to the schemes of those who wish to make men happy apart from Christ. Men say, where is it taught in Scripture? We might rather ask, where is it *not* taught? Every page that alludes to the altar sending up the sweet-smelling savor of its offerings teaches it. Would the Scripture, which cannot lie, teach me that that ascends for me which does not ascend for me; and if it ascends for me, its excellency is attributed to me; and that is imputation.

Lord always before me." We are they of whom the Lord Jesus prophetically said, that "offences should abound" amongst us, and that because of them, the love, even of the greater part of us—his people—should wax cold. Yet the sin even of believers cannot frustrate the purposes of the grace of God. The Burnt-offering altar remains what it ever was; its offering retains its efficacy, and in virtue thereof, the church unitedly, and each believer individually, stands before God, not only protected from the consequences of their failure, but accepted according to the excellency of him who has lived and who has died for them. They will enter into the presence of God, not as those who are to be oppressed by the recollection and sense of their failure; but as those who are to be welcomed and rejoiced over, because encompassed by the results of the sacrifice and service of Another. Our title to this blessing is not affected by the degree of our faith, nor by the depth of our spiritual experience, nor by the character of our service. It is given on the ground of what Christ is, and becomes the inheritance of the believer solely because of him.

The thief on the cross, and the jailer at Philippi, when they believed, could have had little knowledge of their condition—little estimate of sin—little experimental acquaintance with truth—little appreciation of Christ and the fullness of his salvation. Yet Paul himself, when able to say, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith,” was not more certainly under the efficacy of this most precious offering than were they, from the first moment they believed. The babe that falls asleep in Jesus has, as regards this, the same title as an apostle; because that title is, in either case, derived exclusively from Another.

But whilst we have firmly to maintain the prerogative of grace, in giving according to its own bountifulness out of its own riches; and have jealously to guard those blessings which are the common heritage of believers, we must not on that account despise such present blessings, as are by God’s own appointment made dependent on *growth* in the knowledge of Christ our Saviour. A knowledge not necessary for acceptance may be necessary for our comfort, and

for the right direction of our service here. When first our eye is turned believingly towards Christ our Passover, we are quickened by the Spirit, and he begins to dwell within us. To quicken is the work of the Spirit towards us when we are in the world; to teach us respecting Christ, and to cause us to appreciate the things freely given to us of God, is his work towards us when we are in the church. If then the Scriptures describe our relation to God after we have believed, by the type of one standing at the altar under the full acceptance of the ascending offering, should we not seek to recognize this as our position, even though it be true that we are safe without such recognition? If the priests bearing the holy fire, and laying thereon the wood, be a type of believers occupied in the service of the sanctuary, there learning to estimate God's holiness which is as the fire, in contrast with all that is merely natural which is as the wood, who would not desire to have an experimental acquaintance with such things? Yet the soul of a believer may, as regards its experience, linger in the Land of Egypt, and never know the

lessons of the Tabernacle. It may think of Christ as One who delivers from coming wrath—it may recognize the fire of divine holiness as burning destructively against Egypt and its works—it may even appreciate its own immunity from that wrath through the blood marked on the door-posts and doors, and yet be a stranger to the Tabernacle; for to know the blood so sprinkled (blessed as such knowledge is) is not the same thing as beholding it presented at the altar, and there accepted with the offering of sweet-smelling savor. The one speaks of deliverance from destruction; the other of heavenly acceptance and joy in God. How different the place of an Israelite standing in the dark midnight scene of Egypt's judgment, and an Israelite standing as an accepted worshiper by the side of the altar in the Tabernacle of God! How different the aspect of that holy fire which on the night of Israel's release shone terribly against their foes, and the aspect of the same holy fire when seen in the Tabernacle on the Burnt-offering altar! There it could be approached—there the priests could handle it—could con-

sider its nature and acquaint themselves with its character. There they could learn what it eschewed, and on what it delighted to feed. If in Egypt they found deliverance, in the Tabernacle they found him who had delivered. In thinking of Egypt, we learn what we leave ; in entering the Tabernacle we learn whereunto we have come. New interests, new comforts, new prospects, new employments open on us when first we begin to appreciate our place at the altar. The abiding interests of eternal life are there.

I have already said that the appreciation of these things is not necessary to our acceptance ; nevertheless, none that desire to advance in the knowledge of Christ will despise that typical unfolding of the riches of redemption which the book of Leviticus supplies. We *ought* to estimate Christ as there typified ; we *ought* to apprehend his various relations to God and to ourselves as they are there shadowed. We should *desire* to be able to say of each particular type, that it had been verified, more or less, in the apprehensions of our souls. In this way, Leviticus becomes a most

useful test, whereby to prove our spiritual experience. Our experience falls short of that which it might be, just in proportion as it fails to realize the manifold relations of the one great Sacrifice here typically indicated. Such falling short in our experience does not take from us the gift of salvation, for that is of grace through faith; yet, although not less secure, we are less happy—less able also to serve God. He might be very sure of having attained maturity in the knowledge of Christ, who could say that the experience of his heart accorded with the types of this holy book; but who amongst us will pretend to this? Are not our attempts even to sketch what these types are, mere feebleness? Nor should we have courage to attempt it, if God made us offenders for a word, or if he despised the day of small things.

In considering then the Burnt-offering, our minds are not directed, as in the case of some of the other offerings, to the effects resulting from positive transgression. They who can only discern sin when its consequences are made manifest in dark iniquity, will little appreciate the Burnt-

offering. It will be estimated only by that heart that has well considered the duty and the joy of loving and serving God because of what he is, and the sin and misery of not serving him. He who is truly prepared to say, "I have never loved him as I should have loved him, and therein is my sin:" "I have never sought his favor as I should have sought it, although I know that in his favor is life"—he only who is prepared to make this confession will really appreciate the Burnt-offering. Want of devoted love is the sin that the Burnt-offering covers; the favor of the living God is the blessing that its acceptance brings. Through it we can look up and see, as it were, Heaven opened, and hear the voice which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and appropriate the blessing of those words even to our own sinful selves, because we can say, "accepted in the beloved."

To use aright the grace of the Burnt-offering requires, whilst we remain in the flesh, continued watchfulness: else we may sit down under the shadow of its mercies and slumber. When pro-

tection in the earth was by the especial gift of God granted to Cain, the opportunities which that protection gave were instantly used by him against God. It may be said, what else could be expected from the unregenerate heart of Cain?—but it must be remembered that unregenerate energies are still found in the flesh even of the regenerate. “In our flesh no good thing dwelleth;” but sin—essential sin, is there. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” And although the protection vouchsafed to Cain was a temporary mercy only; and although no Burnt-offering spread the power of its acceptance over his guilty head, and therefore in him unregeneracy might be expected to work and to bring forth its proper fruits, yet what shall we say of another—him who is first mentioned in Scripture as standing by the side of a Burnt-offering altar? Noah offered whole burnt-offerings, and the Lord smelled a sweet savor of rest and made a covenant of blessing, and under it Noah rested: but to what did he devote his energies? to planting a vineyard for himself and cherishing its fruits, till he drank the wine thereof and became drunken and dishonored. Can there

be any other result, when the church, forgetting its high and separate calling, finds its chief present use of the grace of redemption, in trying to sanctify to itself mere earthly joys? What then can be expected, but that it will drink of the wine of the earth, till it becomes naked and dishonored, and the voice of the mocker cries, Aha, Aha!

It was otherwise with the Apostle Paul. Who knew, as he, the value of the Burnt-offering and the joy of its acceptance? Yet to him, "to live was Christ;" and he labored on till he could say, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course with joy." And why this difference? It was because the Apostle better understood, that the only true place of blessing was "the *new* creation." His soul followed, as it were, the offering to the place into which its sweet-savor ascended—even above the heavens. Heaven, and not earth, he recognized as the sphere in which the results of its preciousness are alone to be made fully manifest. There he knew its excellency was being treasured for him—his hope was in the new creation. He

sought therefore after no vineyard in the earth ; his treasure was above, and his heart there also.

But there is yet another relation of the altar of Burnt-offering ; it is the place at which we may ourselves serve. The grace of the Lord Jesus, which has given us acceptance, has not shut us out from that which he considered, whilst here, his peculiar joy—the service of God. Therefore, he has consecrated an altar for us, and left it as the place for *our* service, and for *our* gifts. The object indeed for which the Lord Jesus served, was essentially different from any that can be proposed to us ; for he served in order that he might redeem. In life, and in death, he acted and suffered only as the Redeemer ; but none of us can redeem our brother, nor give unto God “a ransom for him.” Moreover his service was in itself perfect, and was accepted in its own intrinsic excellency ; whereas ours, being imperfect, can only be accepted through him. Nevertheless, we through him draw nigh to serve the same God. He gave us an example, that we should follow his steps. If he found in devotedness to God the spring of his joys, in a world which was

to him, otherwise, as the valley of the shadow of death, a path of similar character is, through his grace, opened to us. We too may render the powers of our being unto God. We too may spend upon others, and not upon ourselves. We too may receive the approbation and praise of God—his approbation here—his praise in the day of the glory of Jesus. It was but a small thing for the Philippians to part with a little of their worldly goods in order to relieve the need of an apostle of God, yet how is this their gift spoken of in the Scripture? It is spoken of as “an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.” The value of Christ was reckoned to it: it ascended in the value of the offering that had been burned on the Burnt-offering altar. Who then would not desire to serve such a God—to serve on such terms as these? This is the true way of learning to deny ourselves. It is comparatively a light thing to lose our lives in this world, if we gain these employments, and these compensating joys in the Tabernacle of God. Self-denial, as self-denial, must necessarily be painful; but when accom-

panied by the happy consciousness of accepted service, the pain is counterbalanced; or rather commuted into joy. The self-devised austerity of ascetism has no element in common with this. It knows nothing of the altar of Burnt-offering, nothing of the happy liberty of the service of Christ.

When the soul even feebly apprehends these things, it cannot but desire to dwell in this Tabernacle, and to serve at this altar. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy courts: they shall be still praising thee." "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Nevertheless, we must be prepared to learn in the Tabernacle many an humbling lesson respecting our own incapacities, and our want of thorough devotedness to God. Humiliation will be one result of every right attempt to serve him fully. Yet this will only enhance our sense of the excellency of the service of him who served, and who died at that altar for us. We shall the more gladly lay our hands on the head of that holy victim, and bless God for that wondrous provision of his grace that has made its

excellency ours. We shall meditate with the more joy on that coming hour, when the great manifested proof of our having been accepted in the value of the Great Offering will be given, by our receiving in attestation of its preciousness, change—such change as shall leave in us nothing that is weak, nothing that is unworthy, but shall give us new powers of being, to know as we are known, and to love, and to serve perfectly. Then only shall we fully understand the results of the Burnt-offering having been accepted for us.



CHAPTER III.

THE MEAT-OFFERING.

LEVITICUS II.

INSTANCES of devotedness have, through God's grace, been not altogether wanting in his church. Some have been enabled to make great personal sacrifices for the truth, and have even triumphed because of it over torture and death. Courage and constancy have thrown a lustre around the name of many a martyr ; and in closely examining their personal histories, we expect perhaps to find all as bright as the halo that surrounds their memories. But who that has made such examination has not felt a measure of keen disappointment at the result ? Minute inspection discloses numberless deficiencies in the character of those whose path seems most marked with brightness. Worldliness, impetuosity, and sometimes bitterness and pride, have tinged deeply the words and the ways of those who have been ready to submit unhesitatingly to torment or to death. Many

whose devotedness has been extended through a lengthened series of years—who have received much discipline, and been subjected to countless sorrows, have nevertheless betrayed again and again thoughts little brought into harmony with those of Christ. Self-will and independency of spirit have oftentimes swayed their course. Ignorance, perhaps, of Scripture has led them to despise truth and justify evil: or else, their proud minds, refusing to bow to the simplicity of revealed truth, have, to use the words of the apostle, “replied against God.” Every thought has not been brought into captivity to the mind of Christ.

There has however been One, whose unreserved devotedness, perfect as it was in life and in death, has been equalled by the perfectness of his character even in its minutest traits. Indeed, no *perfectness* of devotedness can exist where perfectness of character is wanting. Acts of devotedness there may be; but even those acts will, if the character of the agent be imperfect, exhibit some flaw, patent to the eye of God, even if hidden from the observation of men. *Acts* of devotedness

may owe their origin to constraint of circumstances ; as, for example, when there is no alternative between confession of the truth or apostacy : or they may spring from impulses that are irregular and fitful. Such devotedness may be sincere : it may have in it principles of faithfulness which God may recognize, and, through his grace in Christ, honor ; but how different such *deeds of devotedness* from that *unreserved devotedness of heart* which is only found where the character is perfect ! There can be nothing irregular, nothing wrongly balanced, nothing fitful in the thoughts and actions of one whose character is perfect. Perfectness of character can only be where every inward feeling, as well as every outward form of action, is in habitual conformity with God. The understanding, the desire, and the deliberate purpose of the heart, must all be ordered aright. The counsel that is formed within, the word that is expressed, or the deed that is done, must be perfect in the mode of its development, as well as of its conception. The will of God must be made the only test. No appeal must be made to any thing short of his perfect-

ness; and, when all things have been measured by this standard and no deficiency found—when inward and outward conformity to the mind of God has been strictly and unvaryingly maintained—then, and then only, can perfectness of character be claimed. Such was the perfectness of the character of the Lord Jesus.*

But although there is this close connection between devotedness and perfectness of character, so that one in reality involves the other, yet they may be contemplated separately. The disciples when they called to remembrance the personal history of the Lord Jesus, might at one moment think of the manner in which he had dedicated himself and all his powers always to God, and this would have shown them the devoted One; at another moment they might consider the principles and habits he had developed: they

* “In accordance with this close connection between “devotedness” and “character,” the Meat-offering may virtually be considered as an appendage to the Burnt-offering. See Numbers xv. 3, 4. The words “Burnt-offering” and “his or its Meat-offering” are of continual occurrence. There was also a Burnt-offering perpetual, and a Meat-offering perpetual.

might ask what he had sanctioned, and what condemned, whom he had approved, and whom eschewed; and this would have taught them his character. Reflection on the manner in which the great devoted One had dedicated himself to God, would necessarily be accompanied by meditation on the aspect in which he had morally presented himself among men. They would see him holy, harmless, meek, lowly, and gentle; they would remember how the unction of the Spirit of holiness had ever characterized his ways; they would think how all that leavening power of evil that had infused its bitterness into the sentiments and habits of men, was in him never found—such would be their thoughts respecting him—thoughts that would teach them of his character, or, in other words, would lead them to the knowledge of the MEAT-OFFERING.*

* It has been sometimes asked how we know that the Meat-offering typifies *character*. The answer is this: no one doubts that the frankincense, salt, oil, etc., indicate certain moral features of good—that leaven, honey, etc., indicate certain moral features of evil—and that these features to be discerned must be

The earth into which Christ came to develop his character—a character new as the Person of him to whom it pertained—the earth had been from the beginning marked throughout all its history by self-will and arrogant insubjection to God. From the moment when the first murderer and his children builded and adorned with the arts of civilization those cities in which violence and rebellion found their first gathering place, on to the time when “ravens and roaring lions” encompassed the Cross of the Son of God, there had never been a period in which wilfulness and insubjection had not been the chief characteristics of man. Cedars of Lebanon high and lifted up; oaks of Bashan sturdy and unbending; fir trees vigorous in the wild strength of nature; beasts dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly—such are the emblems under which God has taught us to estimate the developed character of man. “Pride compasseth them about as a chain;

displayed in a living agent. Seeing, then, that this chapter typically describes the presence of all moral qualities of good, and the absence of all moral qualities of evil—what is this but perfectness of character?

violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens; and their tongue walketh through the earth." Such was the character of those among whom the Lord Jesus came; such are they among whom his truth still travails. Among such he was sent to display features of character in all respects opposite to theirs. Where self-will and arrogancy reigned—where God was hated, and his laws despised—there he came to manifest implicit obedience, implicit subjection to the will of another. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," were the characteristic words with which he entered the sphere of his suffering service here; and throughout its course he was ever able to say, "Not my will, but thine be done." Cheerful subservience to another's will, and that through a bitterness of suffering which none but himself ever knew; meek submission to insult and reproach; gentle kindness and love shown towards his fiercest enemies—such were the

characteristics of him, who, because of these qualities, is here typified by one of the strongest types of meek subduedness that it is possible for nature to supply—an offering of FINE FLOUR. How different the thoughts suggested by such a type, from those which connect themselves with the fir trees of Lebanon, or the oaks of Bashan! Yet which of these emblems is suited best to him, who, though he could say, “I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering,” yet “gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hid not his face from shame and spitting;” whose ear was “opened morning by morning to hear as the instructed;” who “did not strive, nor cry, neither did any hear his voice in the street;” who “glorified not himself;” who said, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, for I am meek and lowly in heart.” What type could better represent him, as to these qualities, than that of fine flour?

