

THE PEACE OFFERING.

(LEV. III.)

IN the reading of the holy scriptures, to pay attention to the divisions made by the Spirit of God, as well as to the order of the subjects introduced, is in itself instructive. The various writers mark the sections by using different formulas, like the one in Leviticus, "Jehovah spake to Moses." This formula makes the first three chapters with the three offerings one section, then from chapter iv. 1 to the end of chapter vii. we get in eight sections the sin and trespass offerings and afterwards the laws relating to them all, where things are taken up rather from our side; as if by the number eight the Spirit even at that time would look forward to a day yet to come.

It is of peculiar importance to grasp this first section of the book and its three offerings set together to make a complete picture, as it were, one whole. Also to keep in mind the essential meanings of the three names, because many Hebrew terms arise from a pictorial basis, though this is often obscured by translation. For instance, the word *עלה* *olah*, translated by the two words burnt offering, is simply "that which goes up," or "is caused to ascend," by the action of the fire on the altar. So with the word *מנחה* *minchah*, a general one for a gift or present, but when used in distinction from the other offerings is translated

by two words again, meat offering, with the old English sense of something to eat other than flesh, as Luke xxiv. 41.

I propose to consider briefly the third and last of the offerings in this opening section of Leviticus—'the sacrifice of the peace offering'; first how it is presented, and secondly what it is. Again, the words peace offering is a translation of one Hebrew word שלמים (*shelamim*—peace), which is a plural form always (except Amos v. 22), giving it an abstract or general sense, and referring no doubt to its wider scope, as we shall see. In keeping with this the peace offering might be a male or female animal, while the burnt offering was strictly a male.

The peace offering comes into view first in Exodus xx. 24, when directions are given as to the kind of altar that God could recognise, and at once it is linked with the burnt offering, as throughout the Old Testament; showing how closely the two offerings are connected in the mind of God, and as having a place previous to the establishment of a priesthood. Nor had they to do directly with sins. Neither was a sin offering, but represented first acceptance and atonement for the offerer, with a sweet savour to Jehovah, and with the second the maintenance or enjoyment of the position, suggested by the word "food," more usually translated "bread." In both it was on the ground of a life, to which no sin attached, being yielded to God that it was possible to approach God or "bring an offering," which in New Testament language is to "draw near." (Heb. x. 22.) This is rightly the pictorial force of the word

commonly translated "to offer," or "to bring," and its noun "offering," because its value is "to approach" or "draw near" with no ordinary sense of nearness, but rather one of the closest and most intimate kind. To this the fullest expression is given in the word "access" of Ephesians ii. 18, for that epistle embraces the whole scope of the offerings, from the trespass and sin offerings, "through his blood, the forgiveness [remission] of sins" (chap. i. 7), then, "He is our peace" (chap. ii. 14) touching the meat and peace offerings, and further up to the peace offering and the burnt offering combined, in "hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." (Chap. v. 2.)

What then is the force of the term, peace offering? Peace offering is, I think, the happiest of the translations, conveying as nearly as can be its true significance, though again two words for one. It stands for the communion of saints, not the making of peace for the sinner. Of this word, however, most interesting is it to realise that the fundamental idea is oneness or wholeness, and so completeness, or a bringing together, and thus peace. The usage of the word also gives a conception of not merely freedom from enmity or quiet after storm, though that is an essential element, but distinctively an atmosphere of completeness and unity; a resultant condition, serene, unruffled—no shade of fear or sense of distance. Further, it is usually spoken of as "a sacrifice of peace offering"—the word "sacrifice" being nothing more than the "slaying" of an animal for the purpose of food, of which others could

partake and in that way enjoy communion. So there may be also the underlying truth that man was never intended to be alone, nor could he be complete or happy apart from God. What is individual is developed by the gospel, but at the same time isolation is repressed.