Observe, there is in this no type of subduedness conferred. No millstone was seen grinding the corn into its smoothness; no sifting to free it from

its husks or roughness. The flour was brought already perfected in fineness, and as such became the type of what Christ was even when first born as a babe into the world. The many afflictions and sorrows that are needed to bring our hearts into the possession, even of a measure of meekness—a measure poor at the best—may help us to understand how wonderful must have been the character of him who needed no discipline, nor any sorrow, to soften or subdue his spirit: for he came into the world perfect in meekness and lowliness, and every power of submission. Affliction found in him these things; it did not bring them. It added to him no new qualities; it only developed those which were already there. The meekness which he manifested on the cross or in the judgment-hall, was not more perfect than that which marked him as he grew up beneath the care of Joseph and Mary—subject to them, and sharing their low estate. The excellencies of his character were intrinsic and essential—unchangeable as the holiness of his own eternal being.

We must remember, too, in the case of all these

types of moral excellency, that the Lord Jesus not only answered to them perfectly, but that he answered to them *always*. If fine flour be the type of perfect subduedness and meekness, the Lord Jesus was not only perfectly subdued and meek, but he was this *always*. How contrasted in this with all his servants! Their graces are, at the best, imperfect; but yet more, they manifest them uncertainly. Moses was the meekest of men, and yet in meekness Moses failed; speaking unadvisedly with his lips, he was not allowed to lead Israel into their land. John, the beloved disciple, who so well appreciated the value of *love*—John was he who wished to call down fire from heaven to consume those whom Jesus came to save. Paul, who knew well the need of bridling the tongue, allowed himself to say to one whom he was bound to honor, “God shall smite thee, thou whited wall:” but Jesus under all circumstances was the same. The equability of his character never varied. It was like himself, unchangeable—the same on earth as it had been in heaven.

There was nothing perhaps that more distinc-

tively marked the character of the Lord Jesus, than the manner in which his various excellencies were developed. Whatever qualities he displayed, the mode, time, degree—in a word, all the circumstances of their development—were as perfect as the qualities themselves. In us, subduedness of character—if through his grace it measurably exist—is often accompanied by a weakness or a want of steadfastness that leads to compromise or abandonment of truth. We may acquiesce where we ought to resist, and be silent where we ought to reprove. Barnabas, no doubt, was one in whom the graciousness and gentleness of Christ were peculiarly seen, otherwise his name would not have been what it was, “son of consolation;” yet Barnabas, when occasion required that the conduct of Mark should be discontinued and the dissimulation of Peter withstood, in both instances failed. Indeed, in the latter case, himself dissembled also, and compromised the truth of the gospel. And even when there is no such marked failure as this, the characters of those who are most mature in grace are seldom duly balanced. Some particular

feature is allowed to predominate; some favorite tendency encouraged. We approve in others just what we approve in ourselves. Exclusiveness follows. We become partial judges, and make *our* predilections, rather than the will of God, the standard by which we sanction or condemn. But it was otherwise with the Lord Jesus. In him nothing unduly predominated; no feature of character became excessive. Though emphatically the meek and lowly One who could weep over Jerusalem and pray for his murderers, yet he could also, when the service of God required, turn on them in anger and say, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" All the actions of Christ were subordinated to the will of God—all were according to the Spirit. It was the recognition of this that was typically indicated by the offerer, when he poured oil, the emblem of heavenly unction, on the fine flour of the Meat-offering.* Oil was ever present in the character

* "The oil which imparted its bright and lasting luminous properties to the burning wicks of the

of Christ. That communion in holiness which subsisted between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, before the world was, was not destroyed by the Son becoming flesh. The mode and circumstances of its development might be different, but the perfectness remained the same. The exhibitions of the meekness of Christ and of all his other qualities, were never in the power of mere human thought and feeling. Every word which he spake, every feeling he expressed, was in the power of that which he essentially was as heavenly and divine. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." "Grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever." Hence we may well understand why oil was poured upon the flour.

Frankincense was also added. "He shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon." Frankincense was a gum of snowy whiteness,

seven-armed candlestick in the holy place, with the oil which was mixed with the meat-offerings, according to the laws of symbolism must be regarded as anointing oil, and consequently as the symbol of the spirit of God.—*Kurtz, Sacrif. Worship of O. T.*

whence in Hebrew its name. It was the emblem therefore of purity—a purity which, when searched into by the fire of the altar, was found perfect in grateful fragrance. Such purity was, I need scarcely say, one of the distinctive features in the character of Christ. He was by birth the Holy One—“that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” He was God manifest in the flesh—flesh physically weak, physically like ours; yet morally so unlike, that every feeling there was, as to purity, in strict congeniality with the purity of that Holy One who had made that flesh his own. His character therefore was, as his person, pure and holy. No spot of darkness could be detected there. It was as the snow-white frankincense. It was the character of One who had never grieved, never hindered the Spirit of God, nor fallen short of his heavenly excellency. The ill-savor of fallen humanity was not there. Frankincense therefore, the type of fragrance as well as purity—fragrance suited to the altar of God—was appointed to crown the Meat-offering.

But whilst there was thus to be the presence

of oil and frankincense, leaven and honey were excluded. "No Meat-offering, which ye shall bring unto Jehovah, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of Jehovah made by fire." There are some things which even nature itself is wont to recognize as evil, and of such things leaven is the type. Leaven is sour and corrupted dough. No one, unless his senses are vitiated or depraved, can taste it without knowing it to be bitter; all who use it know that it infuses its own qualities into every thing in which it is allowed to work. But there are other things as unfit as leaven for the altar of God, in which, nevertheless, nature recognizes only sweetness. Of such things honey is the type—the type of mere earthly sweetness. It is the sweetest of natural things, but is a sweetness that has not in it the characteristics of heaven. Although formed, not under our tainting hand, but the result of an industry that finds its most suited sphere in distance from the haunts of man, where flowers bloom in unknown solitudes—although apparently, therefore, the purest and sweetest of the

productions of the earth—it nevertheless soon shows that its sweetness is not the sweetness of the new creation, for it ferments, corrupts, and quickly turns to sourness. Leaven itself is not more repugnant to the taste, than the acrid corruption of honey. That which is capable of such a change has not the incorruptibility of the Paradise of God. It can find no place in the new creation, for all is unchangeable and incorruptible there.*

* “In frankincense the full fragrance is not brought out until the perfume is submitted to the action of fire. In honey it is just the reverse; the heat ferments and spoils it. The bearing of this on the offering of Jesus is too obvious to require comment. The fire of God’s holiness tried him, but all was pure fragrance. Much of the precious odor of his offering was the very result of his fiery trial. How different is it in believers! There is in many a sweetness of nature—very sweet for a while it may seem to our taste—which yet will not stand the test of fire; the first trial is enough to sour it. Who is there that has been cast into sifting circumstances where God’s holiness and our ease or interests have come into collision, without feeling how much there is in us which could not be a sweet savor upon the altar? And have we never found, in setting even before saints some plain but neglected command of our Master, that much

The moment we admit that in the flesh no good thing dwelleth ("flesh" being the name for *all* that we bring into this world with us as children of Adam), it follows that all such mere natural sweetness of disposition as is found in us, is not more acceptable to God, than are other features of character which are cast in a grosser mould of evil.

The Apostle Paul was well aware how the earthy, corruptible, honey-like sweetness of nature might insidiously infuse itself even into the very highest developments of Christian grace, such for example, as love. "I pray," said he, writing to the Philippians, "that your love may abound yet more and more *in knowledge and in all judgment*" (sensitive perception, discrimination), "that ye may approve things that are excellent," etc. Such would be the result of love being exercised on divine instead of natural principles—of having in it "salt" instead of "honey." But if, in

of the sweetness in them which we have taken to be frankincense has at once shown itself to be fermenting honey? It was not so with the blessed Jesus.—*Gukes on Offerings.*

loving others, we exercise no discrimination, and approve or sanction things that are not excellent, but evil—if we show no regard to truth or to character, but smile on those who are hindering Christ's truth, as much or more than on those who are sustaining it—if private predilections determine our preferences, instead of regard to the great principles of God—then either leaven or honey will be present; honey, if this wrongly-principled love be the result of a natural amiability of character that shrinks from giving pain, and makes quietness and repose the great desiderata in Christian life; leaven, if this exercise of indiscriminating love result from a disregard or contempt of truth, or from a desire to secure influence at any cost, by gratifying the natural feelings of others and pleasing them apart from God.

In the character of the Lord Jesus neither honey nor leaven were found. None of those principles which, operating age after age, had made human society what it was when he came into the world—principles which might properly be called “old leaven,” neither any thing in which that leaven

was working fresh developments of evil—no such elements of character were found in the Lord Jesus. Neither was there in his character any thing like honey. No sweetness that was the mere sweetness of earth was there. That which gave a savor to his actions was “salt,” not “honey.” Salt being in itself incorruptible, is repellant of, and preserves from, corruption. Its incorruptibility and power of preserving from corruption make it also the emblem of perpetuity or unchangeableness, whence the expression, “covenant of salt.” See Num. xviii. 19. As representing such things, it became the fit emblem of principles divine and heavenly—savoring of God, not of men, and giving to character those qualities which were demanded by the altar of God. “Every oblation of thy Meat-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy Meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.” It formed therefore an essential element in the character of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus loved the family at Bethany. God was exercising that family and

teaching it. When the first blow fell on them they sent to the Lord Jesus, and entreated him to come. But he went not. Mere natural kindness would no doubt have caused him to go; but the Lord Jesus never loved any, nor helped any, apart from God. He knew that it was for God's glory and for their blessing that their request should not instantly be granted: he remained therefore where he was, and Lazarus died. If he had not primarily remembered God and God's glory, and had thought merely of gratifying them, then, whatever his kindness, there would have been "honey" in the character of Jesus: he would have lacked the "salt." But this was impossible. Again, mere natural kindness might have prompted him to spare his servant that terrible rebuke when he said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." In Peter, the "honey" had been found. It was mere natural feeling that caused him to say, in the apparent fervor of deep affection, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." But Jesus was as the fire on the altar, quick to detect that which lacked the savor of God. Salt was in his words when he turned and

said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." These, however, were not the only occasions on which salt was seen in the character of our Lord and Saviour. If there was in his love towards God an incorruptible principle, that gave to it a perpetuity such as mere human love never knows, it is not otherwise in his love towards his people. That, too, is faithful and *perpetual*—love stronger than death, love from which nothing can separate. If the love of the Lord Jesus had had in it the mere sweetness of earth, would it not have failed when all his disciples forsook him, and Peter denied him, at the very hour when he most needed kindness—when men were raging around him, and when the terrors of the Cross were before him? Yet it failed not. It was the very moment at which it chiefly manifested its perpetuity, and showed that it was divine.

The perfectness of the character of the Lord Jesus was never more manifested than whilst he was dying on the Cross. If he had there

silently died—if no word had been uttered by his lips, we should still have seen in him the devotedness of One who was rendering himself unreservedly as a whole Burnt-offering unto God. We should have known, too, that his character continued to be what it ever had been, perfect. But the perfectness of his character was livingly displayed on the Cross. His care for his mother; his forgiveness of the repentant sinner; his resolve to fulfill all that was written, when he said, “*I thirst;*” his prayer for his murderers; his use of the twenty-second Psalm, which is a psalm not of supplication merely but of thanksgiving and strong expression of joyful confidence as to the future—all these things showed that there was not one relation towards God or towards man which he was not sustaining perfectly, in all calm self-possession of spirit, just as if the unutterable anguish and weight of divine wrath had not been bearing upon him. It is then in respect of this excellency of character, perfect alike towards God and towards man, maintained unvaryingly through all circumstances, and offered in death for our sakes—it is

in respect of this that Christ is typified by the Meat-offering.

If we had merely to consider the character of the Lord Jesus, and to contrast it with our own, the only result would be, anguish and despair. There would be the sense of necessary and everlasting severance, such as must subsist between purity and corruption. But it is not for this that we are brought to the altar where the Meat-offering is presented. We are brought there, not merely to discern its excellency and to judge our own condition in the light thereof, but to see it accepted on the altar for us, and burned for us, as an offering whose excellency is considered ours. It becomes our wealth—our endowment before God. Poor as the church is in all that constitutes heavenliness of character, it will nevertheless enter heaven in joyful consciousness that the results of all perfectness of character pertain inalienably to it, because of what Christ has been. All that pertained to the offering was attributed to him who brought it. As we behold the sweet savor ascending, we see, as in the case of the Burnt-offering before, the

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type of IMPUTATION. We are able to say that all the value of Christ's character is reckoned to be ours.

And here, we must again remember, that whilst it was needful for the Israelites to provide the Meat-offering, and to offer it in the appointed manner—otherwise its value would not be imputed to him—yet it is not so with us. God has provided for us the offering; God has caused it to be offered; and the moment we believe, all the value of Christ's sacrifice, under whatsoever type that value may be indicated, rests upon us. As we acquaint ourselves therewith we may strengthen our faith, but we do not strengthen the certainty of our blessing.

Nevertheless, nothing is more important to our comfort and to our spiritual healthfulness, than that we should consider well the character of Christ, and our own characters in contrast therewith. Few things are more to be dreaded by the believer than a dull or hardened conscience; and the conscience will soon become hardened if it resolves to merge every thought in the one great fact of accomplished salvation

and is careless of all that gives to character deformity or beauty in the sight of God. In such a case, natural qualities will be mistaken for grace : honey will not be distinguished from salt : and leaven will be unrecognized as bitter, not because it has lost its bitterness, but because the taste has become vitiated, and is unable to discern. The heart, whilst in this condition, apprehends neither the excellency of the qualities it lacks, nor the malignity of those it cherishes. It cannot estimate the character of Christ, nor appreciate what his grace may have wrought in others. “Inexperienced in the word of righteousness,” and failing in all priestly discrimination—for the heart of the priest should keep knowledge—it will censure where it ought to praise, and praise where it ought to condemn. Its powers of service will decay—it will either become listless and cold, or else active with misdirected energy ; feeding on things other than the food which God’s altar supplies, and finding its occupations in the house of the stranger rather than in the Tabernacle of God.

We must seek, therefore, to consider well the

character of the Lord Jesus as the Meat-offering. It is true, indeed, that we must be perfect ourselves before we can rightly estimate perfectness. Our senses *here* are, and ever will be, too dull to recognize fully either the bitterness of the leaven, the fragrance of the frankincense, or the savor of the salt. We fail, therefore, even in *appreciating* the excellency of a condition in which all evil is absent, and all good present. Nevertheless, as we grow in grace, our ability to estimate these things increases. We find it humbling, yet happy, to think of our own leavened characters by the side of that altar where the unleavened One has been offered for us. We meekly thank God that he feeds us with this food, and makes us partakers of his own joy.

Thus, too, we are encouraged to copy the example of him who is our Meat-offering. We must remember, indeed, that if all the grace of which we could conceive as capable of being communicated to a creature, were ours, our characters could never be as *this* Meat-offering: first, because it was positively and negatively perfect; secondly, because it was presented and burned on

the altar *for others*. Moreover, the character of Christ was the development of an excellency that *essentially* pertained to him as the Holy One; whereas our characters, in their best developments have not only flaws unnumbered, but are always the result of a power implanted in us by him—a power which is so far from being naturally ours, that the moment it is implanted it finds itself resisted and opposed by every energy that nature gives. For these and various other reasons, we can never speak of our characters—not even after “the new man” has been created in us—being as the Meat-offering. Nevertheless, if we habitually test our ways by the character of Christ, and acquire an aptitude for distinguishing leaven and honey, and salt and frankincense—if we accustom ourselves to say, “How would Christ, in these circumstances have thought or acted, or spoken or felt?”—actions based on such remembrance of Christ will not indeed be Meat-offerings, but they will be accepted through him who was the Meat-offering, and so will have an excellency attributed to them which is not intrinsically their own.

Reflection, too, on the hinderances which at present obstruct, both in ourselves and others, those developments of character which our consciences approve and our spirits perhaps desire, will quicken our apprehensions of the blessedness of that hour when, being changed into the likeness of him who is risen for us, we shall find even our characters perfect because like unto his. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." This thought, though not properly the subject of this chapter, is nevertheless introduced into it by a verse, evidently parenthetical but intended to remind us that earth is not the only scene in which living character is displayed. It teaches us that there is another sphere, eternal in the heavens, into which Christ, as our first-fruits and forerunner, hath already entered, and there liveth unto God. The parenthetical verse is this: "As for the oblation of the first-fruits, ye shall offer them unto Jehovah, but they shall not be burned upon the altar for a sweet savor." The oblation of first-fruits here referred to is described in Lev. xxiii. 10, 11, and is said by Paul to typify Christ raised from the

dead and made the first-fruits, of them that sleep. 1 Cor. xv. 20. First-fruits, as thus applied to Christ, is a word of exceeding blessing, for it implies the sequence of ourselves into a condition similar to that into which he—our first-fruits—has been already brought. When Christ was here, his service was to satisfy for us at the altar. Then he became as the Meat-offering burned for a sweet savor. But he will never more be this. “Christ being now raised from the dead dieth no more, death has no more dominion over him.” Accordingly the “first-fruits” which represent him in resurrection were not burned on the altar; they were only presented to the Lord and waved before him—the typical pledge of that blessing which he afterwards expressed in words such as these, “Because I live ye shall live, also;” or again, “The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are.” This, as I have already said, is not the subject of the Meat-offering chapter; but it is one so clearly connected therewith, there is so manifest a connection in thought between Christ accepted for

us here at the altar, and Christ accepted above, as "the first-fruits," that we might expect that our minds should be led on from the scene, where we have yet to consider ourselves and our characters in painful contrast with the Holy One offered for us, to that coming hour when this sorrowful contrast shall cease to be—when sin and mortality shall be alike swallowed up of life, and no leaven nor any honey, nor any thing short of the perfectness of Christ shall any longer be found in the characters of the risen saints of God. We shall no longer then use, as now, this chapter; but it will not be forgotten. All that we then shall know and feel and exhibit—all the living powers of our new and excellent being, will be recognized as part of the results of HIS having been accepted for us who is our MEAT-OFFERING.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PEACE-SACRIFICE.

LEVITICUS III.

No awakened heart can solemnly consider the claim that God has on the service of his creatures, without being sensible that its failure in devotedness must have sunk it into destruction forever, if God had not, in the exceeding riches of his goodness, provided for it the grace of the BURNT-OFFERING. Nor will a faithful examination of our characters in their more minute features, lessen the sense of our deficiencies. It will only deepen the apprehension of our guilt and would leave us in hopeless despair forever, if the perfectness of Another's character had not been provided on our behalf, to be accepted for us as the MEAT-OFFERING. It is not, however, in the lack of devotedness, nor in the multiplied imperfections of our characters, that we find the root of our misery. The great secret of our moral disease lies, not in the developments

of our nature, but in the fact of what our nature in itself is, as fallen and depraved—that nature from which all development springs. In God and in his nature, we find light, purity, holiness. “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts.” “He is Light, and in him is no darkness at all.” The emblems which he has chosen to denote the excellency of his own heavenly dwelling-place—such emblems as “crystal mingled with fire,” or “pure gold like to transparent glass,” or “a firmament of terrible crystal”—are but the expressions of what his *nature* essentially is. But when we turn to the condition of *our* nature—that nature which we bring into the world with us—what do we there find? Before any apprehension of good or evil has dawned upon our hearts, before any notion respecting God has been formed in our souls, before we have uttered a word or conceived a thought, sin—essential SIN is found to dwell within us. He who “searcheth the reins and the heart” finds it there. From the first moment of our existence it is the tenant of our frame. Bound up with our being, it enters into every sensation, lives in every thought,

sways every faculty. If the senses, by means of which we communicate with the external world, had never acted—if our eye had never seen, and our ear had never heard—if our throat had never *proved* itself to be an open sepulchre breathing forth corruption—if our tongue had never *shown* itself to be “set on fire of hell,” still Sin would have been the mistress of that secret world of thought and feeling that is found within us; and every hidden impulse there would still have been enmity against God. God alone understands what SIN is; he alone has the title to speak authoritatively respecting it; and such he declares to be its relation to the nature of fallen man. “Flesh” is the moral name given by the Scripture to all that we naturally are, in body, in soul, and in spirit; and it is “flesh” of which the Apostle saith that in it no good thing dwelleth: and again, “the mind of the flesh* is enmity

* As our translators have very properly translated *To phronema tou pneumatos*, in Rom. viii. 27, “the mind of the Spirit,” it seems strange that they should not have rendered *To phronema tes sarkos*, “the mind of the flesh,” in the sixth and seventh verses. Thus the ambiguity of the expression “carnal mind”

against God ; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit." "Flesh," when thus used morally, is the distinctive name of fallen humanity.

"So soon as Adam"—I quote the words of one of our English Reformers—"was defiled with that spot of sin, out of the root and stock corrupted there sprung forth corrupted branches, that conveyed also their corruption into the other twigs springing out of them. Thence came the horrible blindness of our minds and perverseness of our hearts. Thence came that crookedness and corruptness of all our affections and desires. Thence came that seed-plot, as it were, a sink of all sins, with the fault whereof mankind is affected and tormented." *

would have been avoided—an expression which has caused some to suppose that the mind spoken of may be sometimes not carnal ; and that it is only *when carnal* that it is declared to be enmity against God ; whereas the object of the passage is to show that the mind of the flesh (and we have nothing else naturally) is essentially and always "enmity against God."

* Nowell's Catechism

The relation of man's ruined nature, first to the law of God, and afterwards to the Spirit of God, is largely dwelt on in the Scripture. If God meets it with his law, which is "holy, just, and good," instead of that law being welcomed and obeyed, as soon as any of its commandments are apprehended, they instantly awaken within us a desire after the very things which God commands us *not* to desire. In vain the law reiterates, "Thou shalt *not* desire;" SIN within us *does* desire. "Sin taking occasion by the commandment," excites to disobedience, and "works all manner of concupiscence." Rom. vii. 8. Dwelling in us like an unclean demon habitually and essentially opposed to God, it hates every thing that God loves, and loves every thing that God hates. Even after "the new man" has been created in us, and after the Spirit of God dwells within us, the enmity of Sin in our flesh remains unchanged—it still struggles against the Spirit. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." Gal. v. 17. Such is naturally the condition of those whom nevertheless

God has loved, pitied, and met with the grace of the PEACE-SACRIFICE.

The parts of the Peace-sacrifice that were burned on the altar sufficiently indicate the specific object for which they were presented. "The fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the caul over the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take off, and Aaron's sons shall burn it," etc. No types could be chosen more strongly expressive of *inward* being. Those parts were selected, that form the seat of the innermost and most deeply seated of the animal feelings and affections often mentioned in Scripture under the general expression "reins and heart"—known only to him, who, because he searcheth all things, searcheth them also, and finds in their condition the evidence of what the *nature* of those to whom they pertain, morally is. In the Burnt-offering, where devotedness proved by outwardly-developed action was in question, we find none of the parts *specified*, to which exclusive prominence is here given. Even where "the

fat" is mentioned, which denotes the vigor and healthfulness of the parts with which it is connected, there is a contrast. In the Burnt-offering it is the fat which is connected with the limbs and external parts; whereas, here it is* the *inward* fat or *suet* which covers the vitals. The parts selected to be burned in the Peace-sacrifice were those which determine the condition of the *inward* being. Their presentation on the altar marked the condition of that being, as pure, undefiled, and acceptable before God.

The inward parts of a "clean" animal could not be taken to represent the condition of *our* nature. If *our* type be sought among the living things of creation, it must be sought among things defiled and evil, such as dogs, or swine, or vultures; or creeping things tortuous and slimy, like the viper, or the unclean creatures that move at the bottom of the great deep. The vital parts of such might well be used to represent *our* nature; but they never could be brought to

* The words employed in the original point out this distinction.

the altar of God. They never could be burned there for a sweet-savor.

But it was otherwise with our Substitute. His nature as a man was not less perfect than his nature as God. In both he was equally pure, equally holy. His devotedness, the perfectness of his character, all that he manifested in word and deed, was but the result of his being what he essentially was—the Holy One—One *inwardly* as well as outwardly perfect—One who could say from his youth up, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is *within my heart*.” And when he in whom this inward perfectness was, submitted to die; when that perfectness was presented for us on the cross; when reconciliation and peace became the declared result of that offering—such reconciliation that God bids us rejoice in Christ, and grants us communion with his own joy in him—we find in these things the antitype of the Peace-sacrifice.

Few things are more important to the soul that desires to be established in grace, than acquaintance with the truths taught by the Peace-sacrifice. If our inward condition were marked

merely by a distaste for holiness, and a desire to avoid the presence of a purity for which we know ourselves to be unsuited, even that would be a state of sufficient misery. But when, in addition to this, we detect within ourselves an habitual hatred of Him from whose purity we shrink ; when we discover that the whole framework of our inward being is marked by living enmity against him, and yet find ourselves brought nigh to God by an act of his sovereign grace with our nature in all the depths of its depravity judicially set aside, and instead thereof the inward purity of Christ presented and accepted for us, we may well marvel and say that "God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts." Such is the lesson taught by the inward parts of an unblemished victim being burned on the altar. The essential sin that dwells within us is not remembered, save as being covered by the mightier efficacy of a holiness that has given itself for us—so covered that God is able to meet us in the fullness of peace and to grant us for our food a part of that

offering that has fed the holy fire of his own altar.*

The provision of a table for the offerer—a table furnished by part of the same sacrifice that had been presented on the altar, is one of the distin-

* I scarcely need refer to the many declarations which the Scriptures contain respecting the depravity of all that naturally characterizes our inward being: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” Jer. xvii. 9. “Every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart is only evil continually.” Gen. vi. 5. “In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” Rom. vii. 18. The more there is of inward vigor in us naturally, the more there is found of strength of enmity against God.

In Christ, on the contrary, even after he became flesh, all was perfect, pure, and holy. He was not more truly Light when he was with the Father before all worlds, than he was after he became man and tabernacled amongst us here. The perfectness of his devotedness, and of all his developed character, was but the result of a perfectness that was found within. The purity that pertained to him as man was as the purity that pertained to him as God. Hence, we can easily understand the joy of that soul that discerns how this purity has been substituted for its own depravity, and presented for it on the altar for a sweet-smelling savor.

guishing characteristics of the Peace-sacrifice. After the inward parts of the victim had been burned on the altar for a sweet savor, the offerer was allowed to spread a table, to be supplied from the sacrifice which had been presented at the altar, but had not been burned thereon. On this the offerer and others associated with him were allowed to feed in fellowship together. Yet this, their fellowship with each other, was not the chief thought connected with their feeding on the Peace-sacrifice. To feed at the table of the Peace-sacrifice was the token of fellowship *with God*; for they fed on that on which his altar had fed; and to feed on the same thing is the token of fellowship and peace. Thus, whilst the Peace-sacrifice in being slain and having its inward parts burned for a sweet-savor affords the type of that which has supplied its own excellency in the room of the depravity and defilement that inwardly characterizes our nature, the type terminates not with this. It typifies further a ministration *from* God towards those thus atoned for and accepted; and represents him as ministering to them from his own altar, and from his own

joys. The other offerings, especially the Burnt-offering, direct our minds to that which has satisfied God ; but in the Peace-sacrifice we think also of that which God, *after* having been satisfied, ministers to us. It may be necessary for God, when all the principles of his government have been outraged, to vindicate his holiness before angels and men and Satan, by requiring satisfaction. This may be and is necessary ; but it is a necessity arising from sin ; whereas impartation and bestowment of blessing pertains to him, as his own proper characteristic in his own sphere of heavenly blessedness—even as he who was manifest in the flesh once said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

In considering the relations into which redemption brings, our attention may be so fixed on that *from* which we have been delivered, as greatly to hinder our acquaintance with the new blessings *whereunto* we have been brought. On our first conversion our thoughts are often unduly retrospective. Israel, when brought out of Egypt, felt themselves far better able to appreciate the condition *from* which they had been rescued,

than to understand the new circumstances into which they had come. And after we have advanced in our Christian course, if, as believers, we have tampered with evil, and then been, through God's grace, recovered, however thankful we may be for the deliverance—however truly we may recognize many of those relations of blessings which the ceremonies of the Peace-sacrifice typify, yet we shall commonly find, in such cases, that our apprehension of the blessings *into* which we have been brought is far less lively than our appreciation of the mercy that has delivered us from danger. The perils he had known in Sodom would be likely to occupy the soul of Lot, whilst Abraham would be employed with the blessings he had found with God. They who have walked most closely with God will find themselves best able to appreciate the blessings to which grace has gathered them. In such a condition of heart we shall find ourselves able to enter most into the grace of the Peace-sacrifice; for the peculiarity of its joy is grounded not so much on the attainment of pardon, or of acceptance, as on the results of that acceptance received

in communion with God, and ministration of blessing from his hand.