To get hold of all this we must view the first section of Leviticus in its entirety, or as a whole, because the meat offering is directly connected with both the burnt offering and the peace offering. Exodus xxix. 38-41, Numbers xv. 8, 9, and many other passages make it clear that every burnt offering was accompanied by its meat offering, and so with every peace offering. By the meat offering thus closely linking the two, this section becomes a complete picture or typical presentation of Christ and His work from God's standpoint.

For a way in righteousness to have been made into God's presence there must have been in manhood One who could answer in perfection every thought of God's mind and every pleasure of His heart, as well as a perfection within the range of man's apprehension. Therefore the meat offering is described between the two, for it sets out His perfection in life down here—the holy perfection of Him who could become the spotless Victim—not exactly His death, as there is no question of blood. The fine flour, that which is produced on earth and thus a figure of His humanity, in its even smoothness—a balanced equalisation of every moral trait expressed in the presence of opposition and the powers of evil, yet never found uneven or irregular. Upon this oil was poured and frankincense put thereon, then part, with all

the frankincense, was caused by the fire on the altar to rise as a sweet savour to Jehovah, but the remainder as "a thing most holy" was eaten by Aaron and his sons "in the holy place," as if to teach us to-day that the priestly family only could appreciate that downstooping love which was "found in fashion as a man"; while there was a fragrance from that life, "all the frankincense," which entirely went up to God. In other words, One must come forth who could meet the "flaming sword" of Genesis iii., to which the fire on the altar directly referred. It is in One intrinsically holy and sinless, and proved to be so, typified by the various forms of the meat offering; One who could, as it were, sheathe that sword in His own bosom and so quench the flame of judgment, that the way is made to the tree of life—the presence of God.

What now is the peace offering itself? Primarily it is the slaying of an animal without blemish before Jehovah, in view typically of providing food for the sustaining in life of those who were in the enjoyment of Jehovah's favour, secured in virtue of what is taught by the burnt and meat offerings. It was that also in which Jehovah could share, so He points out the portion which can be spoken of in grace as His "food." In the section of the "law" (Lev. vii. 11) which takes up our side and its bearing upon us, we learn the portion upon which we may feed. Equally with the burnt offering it is based upon the killing of a victim whose blood, as the evidence of death, is sprinkled upon the altar round about; in figure really the death of the offerer who had laid his

hand upon its head. And through death is obtained food to sustain a life figuratively beyond death in the enjoyment of the acceptance and atonement taught in the burnt offering. (Chap. i. 3, 4.)

The altar symbolised the unchanging claim of the holiness and righteousness of God, so in the laws the burnt offering comes first, as being the basis of the position between God and man, in consequence of sin having entered into the world and death as God's judgment on the sinner. Therefore the fire of that "burning upon the altar" was never to be allowed to go out; the burning in these verses 9 to 13 being an uncommon word and nowhere else used by Moses. The instructions thus give us a sense of holiness; for in the morning, having changed his garments, the priest was to carry the ashes without the camp to a clean place, fresh wood laid on the fire, then the burnt offering in order on it, and then the fat of the peace offering.

In the ascending of the burnt offering, it seems to me, God had a peculiar pleasure, for there was found on earth a perfection which could meet His searching eye and by that fire caused to ascend wholly to Himself and so become the foundation of His ways in grace—typical then, but now actually come to pass in Christ. And thus in the peace offering there was "food," first for Himself, and then, as the law shews, for the offerers. Communion was established.

In the first place the burnt offering ascended to Jehovah, and of the meat offering, after Jehovah's portion was caused by the fire to rise as incense, the remainder was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons in the holy place. But the peace offering went

further, in that when Jehovah's part had been burnt there was that provided of which his sons and daughters also could partake in a clean place, indeed "every one that is clean in thy house." (Num. xviii. 11.) The rest became in a way general, as 1 Kings iii. 15, still available only through death, and that a death wherein God's claim was recognised. So we can easily see that there could be no peace offering without first the burnt offering.