Nothing can be more important for the right comfort of our hearts, than to meditate well on this relation of God thus ministering to us. "Having been justified by faith," says the Apostle, "let us have peace with God"*—in other words, being at peace with God, let us enjoy the peace which God has provided—let us feed on the Peace-sacrifice. The table spread therewith is an evidence that every claim of God and of his holy altar has been fully satisfied, and that the results are now before us—results of peaceful fellowship with God forever. The offerer seated at the table thus spread by the gift of God is a type of the condition which attaches to every believer in Jesus, however feeble he may be—however slow in apprehending the blessings that are his. He is reconciled to God, and the subject of his everlasting ministration in grace and love; and whenever the great day of eternity breaks, he will be recognized as one who

* Such, according to some manuscripts, is the right reading in this passage.

is in fellowship with God at the table of Peace-sacrifice.

We cannot wonder, therefore, that a specially eucharistic character should attach to this sacrifice. It was offered "for vows or thanksgiving or voluntary offering," Lev. vii., and consequently was always connected with seasons of triumph or festive joy in Israel. To such occasions the Peace-sacrifice peculiarly belongs. Thus, when the temple was dedicated with joy and gladness, "the king and all Israel with him *sacrificed sacrifice* before the Lord. And Solomon *sacrificed* peace-sacrifices, which he sacrificed unto the Lord, two and twenty thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. . . . On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord hath done for David his servant and for Israel his people." Nevertheless, although so peculiarly a sacrifice of joy, and although the feeding thereon was so distinctly the sign of peace ratified by God; yet it was a peace made with those who had been enemies—persons in

whose flesh sin still dwelt—a peace reached only through the shedding of blood. The *feeding* on the sacrifice was a scene of peace and joy only; but with the presentation at the altar was connected confession, self-judgment, and recognition of the claim of the divine holiness—a claim that could be satisfied only by vicarious death. Lest, therefore, any should virtually dissever the table from the altar, and should seek to enjoy the peace without remembering how that peace was purchased, and how undeservedly it came, it was strictly commanded that the Peace-sacrifice should only be eaten two days at the longest after its presentation at the altar. If any should desire to have the joy of the table continued, they must recur to the altar again. Nor is the application of this to ourselves difficult. Some who recognize the cross as the basis of their hopes, have attempted so to occupy themselves with the ulterior results of redemption as to leave, as they have said, the cross behind them—wishing to enjoy the blessings without the continued humbling remembrance of the condition of those to whom they are given. In heaven, indeed, it will

not be necessary, as now, to place ourselves as sinners before the cross, and painfully to contrast our nature with the nature of him who dwelleth in the light, and so to judge ourselves; but whilst we remain in the flesh such self-judgment is necessary for the right healthfulness of our souls. If we attempt to have communion only with the joy and peace of redemption, without the recognition of those truths which pertain to our practical condition whilst yet in the flesh, with sin in us and sin around us, the result will be an arrogant and presumptuous use of the mercies of God, that will turn our blessings into a snare. We can easily understand, therefore, why it should be said, that if the flesh of the Peace-sacrifices were eaten at too great a distance from the time of presentation on the altar, "it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed to him that offereth it; it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth it shall bear his iniquity." Lev. vii. 18.

If we examine the nature of the ceremonies appointed when the Peace-sacrifice was presented, we shall see additional reason for guarding against a neglect of the altar. Not only was there the

confession of the offerer's own depravity implied by the presentation of a substituted victim—not only was the cleanness of *its* nature brought into contrast with the impurity of *his own*, but a Meat-offering also was presented—a memorial of the character of Christ—"He shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried." Lev. vii. Here was a very full memorial of the character of Christ; but, besides this Meat-offering, *leavened bread* also was commanded to be brought. It was brought as the memorial of *our* characters—brought as the contrast between our characters and the character of Christ, that we might consider them together, and compare them as in the presence of the holiness of God. The "*leavened bread*" was neither burned on the altar, nor fed on by the priest—it was merely offered with the Peace-offering and with the Meat-offering, as something protected by their excellency. Such is the type of our condition. It teaches us a lesson full of grace, yet humbling. To be required to judge ourselves—to own the

leaven that lurks in our character and ways—to contrast this leaven with the perfectness of Christ and the requirements of God—to be called on to watch against, and to restrain the developments of that which is thus detected—all this cannot be otherwise than painful; it is an employment of earth, not of heaven; yet it is necessary. Will there be poverty of spirit otherwise? and is there any thing to be dreaded more than that we should feed on the Peace-sacrifice, and seek to rest in its grace, with self-complacent and unhumbled hearts?*

* The second day from the time of presentation at the altar was the longest period allowed for retaining the flesh of the Peace-sacrifice. On the *third* day it was not to be eaten at all. *Three* is frequently used in Scripture to indicate *continuous* repetition; just as *two* signifies simple repetition. It was only, however, in the case of “vows, or voluntary offerings,” that eating on the second day was allowed. If offered for thanksgiving, it could only be eaten on the same day on which it was offered: “The flesh of the sacrifice of his Peace-offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning. But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice, and

None but "clean" persons were allowed to eat of the flesh of the Peace-sacrifice. If any one, "having his uncleanness upon him," or if any one, being clean, had defiled himself by touching any unclean thing, if any such ate "of the flesh of the sacrifice of Peace-offerings, which pertain unto the Lord, even that soul shall be cut off from his people." Professing Christendom teems with examples of persons unsanctified by faith in Jesus, and therefore "having their uncleanness upon them," attempting to feed at the table of Peace-sacrifice. To such these solemn

on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten." Lev. vii. Faith is always regarded as being most vigorous in the case of *voluntary* service or worship, and then the soul can be longer confided in for not misusing its mercies. "Thanksgiving," it will be observed, is not here regarded as a voluntary service. Whenever the call of duty is so imperative that the refusal to recognize the claim would be a sin, then, of course, there is not the same opportunity for voluntariness, as in cases where there is no such claim. For this reason thanksgiving, which becomes a positive *duty* when special mercies are received, is not classed with voluntary services, and the soul that renders it merely, is not regarded as being beyond the ordinary condition of faith.

words in their full force apply—"That soul shall be cut off from his people." And if any who have believed, and are therefore "clean," John xv. 3, tamper with evil, and yet seek to comfort their hearts, *whilst unrepentant*, by the peace of this sacrifice, against them, too, judgment is written. Of such the apostle spoke, when he said to the Corinthians, "for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep; for if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged." 1 Cor. xi. 30. It is true, indeed, that such, seeing that they are under grace, and not under law, shall never come under that judgment of condemnation which shall fall upon the world of the ungodly and end in the second death. The judgment of chastisement here, however severe, is not to be confounded with judgment unto damnation. The one is from a Father towards his children, and is in love; the other is from an unreconciled God towards rebels, and is in the power of everlasting wrath. Nevertheless, the apostle spoke of chastisement from the Lord being a solemn thing, even though grace enabled him to add, "but when we are judged we are

chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." The knowledge of this mercy must not prevent our saying, "Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord."

It will be seen from what has been already said, how needful it is to distinguish between the altar on which the sacrifice was *offered to God*, and the table on which the remaining part of the sacrifice was fed on by the offerer. Nothing could be more contrasted than the altar and the table. The altar was the place at which the blood *was shed for expiation*, and where *satisfaction* was made unto God. All the ministration there was toward God. It was the recognition of the claim of *his* holiness, and unless that were satisfied, rejection and wrath, not acceptance and peace, must have been the portion of all who drew nigh. But when the services at the altar were finished, then God could act toward the worshiper as reconciled; and the table became the place, not of the offerer's ministration to God, but of God's ministration to him. There was no atonement at the table—no propitiatory sacrifice

was offered there ; all this had been completed before ; and the flesh of the Peace-sacrifice, fed on at the table, was only a memorial of the sacrifice already finished at the altar.

I scarcely need observe that there is a marked resemblance between the relation of the table of Peace-sacrifice to the altar, and that of the Lord's table to the cross. This analogy is distinctly referred to in the New Testament ; and if remembered, would sufficiently preserve us from the destructive error of confounding between an altar where expiatory sacrifice is offered, and a table which only exists on the ground of expiation having been complete. The table is indeed connected with an altar, but that very connection shows *that it is not itself an altar*. Nor could this obvious truth have been forgotten, if professing Christianity had not lost the apprehension of what the cross is, as the place where the true Peace-sacrifice has been once and forever offered. Otherwise, the table of the Lord could never have been spread ; the very fact of its continuous existence implies that the sacrifice on which it has been founded is finished and accepted forever. This however, was soon forgotten in

the professing church. The doctrine of completed atonement was lost almost as soon as the apostles died. The thought expressed in "SATISFACTION"—that word which embodies the keystone truth of the gospel—was banished from the writings of the early centuries, until at last the table of the Lord was avowedly changed into an altar, and blasphemously surrounded by sacrificing priests, in daring defiance of every truth that the ninth and tenth chapters of the Hebrews contain. No peace can dwell in a heart that, even indirectly, gives itself over to such things.

We are able, through God's abounding grace, to say that our Peace-sacrifice has been slain, offered, accepted forever; and that the feeblest believer is regarded by God as being under its power and having fed thereon. He is regarded as a guest at the table of God (for the Peace-sacrifices were the Lord's. Lev. vii. 20), and the fact of his being a guest there is a proof that, *as to acceptance*, he is perfected forever—so perfected that there remaineth no more offering for sin. He never, therefore, seeks to offer for sin again. He may recur to the remembrance of the sacrifice once offered, and to every thought

connected with the altar; yet he never seeks to make atonement at that altar again. The cross of the Holy One cannot be erected afresh. To speak in any sense of the repetition of atonement is to dishonor the work which Christ has wrought—it nullifies that by which God has declared that he perfects forever all who believe, and is a rejection of the one only propitiation.

It is, then, the sin of our nature—that which of all things is most depressing—most terrifying to an awakened heart—it is this that is met by the grace of the Peace-sacrifice. Wherever we go, whatever we do, by night or by day, in public or in private, in the church or in the world, we carry *sin* within us. It besets us always, and is often chiefly felt when we seek to worship or to serve God. Watchfulness and experience may enable us to restrain its violence, and to gain victories over its outbreaks, and he who is best able to bridle his evil is pronounced by the Scripture to be most practically perfect; but such perfectness is not the perfectness of heaven, neither is it a perfectness on which we can rest as the ground of acceptance before God. The knowledge of our inward defilement must have made

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us shrink from God forever, and would have hopelessly shut us out from his presence, unless he had provided for us this offering. But there we see the inward perfectness of the Holy One presented on our behalf; and ourselves not only accepted but *ministered to* by God. Thus sorrow is turned into joy, and the cry of hopeless despair exchanged for the voice of thanksgiving. We are enabled to say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad"—that "He hath given us the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness." The more we examine ourselves, and probe the source of our woe, the more do we find reason to bless him for that grace which has found in the exceeding depth of our sin the occasion for the display of its own more abounding fullness. The soul willingly consents to be honest in self-examination then. It need not hide from itself the condition of its nature, when it finds in that condition the very thing that has drawn forth the grace of the Peace-sacrifice—grace that causes us to recognize the essential evil that dwells within us, only when it makes known to us essential good as our everlasting portion.

CHAPTER V.

THE SIN-OFFERING.

LEVITICUS IV.

THE former chapter has directed our thoughts to the manner in which grace has met the deep intrinsic evil of our nature—that nature which, even if its energies had never been aroused into development, would still have remained “enmity against God,” and therefore have justly merited everlasting wrath. What can merit wrath more than that which is inherently opposed to essential perfectness? What can be more surely the heir of woe than that which is so evil as necessarily to be miserable in the presence of good? Such a condition is in itself misery, apart from the superadded inflictions which fall on it from the righteous judgment of Good: and such is the condition of our nature—truly, in every sense, the rightful heir of anguish and of indignation. Yet, in order that we might not inherit these things—in order that we might know blessing

instead of curse, joy instead of anguish, peaceful communion instead of the alienation of eternal enmity—the Peace-sacrifice is given. So, standing as in the presence of God's own holiness, we are able to consider our nature in all the depth of its corruption, and yet to say that instead of having it and its judgment as our portion, we have reckoned to us, the perfectness of One, whose excellencies are the exact converse of our abominations. Such is the result of Jesus being the Peace-sacrifice. In virtue thereof, peaceful communion, as if at the same table and over the same sacrifice, becomes the abiding relation into which the whole family of faith are brought with God.

But our knowledge of evil is not limited to that which lies hidden within us. Our nature does not slumber; it acts. "Dead," as regards all power of living to God, it is full of untired energy in living according to the prince of this world—"the spirit who worketh in all the children of disobedience." Cain and his children were "dead" towards God—no principle of purity or holiness, or light or love, acted in them to-

wards him ; but out of his presence they were full of enterprise and activity—they builded cities and invented arts, living to Satan and to themselves. What they *were*, that naturally we *are*. We are *committers* of sin—*doers* of iniquity. No remedy, therefore, commensurate with our need, could be found in any thing that failed to meet the consequences of *committed* sin. Accordingly, for this the Sin-offering and the Trespass-offering were appointed.

Committed sin may be distributed into two principal divisions : first, sins committed in ignorance ; secondly, sins committed consciously. It is of the first of these classes that the fourth chapter of Leviticus treats.

There is a prevailing disposition in the hearts of many to think of the sins of ignorance as if they were no sins ; or if they are to be called sins—if it be allowed that they need mercy, such mercy is regarded rather as a right than as the free and unmerited gift of grace. Ignorance in the minds of such persons becomes synonymous with guiltlessness ; to act conscientiously, however dark or dead the conscience, is to act blame-

lessly. The thought of the responsibilities that attach to knowledge, becomes secretly a reason why knowledge is eschewed. In a word, darkness is loved rather than light, because darkness brings quiet; but light has awakening and convicting power.

I scarcely need remark how all that we have been considering in relation to the Sin-offering, and sins committed in ignorance, destroys that evil and infidel thought, of every man being to himself a sufficient rule for his own actions. If culpability only attaches where conscientious conviction is transgressed, he who has the most darkened or hardened conscience would have least of guilt, for he would sin conscientiously. We are sufficiently disposed to avoid light without this additional incentive to love darkness. What is conscience in a fallen being, without rectification according to the word, and by the Spirit of God?*

* "Neither our conscience, nor our measure of light, nor our ability, but the truth of God is the standard by which both sin and trespasses are to be measured. *'Though he wist it not, yet is he guilty,'* Leviticus v. 17.

A sufficient answer to all such thoughts is this—that the especial reason for the appointment of the Sin-offering was, that it might meet sins committed in ignorance. No one who reverences the word of God, will speak lightly of sins of ignorance, after he has once read such words as these: “If a soul shall sin through ignorance

If man’s conscience or man’s light were the standard, each man might have a different rule. And, at this rate, right or wrong, good or evil, would depend, not upon God’s truth, but on the creature’s apprehension of it. At this rate the filthiest of unclean beasts could not be convicted of uncleanness, while it could plead that it had no apprehension of that which was pure and seemly. But we do not thus judge in the things of this world; neither does God judge so in the things of heaven. Who argues that because swine are filthy, therefore the standard of cleanliness is to be set by their perceptions or ability; or that because they seem unconscious of their state, therefore the distinction between what is clean and unclean must be relinquished? No; we judge not by their perceptions, but our own; with our light and knowledge, not their ignorance, as our standard. God, in like manner, though in grace he finds means for pardoning it, still judges evil as evil whenever he finds it. Our blindness does not alter his judgment; for it is our sin and that alone which has caused the blindness.”—*Gukes on the Offerings.*

against any of the commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them, . . . then let him bring for the sin that he hath sinned," etc. The heinousness of such sins of ignorance depends, not so much on the character of the deed done, as on that condition of heart, which is capable of committing sin without knowing that it is sin; and commits it, perhaps exultingly, triumphing in it as good. What must angels in heaven think of the state of that soul which is so thoroughly blinded—so utterly astray from God as to violate his commandments, and resist his will in total unconsciousness that it is doing wrong! It was thus that multitudes in Israel hated and persecuted the Lord Jesus—it was thus that Paul shed the blood of Stephen, resisting the full testimony of the Holy Ghost from one, whose face shone as he spake, with heavenly brightness. All this was ignorance. Paul verily thought that he was doing God service; yet that very thought argued such thorough blindness of soul—such entire alienation of heart from God,

that it was alone sufficient to make him "the chief of sinners."

Nature, if left to its own native blindness, would always sin, and sin in ignorance—such sin being the embodiment in action of those dark principles of enmity against God which lie embosomed in the human heart. In order, however, that the character of sin might be fully manifested, and that want of light might never be pleaded in palliation of transgression, God has never left himself without witness. Throughout the heathen world, the eternal power and Godhead of God are borne witness to by the works which his hand has made. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work." Ps. xix. "He left not himself without witness, in that he gave them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness." "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Rom. i. 20. The Jews, in addition to this testimony of crea-

tion, had also the written word. "To them were committed the oracles of God." They had also many a prophet, many a teacher, line upon line and precept upon precept. The consciences both of Jews and Gentiles were often made to feel the appeals of God. As Paul spake Felix trembled. Nevertheless, they rejected these appeals. Satan and their own evil quenched or obscured the light. As they turned from it, their conscience became more hardened; and as it hardened, sins of ignorance were multiplied, and committed with a higher and more reckless hand. Shall we speak lightly of sins of ignorance like these? One evidence of their character will be found in this, that such sins chiefly abound where the conscience is most hardened, either by long continued evil, or by the judicial infliction of God. What can be more terrible than a conscience so hardened?

Nothing has a greater tendency to bring the conscience into this state, and to lead to the daring commission of sins of ignorance, than religious truth perverted. Revealed truth had been received by Israel, but received to be be-

trayed. Their influential systems—the systems which they worshiped, were based on perverted truth. From their childhood they drank of a cup of error ministered to them in the name of God. In vain the Scriptures spake of Jesus; in vain John, his forerunner, testified; in vain the Lord himself proved by his words, his character, his miracles, that he was indeed the Son of the living God. The light of holiness and of grace shone fruitlessly upon hearts, whose natural darkness was deepened by the systematic influence of a religious corruption, that had sanctified error by holy titles, and had blessed wickedness in the name of God.

Nor has it been otherwise in Christendom. The past and present history of the church of God supplies countless instances of souls, so nurtured from childhood in the atmosphere of error, as to be deadened in every power of right discernment and apprehension. If a lamp that man or Satan have kindled from beneath be early put into our hands; if we are taught to regard it as a light kindled in the sanctuary of God; if our ear welcomes the deceiving tale, and we refuse

to test it by the true light of God's written word, what wonder if we are deceived? What wonder, under such circumstances, seeing that our hearts naturally love darkness, that sins of ignorance should abound? Shall we say that there is no heinousness in sins of ignorance like these?

It would be happy, indeed, if we could assert, even of real Christians, that they are free from these fearful sins of ignorance. But whenever they give themselves up to the guidance of any individual, or of any system whose influence is not strictly according to the revealed truth of God, they will surely act against Christ and his commandments ignorantly. The practices that he favors, they will discountenance; the doctrines he teaches, they will reject; the persons whom he commissions, they will resist; they will substitute error for truth; and ignorantly throw the weight of their character and their gifts into the scale of falsehood. There is nothing, perhaps, at this present moment, that is operating more terribly against the progress of truth, than the misdirected energies of real Chris-

tians, ignorantly sustaining error, ignorantly resisting light.*

Paul was keenly alive to the danger of these sins of ignorance. He knew how easily the souls, even of believers, can be bewitched. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" He knew how easily Satan can transform himself into an angel of light; and how hard it is, while in the midst of "man's day," to judge of persons and things in the light of the day of God. Even, therefore, when he was walking most blamelessly, in much maturity of grace and knowledge, he refused to pronounce any certain judgment on his own character; for there might be blemishes in it which he was unable to discern, and decision respecting this pertained to the Lord, not to him.

*Of course I do not mean to imply that all the sins either of Christendom or Judaism are sins of ignorance. But in a period of religious declension or apostasy, when the early pattern given by God to the churches has been long departed from, it must be that ignorance will abound. And as the dispensation draws nigh to its close, and the conscience becomes more obdurate, and judicial blindness increases, sins of ignorance will necessarily multiply.

“I am not,” said he, “conscious to myself of any thing;”* that is, I am not conscious of any allowed transgression; “nevertheless am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.” If, then, there may be sins of ignorance, even where there is most diligence and watchfulness, how much more where there is negligence or slumber, or acquiescence in the prevailing evil of the age? There has been only One on earth free from sins of ignorance, even he who said, “I have set the Lord always before me;” and he came to be our Sin-offering—to bear the wrath due to these very sins of ignorance: otherwise, they alone would have sunk us into perdition forever.

The chapter before us, as being addressed to those who were ostensibly the separate people of God, teaches us especially respecting sins of ignorance committed by *believers*. The greater our privileges, the nearer we are brought to God; the more intimately we are connected with his

* “I know not that I am guilty of unfaithfulness.”
1 Cor. iv. 4. Coneybeare and Howson’s Translation.

service, the more terrible must be the consequences of transgression. The sin of an Israelite had a greater heinousness in it than the sin of an uninstructed Gentile—the name of God was more dishonored thereby. Again, the sin of a priest or of the whole congregation of Israel, seeing that with such should have been found understanding, and the fear of the Lord, was greater than the sin of an individual among the people. To the sin of an anointed priest and to that of the congregation equal heinousness attached. In each of these cases, the full consequences of the sin of ignorance were developed: and therefore, in meeting these consequences, the full efficacy of the Sin-offering was displayed.

The priests were anointed that they might minister in the near presence of God. Their employment was in holy things—their place the sanctuary. As instructed in the ways of the Lord of Hosts, as acquainted with the manner of his house, their lips were to keep knowledge; and others, through them, were to learn the ways of the Lord. Sins of ignorance, therefore, were

the very sins that should have been absent from the priest. But if they were found in him—"if the priest that is anointed do sin . . . through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them," then his sin was to be estimated by the holiness of the things and places in which he ministered, and by the disastrous consequences to others, as well as to himself, that flowed from its commission. His sin had penetrated, as it were, the holy place; it had entered before the veil; it had tainted the place of his ministration; it had defiled the altar; it had involved others in its consequences; and the stain must be effaced, either by vengeance consuming him, or it must be expiated by the blood of a substituted victim.

It was for this that God, in the unsearchable riches of his grace, appointed the Sin-offering. The offending priest brought the victim to the door of the Tabernacle before Jehovah, and there "leaned" his hand upon its head, and slew it. The blood was then borne into the holy place, and there sprinkled seven times before the Lord,

thus specially recognizing *him* as the person against whom the sin was committed. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." The ground on which he was accustomed to stand when he ministered was thus sprinkled, and also the golden altar of incense, at which he served. Thus the taint was covered over; himself purchased back from destruction; the places of his honorable service preserved unforfeited. The remainder of the blood was then poured at the bottom of the altar of Burnt-offering, as a memorial that the just requisition of holiness had been met—met by death. The blood was not, as in the Burnt-offering and Peace-sacrifice, scattered *on* the altar, in token of its acceptableness there; for now it was regarded as the result and token of vengeance deservedly falling upon sin. The reality of the death by which the sin was expiated, and the certainty of that expiation being recognized in the very sanctuary whose holiness had been violated, was proved by the blood being poured,

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and allowed to *remain*, at the bottom of the altar. There it could be seen as the token of accomplished and accepted atoning death. It was blood *shed*.*

But whilst these ceremonies within the holy place and at the brazen altar thus supplied the memorial of reconciliation as the result of wrath appeased, there were other ordinances without the Tabernacle, which teach us respecting that wrath whilst in process of being inflicted. The principal parts of the victim, viz. : “the skin of the bullock and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung,

* There is, probably, nothing that the consciences of believers feel more acutely, than the extent of the dishonor done to God, when they have sinned in positions of high and honored service. They know that the dishonor done to God is commensurate with the dignity and holiness of their position. They know, too, that Satan, and holy angels, and men in their measure, understand this. The sense of such guilt would be overwhelming, if there had not been provided in the Sin-offering, grace adequate to meet the depth even of this need. Happy are they who, in such circumstances, fly to the true refuge, instead of having recourse to idle extenuations, which have in them the guilt of hypocrisy.

even the whole bullock, shall he carry forth without the camp, unto a clean place where the ashes are poured out, and burn him—literally, burn up or consume—on the wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out shall he be burned up.”

It should be observed how remarkably this passage respecting this first class of Sin-offering ends with the word “*burn up.*” This is very unusual. We commonly find at the conclusion some words that intimate forgiveness attained, or which speak of the offering as a sweet savor. But here no such results are mentioned; the object being to bring out in strong relief the great truth that sin deserves and receives consuming wrath. This thought may be and should be *conjoined* with other thoughts; but other thoughts should not be *commingled* with it, for so none will have their own proper completeness. This, however, is seldom the case in our experience; we continually neutralize one truth by another. It is right to combine, but combination is not confusion. In the rainbow, colors are combined, but they are not neutralized nor confused.

The mind is evidently intended to rest on the solemn truth taught by the word with which these directions conclude—BURNT UP. He who has considered the heinousness of sin as estimated in the sanctuary in relation to the holy vessels and services there, will best apprehend the reason of the devouring wrath which this word expresses. In the Passover our minds are chiefly directed to the deliverance; in the Peace-sacrifice to the peace into which we are delivered; in the Sin-offering to the satisfaction rendered to WRATH. The manifested infliction of destroying wrath, though deserved by indwelling sin, is delayed in the governmental order of God, until sin has been *committed*. This is a sufficient reason for the great type of wrath *inflicted* being found in this chapter.

A very different type this, from that in which the whole offering was lifted up on the altar of God as an offering of sweet savor; or from that in which, as in the Peace-sacrifice, these parts, or the greater number of them, were fed on by the offerer. Here fire kindled, not on the altar, not within the Tabernacle, not even within the

camp, but kindled "without the gate"—the place of dishonor and reproach—devoured, like the fire of Gehenna, that which was counted as if it were an accursed thing. In the case of the altar, the fire that was thereon kindled, fed gratefully on that which satisfied it by its excellency; but here, a fire, kindled without the camp, burnt up, as in fury, that which was given it to be consumed. Such was the type of him, whom, though he knew no sin, God made sin for us. 2 Cor. v. 21. In other types, we have seen him, as the One who "gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor;" but in this burning without the camp, we see him stricken—"bruised"—made a curse for us—made sin for us.* It was then that he

* It is not easy to recognize vengeance and wrath, either as due to our sins, or as endured by our Substitute for us. Often, after we have apprehended that the Holy One has been stricken for us, and that he has become for us a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savor, we form but a feeble estimate of the wrath he sustained for us, or of the reasons why that wrath was due. It is well for us that our safety depends not on the clearness or comprehensiveness of our faith, but

uttered that bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" Thus, too, we can understand the words of the apostle, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, judged—damnatorily judged—sin in the flesh." The flesh of the Lord Jesus was holy: in him was no sin; but the sin of our nature, here called "sin in the flesh," was reckoned to him as our Substitute, and when he died upon the cross was there damnatorily judged. There it received its award. This is the lesson that faith learns, as it stands by the fire without the camp, and gazes on it, whilst the devoted parts of the Sin-offering are consumed. There it beholds the memorial of what Christ became on account of his people. There it sees not only their sins but their sin judicially ended. We may stand, as it were, by the side of that burning pile. We may see the flame fiercely raging in the full intensity of its

simply on the fact that our souls have indeed said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

devouring power ; at length we behold it lessen ; at last, flicker and decay, till it smoulders among the embers. We may watch the last expiring spark that glimmers there, and when that ends—when nothing but the cold ashes remain—we see an emblem of the relation which the fire of holy wrath bears to all the believing people of God. Its power is expended ; it hath burnt itself out ; ashes only remain.

Yet at the same moment when the real power of wrath bore on the Holy One—our Substitute—even whilst he was being stricken *as if* he had been sin, there was, nevertheless, found in him all that perfectness of heavenly excellency, which was inseparable from him, even whilst being made a curse for us. God still beheld in him his only beloved Son in whom he was well pleased ; whose obedience and devotedness and perfectness in life and in death, remaining unchanged even whilst wrath thus preyed on him, ascended still as the “odor of a sweet-smelling savor.” This truth is carefully preserved, not only in the types of the Burnt-offering, and Meat-offering, and Peace-sacrifice, but also in the ordinances of the

Sin-offering itself. Whilst the body of the Sin-offering was carried without the camp to be consumed, the internal parts, that is to say, the internal fat, kidneys, etc., were placed on the altar, and there burned. These, it will be observed, were the same parts that were burned in the Peace-sacrifice; here, too, intended to typify those excellencies of nature in Christ, which shone in him always, and manifested his nature as man, to be the exact opposite to ours, as inhabited by, and subjected to sin. Sin committed in ignorance is so connected with the condition of our nature, inwardly; it is so impossible to meditate on the one without tracing it to the other, that we can easily understand why this part of the ceremonies of the Sin-offering should direct our thoughts to the condition of our nature, and to the satisfaction made on its account. Conscience, whenever it truthfully meditates on sin committed, goes back to the root from which it springs, and finds that root within us. And when that is once seen, how could there be any rest, unless God had provided for us One, whose excellencies are here also sub-

stituted for our vileness? In atonement, divine holiness requires in the Surety, not only that he should bear every penalty, but that he should also present a substitutional perfectness for us.

If we compare the *fourth* and the *sixth* chapters of Leviticus, it is very evident that the first broad distinction between them is, that the former treats of sins committed ignorantly; the latter, of sins committed knowingly. In the one, it is said, "if a soul sin, through ignorance, against any of the commandments of the Lord." Lev. iv. 1. In the other, "if a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered to him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbor, or have found that which was lost and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely," etc. Lev. vi. 2. In such cases it is very evident that the action is willful.

The division, however, into sins ignorantly, and sins knowingly committed, is not alone sufficient. Sins committed ignorantly greatly vary, not only in the degree, but also in the kind of

ignorance; and for such ignorance, we may be in different degrees responsible. In order, therefore, to mark that such differences are appreciated by God, and that he desires that we, too, should appreciate them, various classifications of sins of ignorance are given in the fifth chapter; in some of which, there is so much of self-caused ignorance, that they very nearly approach, in the character of their guilt, to sins knowingly committed. Nevertheless, whatsoever the character of sin, we have ever to remember that the one sacrifice once offered "covereth over" forever *all* sin, for all who believe. If believers analyze the character of their sins, it is not that they might be more secure, but more wise, more able humbly to serve and to thank him, who teaches them the character of their sin *after* he has brought them, through the blood of the sacrifice, into everlasting reconciliation.

Sins of ignorance greatly differ in kind as well as in degree. He who transgresses because he is ignorant that any commandment exists forbidding him to do what he does, commits a sin very different in character from that of one who,

knowing that certain things are forbidden, nevertheless disobeys, either unawares, or because he deceives himself into the belief, that the particular case in question may be made an exception to the general rule, on the ground of necessity, or pardonable expediency; so that with a *good* conscience (as men say), in other words, with a perverted conscience, he ignorantly does evil. Ignorance of this kind, that is, ignorance which respects the particulars of action, is often self-induced, in a sense in which general ignorance, that is ignorance which affects the general *principles* of action, is not self-induced. To be ignorant of some general principle whereby a whole class of things is universally proved to be evil, differs greatly from an ignorance which only affects the question whether such and such a particular case falls, or does not fall, under that class. Thousands, for example, like Luther in his earlier days, render religious allegiance to bodies falsely claiming authority from God, because, from being educationally, or otherwise blinded, they discern not the principle whereby, in the word of God, all such bodies are con-

demned; whilst others, well knowing that any recognition of such bodies is forbidden, do, nevertheless, give themselves to practices whereby, unconsciously or carelessly, or for expediency's sake, they recognize them. The first are ignorant as to the principle of their action; the latter of its circumstantial particulars. The first kind of ignorance is chiefly marked by the extent and depth of the darkness by which it is accompanied; the second derives its criminality, chiefly, from the carelessness or willingness to be deceived, by which it is almost always characterized. The sins of the *fifth* chapter belong to this latter class. They are, indeed, done in ignorance; but so much of voluntariness mingles with the ignorance, that they verge towards the willful sins of the sixth chapter, and so stand contrasted with sins of ignorance properly so called, of which the *fourth* chapter treats. Such sins, therefore, have a mediate character. They are committed in too much ignorance to be classed with the willful sins of the *sixth* chapter; whilst, on the other hand, there is too much of voluntariness in that ignorance, to admit of their being classed

with such sins of ignorance as are treated of in the *fourth* chapter. Accordingly, whilst the sins of the *fourth* chapter, that is, sins done in ignorance, and arising mainly from ignorance, are met by the Sin-offering; and whilst the sins of the *sixth* chapter, that is, willful transgressions, are met by the Trespass-offering; the sins of the *fifth* chapter—from verse 1 to 13 inclusive—are met by a *Trespass-offering of a peculiar character*, viz., a Sin-offering* offered for a Trespass-offering; whereby the mediate character of such sins is plainly signified.

The sins treated of in the fourth chapter—met by the Sin-offering properly so called—derive their predominant feature from the circumstance of ignorance being their root. They so manifestly spring from ignorance—ignorance is so distinctly their parent, that they stand morally contrasted with other sins, which, even if committed ignorantly, cannot, in the same sense, be said to spring from ignorance. The ignorance which once

* And sometimes by a Sin-offering *and* Burnt-offering offered for a *Trespass-offering*; sometimes by a Meat-offering offered for a *Trespass-offering*.

caused St. Paul to venerate Judaism; and caused Luther, for a time, to bow before the false pretensions of Romanism, is very different in character from that ignorance which tampers with something that is unclean or evil, because it is too careless, or too inextertive to rouse itself to inquiry; or because it fears what it may discover, if it should probe too deeply. In the first case, there is no dread of inquiry or deliberation, because the mind is so thoroughly blinded, that it suspects not its condition; but in the second case, carelessness or disinclination to know the truth prevents examination. Ignorance, in fact, is *consciously* cherished; so that every one who honestly examines an action so performed, feels that, however much it may be committed ignorantly, yet that its root is not ignorance, but a certain disposition of heart that entails on itself an ignorance which it knows that it might readily escape.

There are few chapters worthy of more solemn consideration than the fourth of Leviticus. It teaches us the deep responsibility of all positions of ostensible service—especially such as are in-

fluent over the minds and habits of others. Any influence we may possess, any ability of instructing, comforting, or in any way helping others, by word or by example, is a talent which we cannot escape the responsibility of using. We dare not hide it in a napkin. The priests of God, and all believers are priests, *must* act, and that, too, openly. But how needful that they should well consider the responsibility of their position; the danger in which they are of acting ignorantly, and the disastrous effects of such ignorance, in dishonoring God, and injuring others, who may be involved in the consequences of their sin! Honest-hearted reception of the word of God can alone preserve us from such ignorance. But is there acquaintance with the Scripture now; or is its light hidden, and other lights substituted instead? Think of the general delusion that has pervaded Christendom, as to this present time being one of holy progress, whereas, the Scripture over and over again declares, that it is one of declension, disobedience, and dark iniquity—iniquity that will bring on a visitation of judgment, the like to which has never yet been.

Think of the manner in which ceremonial rites—many of them mere inventions of man—ministered, too, by unholy hands, have supplanted the true and saving ministration of the gospel of the grace of God. Think of the multitudes, yet in their sins, because unsanctified by faith in Jesus, who are taught, even whilst they are yet strenuously serving the god of this world, falsely to say to the great Shepherd of Israel, “We are thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture.” Think how many, uncommissioned of God, unacquainted with his truth, and untaught by his Spirit, have usurped the place of ministers of Christ, and are so owned and honored. Think of the manner in which Judaical position and Judaical principles have been assumed by those who have forgotten that Christ, and not Moses, is their master; so that they whose feet should have been shod only with the preparation of the gospel of peace, have rushed into the battle-field, crying, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon;” whilst others, who should have remembered that the place of discipleship now is to follow Jesus of *Nazareth*, and to become, it may be, as the off-scouring of all things

for his sake, have eschewed this place of lowliness, and have sought to reign as kings, building for their worship gorgeous temples, and for themselves pleasant palaces; as if Solomon on the throne of his glory, instead of Jesus in rejection and reproach, were the pattern of Christian condition now. Think, too, of the blindness that prevails, as to the prospects of Israel, of the nations, and of the church, as to the nature of the last great Apostasy, and the coming and reign of the Lord Jesus; and then say, whether there was ever an hour when sins of ignorance more abounded—an ignorance, the depth of which, and the sinfulness of which, One only can appreciate.

There is a natural tendency in the heart of man—and it operates abundantly even in real Christians—to bow to the influence of perverted and falsely assumed authority. “The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so.” That honored place of authority and influence, once held by the unfallen church, whilst it yet stood as “the pillar and ground of the truth,”

has been seldom claimed by any, without the claim—however false and presumptuous—being willingly owned, and sometimes welcomed, even by many who are really Christ's. But all such authority, seeing that it is neither based on nor guided by truth, can only lead into the darkness to which itself belongs. What wonder, therefore, that ignorance should settle in upon that soul that has made itself the slave of such authority; what wonder if, unconsciously, it should welcome falsehood, and fight against Truth; and congratulate itself most when furthest distant from the principles of Christ. Individuals, too, as well as collective bodies, may claim an authority which God has never given; and not unfrequently fear, or affection, or self-interest, or a disposition to lean upon others, causes it to be gladly recognized. But such authority, seeing that it is not in the power of Truth, that it directs not to the Scriptures alone, that it will not bear the test of the "law and of the testimony," can only, as in the former case, lead towards, if not into, darkness. Nothing but close adherence to the Scripture can preserve us

from such results in a day like the present. Is that which we hear false or true? Is it or is it not the word of God? Such are the great questions we have to ask ourselves now. The faithful use of the Scriptures will no doubt expose many an error, detect many a sin of ignorance, and show us much that we have no sufficient grace to attain. Thus, after years of dark declension in Israel, when at last the faithful energy of a few led them back again to the neglected Scripture, the first result of their return to it was this—that all the people “wept;” for they discovered how they had offended, and in what they had long and ignorantly sinned. Yet their tears were not allowed long to flow. The voice of compassion said to them, “Weep not; let joy in Jehovah be your strength.” God can ever comfort truthfulness and confession.

The amount of responsibility that may attach to individuals on account of these sins of ignorance, there is One, and One only, that can determine. An all-seeing eye that traceth the end from the beginning, is alone able to detect how, and when, and where the various streams of

error first emanated ; and who they are who have since most labored to swell them, or to prepare channels for their diffusion. Some diffuse error because they love it ; others, because they are deceived into believing it a duty. Some, through indifference, or timidity, or dislike of truth, refuse to avail themselves of instruction, even when it is brought to their very doors ; others, again, seem deprived almost of the opportunity to learn, entombed in a darkness which light seeks in vain to penetrate. The determination of the various proportions of guilt must be left to the great final day. All that we can at present say is, that the value of the Sin-offering can never fail ; and that all who are under it, that is, the whole family of faith—all who have not rejected the record which God hath given of his Son—are surely protected from condemnation by its everlasting efficacy. But although the believer in Jesus shall never be plucked from the hand of the Almighty Shepherd, yet the effect which sins committed by us in ignorance may produce upon others, who, through our example, may continue in darkness, and perhaps perish with a

lie in their right hand; the effect which such sins must produce in darkening our powers of spiritual apprehension, and destroying the proper comfort of our hearts; the effect, too, upon our service in hindering fruitfulness, and causing "wood, hay, and stubble" to be the result of our labors;—these, and other such consequences, who can appreciate? They will be understood only in the day which revealeth all things; when "we, too, shall know even as also we are known."

Instruction, exhortation, discipline, chastisement, are employed by the grace of the great Head of the church towards his people, to free them from sins of ignorance, and their disastrous consequences. But Satan and the sin that dwells within us put forth their energies to resist. They struggle to increase darkness and to confirm error; and we cannot be surprised that their plans should prosper during a period marked by our Lord himself as one in which "iniquity shall abound."

Yet, the greater the darkness, the more precious is any light that is available in its midst.

Amid all the dark and shifting scenes through which the fierce passions of men under Satan are hurrying, alike, the church and the world, the word of God remains unchanged and unchangeable, as the one steady light appointed to shine on in the darkness, until the day dawn. Happy are they who stand most apart from the tumultuous scene, and cleave most closely to the Scripture, and most meditate therein. If, as the history of Christianity peculiarly shows, the perpetual effort of Satan be to hide, or to veil, or to distort the light of Scripture, let our effort be to unveil it, and to give steady direction to its beams. Even if weak ourselves, we may be able very effectually to aid others. He will not have lived in vain, who shall have caused one ray of light from the word of God to rest steadily on a heart that was dark to it before.

But how could we have any courage to use, or to approach a light that will surely manifest ignorance and sins of ignorance, both in ourselves and others, if there were no SIN-OFFERING? What hope could we have unless we were able to say that the whole family of faith are pro-

tected forever under its efficacy? We have not again to offer it: it HAS BEEN offered, once and forever offered—every ceremony fulfilled—every ordinance obeyed. We find in it a work that has been finished—a grace that has been perfected. May we use it, not to nurture ignorance, and listlessness, and slumber, but to encourage ourselves to cleave to, and maintain that light of revealed truth, which, however beset by evil, however much it may be for a time shrouded, shall never have its essential brightness marred by the admixture of one element of darkness, on to the hour when it mingles with the light of the eternal day.

There, none will pretend that there are many standards of right and wrong; or that a fallen creature may find a safe and sufficient guide in the convictions of his own dark bosom. As soon as the redeemed are personally sinless, they will fully recognize the blessedness of owning and bowing to one sovereign will. Sins of ignorance will be fitly appreciated then; and habits of extenuating and excusing evil will no longer hinder the apprehension of the fullness of the

grace, which, refusing to palliate iniquity, or to call darkness light, has itself bowed beneath the curse due to evil, and there proved itself to be almighty—almighty in vindicating holiness—almighty, also, in delivering the sinner who despises not the Sin-offering.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRESPASS-OFFERING.

LEVITICUS VI.

IF we read the commencing verses of the sixth chapter of Leviticus, it is evident that the sins they describe are sins that must have been committed knowingly. "If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbor; or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely," etc. In the cases here supposed, there is evidently no ignorance—the deed is knowingly and deliberately done.

Our first impulse, in thinking of sins thus committed, is, to attach to them a far higher degree of heinousness than to sins committed in ignorance; and in many cases this impression is just. I say, in many cases, because sins igno-

rantly committed *may* imply a condition of more obdurate evil than is indicated by some sins that are knowingly committed. Violence of temptation, terror, or the desire of escaping some threatened danger, may sometimes overpower a heart whose disposition, radically, still remains true to God. It is thus that martyrs have sometimes foregone their previous confessions, and disavowed, momentarily, the truth which their souls still loved. It was thus surprise and terror caused Peter to deny his Lord; whilst nevertheless his faith in him and his mission failed not. Satan never so far prevailed as to banish from the heart of Peter the conviction that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God—worthy of all reverence, all reliance, all love. That conviction was never driven from Peter's soul. If it had been, he must have been separated from his Lord forever. Ignorance, like the ignorance which was resting on the people of God's wrath around him, would, in that case, have rested on him also. But it was impossible. Though he was sifted as wheat, yet Jesus prayed for him, that his faith should

not fail; and it failed not. His heart was never driven back into utter darkness: he still confided in and loved him whom he was denying—otherwise, when Jesus looked on him, would that look have pierced? Would he have gone out and wept bitterly?

How different the state of Peter, even whilst knowingly committing that sin, and the condition of another, who, even at that very moment, was preparing—ignorantly, indeed, but deliberately—to enter on his course of resolute and blasphemous defiance of Christ. Paul was in Jerusalem, learning at the feet of Gamaliel, during the time that the Lord himself was ministering in the midst of Israel. He had the opportunity therefore of hearing and owning that Holy One—him of whom God had said, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.” It was open to Paul to have owned him and comforted him; for though he was the One “who clotheth the heavens with blackness, and maketh sackcloth their covering,” yet he had humbled himself, so as to need sympathy and find refreshment in the love, even of the creatures

whom his own hand had made. But Paul rendered to him no sympathy, nor any love: on the contrary, he despised him, hated him, and virtually, if not actually, joined in the cry of those who said, "Crucify him! crucify him!" And afterward, when the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven, and many, even of the murderers of Jesus, quailed before its testimony and resisted no longer, the heart of Paul still refused to bow. He heard the words of Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost and of power—saw his face shine as the face of an angel, and yet joined in slaying him. All this, indeed, was done in ignorance; but it made Paul the greatest of pardoned sinners. The greatest, therefore, of pardoned sins recorded in Scripture, was a sin committed in ignorance.

If Paul had not done these things in ignorance—if he had blasphemed, as he did, the testimony of Stephen, whilst secretly in his conscience recognizing it as being from God—he would, in that case, have passed the limits of forgiveness, and would have committed the sin that never can be forgiven, either "in this world or in the

world to come." It may seem difficult, perhaps, to conceive of wickedness so intense as for the soul deliberately to blaspheme as evil that which it *knows* to come from the almighty Source of all good; yet so it may be. Light may dispel darkness, but light has in itself no power to change the nature of man's perverted will. It is a fearful thought, that when the soul has long loved darkness and avoided light, and cherished its delusions, and hardened itself in willfulness, even if God should be pleased, by a sudden exercise of almighty power, to sweep in a moment every cloud from the soul, and to scatter every web that dissimulation or hypocrisy have woven, the unregenerate heart would nevertheless still remain as full of willfulness as ever, and would only use the light given to assist it in committing the unpardonable sin. It would still blaspheme, and blaspheme knowingly. Such will be the character of that closing hour, when men, well conscious of what they are doing, will say both of Jehovah and his Christ, "Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us"—when "they shall make war against

him that sitteth upon the horse, and against his army." Rev. xix. Thus, whilst the greatest sin recorded as pardoned is committed ignorantly, the greatest of sins is committed knowingly.

It is not, therefore, from the mere fact of a sin having been knowingly committed, that we can infer the greatest insubjection of the will. Abraham sinned knowingly when he wandered from Canaan into Egypt, and endeavored to protect himself by falsehood and the abandonment of his wife. Gen. xii. Moses sinned knowingly when he smote the rock in anger, and forgot to honor God in the sight of Israel. Peter and Barnabas transgressed knowingly when they dissembled at Antioch and compromised the truth of the gospel. Paul disobeyed knowingly when, being warned through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem, he went. Acts xxi. 4. Martyrs have sinned knowingly when, overpowered by terror or seduced by flattery, they have sometimes fallen for a season, and abjured the truth for which they have been suffering. Yet how many a sin committed in ignorance indicates to the eye of God a degree of willfulness not found

in these his servants, even though they knowingly turned from the straightforward path! When we willfully cause, or willfully deepen our own ignorance, or avoid the light whereby it would be dispelled, or cleave to our ignorance because we love both it and its results, we are in a worse condition of heart than many, who, under the force of circumstances, may commit conscious and deliberate transgressions. Accordingly, though the transgressions mentioned in the sixth chapter of Leviticus are distinctly such as must have been knowingly committed, yet not a word is said that implies that they are more heinous than the sins of ignorance mentioned in the preceding chapter. They may be, or they may not be. The degree of heinousness that attaches to any transgression depends really on the inward condition of the will; and that, who, excepting God, can judge?* Yet, though sins may thus differ in their character and in the degree of their heinousness, we must remember

* The transgressions which *we* are accustomed to judge most severely are such as are deliberate and

that every sin is a breach of God's holy law—a law whose holiness adjudges wrath to *all* transgression. Every sin, therefore, of whatsoever kind it be, needs to be met by the same grace, exercised through the same everlasting sacrifice.

The cases of trespass mentioned in this chapter

willful ; yet it may happen that one, who sins in ignorance, may have a will more stubborn, rebellious, and wicked, than one who may commit knowingly a very great transgression. A willful transgression does not always prove the greatest willfulness of soul ; nor does the committal of the very same sin prove, necessarily, the same alienation of heart from God. Adam, though he committed the same sin as Eve, was not in the same depth of transgression ; for he was not deceived as she. He did not believe the lie of Satan, that Satan could make him happier than God had made him. The apprehension of God and of his goodness were not blotted out of his remembrance in the same manner as in Eve. "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." 1 Tim. ii. 13. We must not, therefore, judge by the outward appearance merely—there may be distinctions that we cannot discern. The direst form of sin is when willful transgressions are the direct result of habitual willfulness of soul ; and this is often the result of long perseverance in sins of ignorance.

are all of them trespasses against a neighbor. Nevertheless such trespasses are also trespasses against the Lord. "If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor," etc. Wherever government is perfect, wrong done to a subject is regarded as wrong done to the sovereign; and so it is here. If a man injure his neighbor, wrong is considered to be done to God as the Legislator and Governor of his people; and wrong is of course done to the neighbor—wrong, too, of double character: first, in that he is deprived of that which is his own; secondly, in that he is deprived of it by fraud or deceit or violence, so as thereby also to be injured and dishonored. Accordingly, *compensation* becomes a predominant and distinctive feature in the Trespass-offering. The stern eye of Moses, who, as the minister of law, could abate nothing from the full claim of perfectness, examined the victim and estimated it by shekels of silver; and if it fell short of the appointed value, it was rejected. "And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy (that is Moses') estimation;"

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the victim must be of a value that would adequately compensate for the wrong done to the government of God. Moreover, all that was taken from the neighbor was to be restored. There was to be the compensation of restitution —“He shall restore that which he took violently away,” etc. And lastly, in order that the injured person might be compensated for the manner in which he had been defrauded, a fifth part of the value was to be added to that which was restored. “He shall even restore the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereunto, and give it to him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass-offering.” Unless all this were done, and the victim duly offered, the sin was not atoned for, and wrath remained as the portion of the guilty.

Such were the severe but just ordinances of the law respecting trespass. And here again we have to observe the contrast between the requirements of Sinai and the grace of the New Covenant—the Covenant of Zion. What if such compensation were exacted from *us*? Could we provide any offering that would meet the estima-

tion of the sanctuary of God? Could we make restitution, and not restitution merely, but full compensation to all whom we may have injured by thought or word or deed, and then rest our claim for immunity from wrath on the completeness of the satisfaction thus rendered to God and to man? If such things were required of us, wrath must have remained as our irreversible portion forever. We should not have been able suitably to compensate man, much less to satisfy God. But we have not thus to provide. God has not forgotten that he is Jehovah-jireh. True to that covenant name, he has himself provided for us a sacrifice, by whose perfectness every claim is satisfied: so that nothing as regards the putting away of guilt remains to be effected either towards God or towards man. "By one offering" Christ "hath perfected forever" all who come unto God by him. The remission is so complete, says the Apostle, that "there remains no more offering for sin." This is salvation.

If compensation to those whom we have injured were, under the gospel, made *necessary to the attainment of forgiveness*, then we should,

in part, become the authors of our own salvation.* Not but that it is just and meet, whenever it be possible, to make restitution to any whom we have wronged. The fitness of such restitution, nature itself teaches. The first thought of Zaccheus, after the Lord had entered his house bringing salvation, was, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have defrauded any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold." A right and fitting thought, if such devotedness be made a thank-offering for salvation; but pregnant with destruction if made the prerequisite or procuring cause.† Yet how often on this and kindred subjects does error

* The author means here to draw a distinction between the offering of compensation, as a work in order to obtain the forgiveness of God, and the making of restitution as a result of the forgiveness and cleansing freely granted through the sacrifice of Christ. The latter is the exercise of one saved by grace and taught by the Spirit to exercise himself, "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."—AM. ED.

† It should be observed that, in our Lord's reply, he makes no reference to the intentions that Zaccheus had expressed. He simply said, "this day hath SALVATION come to this house." The emphasis is on

feign the accents of truth ! Naked falsehood is not the only instrument whereby Satan deceives. He deceives chiefly by perverting truth or deranging its proper order ; and therefore one of the employments of the Great Head of the church—the Bishop of the souls of his people—is to give them, through the Spirit, *rightly ordered* apprehensions of his truth. None who have the Spirit of Christ can fail to recognize that restitution and compensation are principles holy, just, and true—they are principles which all who honor Christ will seek practically to embody in their ways whenever occasion may require : but how different this from making them the prerequisites of salvation ! To that we say, God forbid. If salvation be of grace, then it is no more of works. We desire not to be “ teachers of law,

salvation. That was the word intended to arrest the attention of Zaccheus and all who were observing these things. The fact that full and free salvation had suddenly come to a most undeserving dwelling was not to be obscured by Zaccheus’ proposals for the future—however sincere such proposals—however right as a *result* of salvation.

understanding neither of what we speak nor whereof we affirm."

But it may be asked, are we, by this type, authorized to expect compensation from those by whom we may have been injured? If we were under law and were claiming "an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth," we should, of course, whenever injured, expect reparation. But we are not under law: we are sinners saved by grace, and as such, deserve nothing, and claim no compensation.* Compensation, in this sense, is a word banished from the lips and from the heart of every one who knows what grace is. Could the redeemed, in the day when grace shall be fully apprehended and its results known, desire—even

* If the Old and New Testaments mean any thing by what they teach on this point, *the trespasser is the wrong man to contend for rights*. Because we are converted trespassers, and trespassers who make our boast in grace, we are called, as the very witnesses of that grace and of our need of it, to deal in what we call grace to others. * * But how far is this acted on by many who profess to be one with Christ? Provided we have been *just*, who asks have I been *gracious*, in my dealings to my fellow-men.—*Gukes*.

if it were possible—to exact any thing from their then perfected brethren? Did Joseph wish it, when his brethren stood around him and he comforted them? Even here, grace “frankly forgives” whenever any are brought to the recognition and confession of the wrong. Not indeed that the saints will lack recompense; but the recompense of grace through Christ is not to be confounded with the exacted compensation of law. The redeemed in that day will be recompensed, and more than recompensed, for every past suffering and for every woe. However they may have been persecuted, or maligned, or injured—however they may have been hated or outcast even by their brethren—however they may have found treachery where they expected faithfulness—all will judge themselves to be more than recompensed, when they find themselves surrounded in glory by all the results of the righteousness and excellency of the Son of the Father. It is true, indeed, that he who putteth every tear into his bottle, and noteth all their sorrows in his book, may in the abounding riches of his grace meet every past grief by some

corresponding joy, and make every injurious word or violent deed that they have meekly met for his name's sake, an added jewel in the crown of their glory. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven." I do not limit the superabounding bountifulness of grace towards those whom God has been pleased to love in Christ Jesus. But I say, that no superadded recognition or reward of this kind will be needed, in order to make every heart feel that its recompense is not merely complete, but infinite, the moment it stands in glory numbered among the saved. Every heart will spontaneously and joyfully acknowledge then, that whatever claim brother may have had against brother, all has been answered to infinitude by Him who, as the kinsman and representative of all his brethren, will have given to each, more than could ever have been taken away from any one among them, even if all the combined energies of evil, that have ever worked in the church and in the

world, had been concentrated on one individual head. Thus grace, without acting on the Sinai-principles of retribution, is able to appropriate every principle that is holy, just, and true, and to apply it in its own new manner, in the power of blessing.

In the preceding observations, I have chiefly dwelt on the trespasses described in the sixth chapter, because they, being knowingly committed, seem to stand in most palpable contrast with the sins of ignorance described in the fourth chapter. I have, however, already remarked that a Trespass-offering was not only required in cases in which the deed was knowingly done, but on every occasion in which the attention is primarily directed to the nature of the act, rather than to the moral condition of the agent.

Indeed it is on this, and not on the circumstance of the sin being ignorantly or knowingly committed, that the true distinction between the Sin-offering and the Trespass-offering must be made to rest. We well know that there are occasions on which the general moral condition of

the person who has sinned is regarded far more than the particular act of transgression he may have committed. On the other hand, there are cases in which the deed done and its consequences are made the primary object of regard. In the first case the Sin-offering, in the latter the Trespass-offering, would be required.

Nothing can more clearly show that the distinction between the Sin-offering and Trespass-offering is not founded on the sin being knowingly or otherwise committed, than the fact that the first instance in which the Trespass-offering proper is commanded to be brought, is one in which the wrong is done *ignorantly*. See the fourteenth verse of the fifth chapter, where the words, "And the Lord spake unto Moses," marking a fresh division, are again found. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance in the holy things of the Lord," etc. The trespass referred to in this passage is done in ignorance and is committed against the Lord only. In this case, as in the case of a trespass against a neighbor (see chap. vi.), the victim brought for

a Trespass-offering was to be of a fixed, estimated value; and secondly, in addition to the victim, compensation was to be made, not merely by returning an equivalent, but by adding a fifth part or double tithe thereunto. Whenever, therefore, in the relation we hold to God, as his people and servants, we defraud him even ignorantly of that which is his rightful due, a trespass is committed, by which we should have been forever ruined, if there had not been found in Christ a value fully compensatory in all the three aspects here referred to.

It is worthy of remark that, although the ignorance in cases of trespass against the Lord in holy things must be considered as especially *voluntary*—inasmuch as we cannot suppose that the declarations of God respecting his rights are unintelligible or obscure—yet that the only trespasses here mentioned as *ignorantly* committed, are trespasses against the Lord in holy things; whereas the instances of trespass *knowingly* committed are confined to those committed against men. We can easily

understand this. We often defraud God of that which is his due, carelessly and without giving it a thought; whereas in trespasses against a neighbor, we are for the most part far too cautious to trespass unwittingly; the fear of man being often more operative than the fear of God. Israel went on for ages defrauding God of that which was his due; for they were commanded several times in the year to appear before him and celebrate his feasts; yet ages passed and they never celebrated them at all. And when at last, as in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah, they gathered together and opened up his word and read therein, they found their omissions so many and so grievous that they all lifted up their voice and wept. In Malachi, too, we find them again described as habitually defrauding the Lord of his due; and yet saying, "In what have we sinned so much against thee?" And if we consider the present condition of the church of God—are they rendering to God that which he claims of them in his word? Is their doctrine, their order, their worship, such

as his word demands? Or is there daily a continuance in practices which take from him that which his word declares to be his due? Are there not many real Christians, exact, even to the most minute tittle, in rendering to men their due, who nevertheless—for reasons that will not bear examination—selfish reasons—refuse to search fully into truth; so that they continue voluntarily ignorant of its claims, and never give to it its right pre-eminence nor the proper allegiance of their souls; and so render the practical unity of the children of God impossible? Yet this is often done and persevered in unconsciously.

The seventeenth and following verses of the fifth chapter are worthy of especial attention; because they pronounce all ignorance that has caused aberration from the commandments of the Lord to be in itself *trespass*. “If a soul sin, and commit any of those things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity. And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy

estimation, for a Trespass-offering, unto the priest; and the priest shall make an atonement for him *concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist it not*; and it shall be forgiven him. It is a Trespass-offering." Lev. v. 17, etc. We have before seen ignorance marked as sin—we here see it marked as *transgression*. How different man's estimate, and even the church's estimate of ignorance, and sins of ignorance, from that which is presented to us in these chapters! However trivial the offence committed, the ignorance in which it is committed is marked as being itself *trespass*.

It is interesting to observe how the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah—that blessed chapter of salvation—describes the punishment due both to the sin and to the trespasses of God's people as having alike rested on the head of the great Substitute. "It pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt have made his soul an offering for sin (*trespass*), he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand." Again in the 12th verse, he is described

as the Sin-offering : “ He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the SIN of many.” Thus Jesus is alike the Trespass-offering and the Sin-offering for his people—even all who believe.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OFFERINGS AS A WHOLE.

SUCH, then, is the outline—an imperfect outline, of the five different aspects under which it has pleased God to teach us respecting the one great sacrifice. In separating us from Egypt and leading us into a wilderness—for in following him we find ourselves separated from many an association, and interest, and occupation, which naturally we loved—when thus led into the wilderness, we find not a wilderness merely, but a Tabernacle, within whose holy enclosure we are taught lessons of grace. When, not as in the presence of the fires of Sinai, but with the light which the gospel has supplied, we enter that typical dwelling-place of God, we find every thing there testifying of grace, because every thing speaks of Christ. As we stand by the side of the altar, and think of the guilt of our trespasses, or of our sins of ignorance, or of the sin

of our nature, or of our blemished characters, or of our failure in devotedness to God, we find an offering which has not only canceled this guilt, but left the perfectness of its own excellency in its room. It is not only blackness covered over : it is blackness of darkness swallowed up of light—light pure, holy, and perfect as that which is known in the presence of God in heaven. God had so appointed it—it is his gift—we have only to bow the head and worship, and give thanks to him forever.

But while this superabounding of grace is the great lesson of the Tabernacle, the side of the Burnt-offering altar is also a place where instruction of deepest practical moment is received. The apostle speaks of it as an altar, at which we may not only feed—feed on the provisions of its grace—but at which we may also *serve*. “To do good and communicate forget not, for with such SACRIFICES God is well pleased.” There is a sense, therefore, in which, through Jesus, even we may bring our gifts and sacrifices to the altar. It is the knowledge of this that sheds a radiance upon the otherwise dark circumstances of life,

and gilds many a gloomy scene in the wilderness with the light of heavenly blessing. When the soul discerns how sin and death have entered into all things here, and sees that all is tainted—when it apprehends the truth of that sorrowful cry, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity”—how it rejoices to find a new sphere in which things that would otherwise “perish with the using” may be employed for God. Even the mammon of unrighteousness may be used for him. “Make to yourselves friends,” said the Lord Jesus, “of the mammon of unrighteousness;” that is, so use it that its use may bear witness *for* you and not *against* you in the final day. We may, if we please, spend our time, our energies, our talents on ourselves, and sow to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption; or we may bring these things to God, and to his altar, and so sow to the Spirit, and of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Nature uses for itself; Faith for God. Faith has a transforming touch, whereby things which otherwise are worthless as dross, become transmuted into the preciousness of gold. He who most fully knows the ruin that sin has wrought in every

thing beneath the skies, and who best appreciates the character of him who is "a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," will bring, like Abel, "the more abundant sacrifice," and find in the service of the Burnt-offering altar one of the chief consolations of the hours of his pilgrimage. And if a regard to the various aspects supplied by these several offerings be needful in forming a right estimate of the One Sacrifice, it is scarcely less needful in preserving us from a certain narrow exclusiveness of feeling, into which we not unfrequently fall in our attempts practically to follow Christ. Ardent and imaginative hearts, young in the faith and ignorant of themselves, struck with the blessedness of being wholly devoted to God, are often wont to make *that* the one absorbing thought, whereby every desire respecting themselves and every judgment respecting others is moulded. It would be difficult, indeed, to over-estimate the value of true devotedness; for it imparts an energy and vigor to Christian life such as nothing else can give; but unless the desire for its attainment be tempered by the knowledge which other relations of Christ

supply, nature governs it, and evil fruits—fruits of bitterness, selfishness, and pride, are found in result. Many who have made devotedness the exclusive object of their thoughts, have shown little ability, or else little disposition, to regard either excellencies or blemishes in character. They misjudge both others and themselves. “What,” say they, “are a few blemishes in one who has made personal sacrifices and dared hardships and dangers from which others have shrunk back dismayed—what the value of a few quiet, minute, and almost hidden graces, compared with deeds of self-denial that might adorn even an apostle?” Self-denial and suffering become, in the eyes of such, the only bright jewels in the crown of service. Suffering is extolled; but whether truth be the object suffered for is a question unasked and unheeded. It is thus that the toils and sufferings of Xavier have, to many minds, thrown a halo around the wickedness of Jesuitism itself. It is thus that the workings of falsehood and evil, even in real Christians, have been overlooked, and virtually sanctified. It is true, indeed, that that which blinds the world

may only dazzle the eye of a Christian; but a dazzled eye is unfit for right practical discrimination. It can neither extend its view to that which is afar off, nor examine that which is nigh. It is not to be wondered at, that such, though they may speak great things respecting the Burnt-offering, should virtually pass over the Meat-offering unheeded, and fail to distinguish salt from honey; frankincense from leaven.

And again, if any, more experienced than themselves in the evil of the human heart, has found a rest greater than they have ever realized, in the knowledge of the Peace-sacrifice, the desire to speak of that peace and to dwell in that peace, even when combined with true devotedness of heart, is often despised by those whose thoughts respecting devotedness are more like highly-wrought pictures than realities learned in the school of well-disciplined experience. Ripened knowledge and maturity of grace are, by such persons, little appreciated. The undisciplined fervor of youthful energy is valued far more than the wisdom of the hoary head, even when that head has grown hoary in the path of faithful-

ness and truth. And if such succeed in influencing or guiding the sheep of Christ, they are far more ready to be ever hurrying them, and that by harassing paths over stony places, than to give them, from time to time, their proper rest by still waters and green pastures. They forget that the Good Shepherd "maketh his flock to rest at noon," and "carrieth the lambs in his bosom," and "feedeth that which standeth still."

Yet there may be error on the other side also. Some, attaching exclusive importance to certain displays of character, have undervalued devotedness. If certain features of character are possessed—especially such as belong chiefly to the circle of natural duties—the desirable point of Christian progress is supposed to be attained; although the interests of truth, and the sorrows of those who suffer with it, and the path which is marked with the characteristics of Nazareth, are unthought of, or else eschewed. Or again, the enjoyment of the peace of redemption is sometimes made the one exclusive object of desire. If that be maintained—if the soul, as gathered under the shelter of the Peace-sacrifice, be able

to say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his," it is satisfied; whilst all energy of service, and every stimulating principle that is supposed to disturb or to interfere with this rest, is suspected. The true rest of faith is never interfered with by energy, nor by earnest inquiry after truth, nor by going without the gate bearing the reproach of Christ. We read in the Canticles of one who had been brought into the city and was slumbering in its palaces, "her hands dropping with myrrh, and her fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh," whilst her Lord was without, "his head filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night." What a contrast of condition! How diverse the circumstances of the bride of Christ, and those of her Lord! Her conscience recognized the dissimilarity; she tried to comfort herself in the thought that her *heart* was awake, even though *she* had laid down to sleep. Vain comfort! for why should there be this opposition between the practical position and the inward condition of the heart? Yet how often is this diversity found! How prone our hearts to lay aside their soldiership and to sink into

listlessness or slumber, forgetting that the true rest of faith is most found when the realities of the conflict of this "evil day" are most realized. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." We stand as in the midst of a land which teems with the strongholds of an active and skillful foe. What secular system, what ecclesiastical system is there, influential over the hearts of unregenerate men, in which faith does not recognize the presence and power not of human evil merely, but of Satan? What need, then, of the armor of God! What need of activity and vigor! It is true, indeed, that the great Captain of our salvation is able to grant, and does grant to his people, rest. Israel, from time to time, rested in the wilderness; but they rested in places which God chose; and when he chooses them, the places of rest are always found in the onward path of victory and triumph, where the foe may be successfully resisted, if not overcome. Whilst waiting on the guidance of his hand, we shall not misuse our

seasons of repose; we shall not so rest at the Peace-sacrifice table, as to forget the service of the Burnt-offering altar.

Thoughts like these—for these observations are merely intended as suggestive—may be much enlarged by those who desire to pursue such meditations. Yet however important the practical instructions that are connected with every lesson of the Tabernacle, we must never forget that the great primary subject of instruction there, is *grace*—that “grace in which we stand.” Well may it be said that they “stand in grace,” who are brought within the holy enclosure of the Tabernacle, there to abide under the protection and under the value of all that the One Great Offerer has supplied to the now satisfied altar.

And if it be asked what the instrument is employed by God to bring us into connection with all these wondrous and enduring blessings, the answer is, *Testimony*—the testimony that he himself gives in his word and by his ministers respecting Jesus. How wonderful the condescension and goodness of God, in that he himself

consents to become the declarer of that mercy which his grace has provided on the Cross! The gospel is called "the gospel of God," not only because God provided the sacrifice, but because he "preaches" or announces it. God "preaches peace by Jesus Christ." Acts x. 36. Hence God thus testifying concerning Jesus presents himself as the object of saving faith; and therefore believers are described as those, "who, through him—*i. e.* Jesus—*do believe on God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*" 1 Peter i. 21. And again, "It was not written for his (Abraham's) sake alone that it (righteousness) was imputed to him, but for our sakes also to whom it shall be imputed, that is to say to us *who believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,*" etc. Rom. iv. The testimony thus spoken of may be *written* in the Scripture, or it may be *orally* given by the lips of God's servants: in either case it is alike to be regarded as testimony given by God. Of the *written* testimony it is said, "These things are **WRITTEN** that ye might believe that Jesus is the

Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." Of the *preached* testimony it is said, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith that we PREACH; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. x. 8. And again: "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." 1 Cor. i. Accordingly we read of the Apostle standing before a mingled multitude and saying: "Men and brethren, through this man (*i. e.* Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and through him all who believe are justified from all things." Acts xiii. What words can be more simple? What more explicit? It is a testimony sent from God. It directs not to ritual observances; nor to observances of any kind; but simply presents God as ready to become the justifier of any who cast themselves on him, through the finished work of Jesus thus declared.

Some receive the message; and them God receives through the name of Jesus, and imputes to them righteousness without works, and makes Christ to them "righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Others, either careless as to having any rest for their souls, or else resting in some other hope, refuse the rest prepared of God in Jesus, and they continue aliens—unsprinkled by the blood of the Lamb. It is possible, indeed, that such may have "a zeal of God" that men may magnify and admire. So had Israel. "I bear them record," says the Apostle, "that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." It was not guided by truth—revealed truth. "Going about to establish their own righteousness, they refused to submit themselves to the righteousness of God"—the righteousness, that is, which he had provided in another; and therefore wrath abided on them, and they died in their sins.

Nor is the forgiveness of the gospel the forgiveness of past sin only. Such is the character of forgiveness among men—it respects the past only: but he who through faith is brought under

the grace of the gospel is not forgiven *merely*. His forgiveness is accompanied by acceptance and endowment with grace *in another*. He is "accepted in the Beloved." God is pleased to enter into covenant with every believer, and to engage never more, as regards acceptance, to behold him in his own separate individuality; but always to view him under the value of the service and sacrifice and name of Christ. In other words, the believer obtains a new relation to God in a Representative; and that relation must be measured both as to its value and as to its perpetuity, by the value and continuance of that Holy One by whom he is represented. Hence, though God retains his title to chasten and to correct, yet the believer, from the moment he believes, is judicially pronounced in the courts of God free from the wrath due to his sins, whether past, present, or to come. His standing as recognized in the courts of heaven is in Another. Another is his "Forerunner," Heb. vi.; his "First-fruits," 1 Cor. xv.; his "Priest," Heb. viii.; his "Advocate," 1 John ii.; his "Life," Col. iii. In his Representative, he is

already "seated in heavenly places," and brought into the new creation of God : in which sense, also, it is already said of believers, " old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new."

Let none, therefore, who have received the message of reconciliation in the blood of Jesus, and cast themselves on God thereby, fear to appropriate to themselves these mercies, and to take their stand boldly, as those who belong to the Tabernacle of God. The deepening darkness of these latter days requires steadfastness—it demands that we should gird on our armor, and witness a good confession, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. We may be weak ; but the faithfulness of God will not fail his people. He has loved them with a love stronger than death, that many waters shall not quench. He has brought them from Egypt, and divided for them the waters of destruction, and guided them by his strength unto his holy habitation, in a sense that Israel's deliverance merely typified. Theirs was a typical separation in the power of fleshly ordi-

nances; ours a real and effectual separation in the power of "an endless life" as seen above the heavens in Christ risen. The one was made dependent on the creature, and it failed: the other rests on him who is "God over all, blessed forever"—the Redeemer as well as the Creator of his heritage, and therefore it is effectual, and abides for evermore.

THE END.