Now as to the ritual of the peace offering; by the laying or resting of the hand on the animal's head there was the identification of the offerer with all the acceptability in the eye of Jehovah of the virtue of the victim; which was then killed by the offerer himself, who typically admitted that only by way of death could he be in God's presence with acceptance; the blood sprinkled on the altar meeting the claims of a holy God. Then all the fat, with the two kidneys and the caul above the liver, was to be taken away and burnt by the priest upon the burnt offering upon the wood which is upon the fire, a fire offering of a sweet savour to Jehovah. The order of the detail is to be noted—all the fat, the two kidneys and the caul.

First, "All the fat that is upon the inwards" would shew the healthy and vigorous excellence of the victim, and in type is the steadfast energy in which Christ moved to do the will of God; the inwards, in New Testament language, being the "moved with compassion" of Christ in the gospels, and the "bowels of mercies" in the saints. (Col. iii. 12.) The two kidneys, which in nature perform a purifying or separative function to maintain in good condition the blood, "the life

of all flesh" (Lev. xvii. 14), would suggest discrimination between good and evil, and thus the perfect discernment of Him of whom it is written, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness" (Psa. xlv.), iniquity or lawlessness as quoted in Hebrews i. 9. Or in us the "senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. v. 14.) Then last the caul. This may present a slight difficulty, but I do not doubt the margin gives the correct reading—the "midriff"* or diaphragm, that is, the muscle which is stretched out between and divides the upper from the lower part of the body and moves with every breath. This would speak of every pulsation of His being, as rendered Godward, and is confirmed by Psalm xxii. 10, "I was cast upon thee from the womb," as well as by the prophet's rebuke to the impious king, "The God in whose hand thy breath is . . . hast thou not glorified." (Dan. v. 23.)

These three things from the fire on the altar all rose as a sweet savour, setting forth in totality and in detail the sinless perfection of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, but surrendered in death. How truly could He say, "I do always those things that please him." (John viii. 29.) Death being God's judgment has been executed typically in the victim, actually in Christ. This, "the food of the offering made by fire," concludes the first section of Leviticus, where God speaks from His own side, and so claims all the fat and the blood.

* יִתְרֵת yoh-theh'-reth is literally the extended or stretched out thing, and one cognate form is translated "string" of a bow and one "cords" of the tabernacle.

That is, the excellency of the life exposed in death, and the life taken, were for the satisfaction of Jehovah's throne: "the blood is the life thereof." The throne of the King is established in righteousness. (Prov. xxv. 5.)

In result there is for us "the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings," giving Aaron his sons and daughters the breast which was waved and the right shoulder which was heaved before Jehovah, as if suggesting an ability in us to appreciate the inward spring of love, and also the strength in which Christ carried through His work to the very end, as He could say, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (John x. 17.) After that, of the other portions of the flesh the people generally could eat and rejoice in communion before Jehovah their God. (Deut. xxvii. 7.) This is a collective thought as distinct from individual appreciation. The eating of the legs would suggest an appropriation of the steady equality (Prov. xxvi. 7) in which Christ walked His pathway here, and there would be an answer in us, as strangers and pilgrims, to the Apostle Peter's "be ye holy in all manner of conversation," or "course of life" in modern English. And does he not tell us that He who suffered has left an example that we should follow His steps? (1 Peter ii. 21.) Also, that the type might be as exact as possible, if any of the flesh of the sacrifice remained on the third day it was to be burnt with fire. His body saw no corruption.

I think we might now consider how in the

narrative of the gospels the Spirit of God has given us an exact answer to the offerings of Leviticus i. to vii., marking at the same time the distinction of their four different points of view. The offerings testified to God's holiness and righteousness, and were "a shadow of good things to come," but could not give perfection as to the conscience, and so a distance was enforced. On the other hand the gospel, or glad tidings, based on the new covenant, shews that in the birth of Jesus Christ God in grace has reached man "where he was" by bringing in the promised One who could take up and deal with the whole question of sin and distance; One who could triumphantly meet Satan and bind the strong man, and at the end, after bearing on the cross all God's judgment, pass into the penalty of death itself, and so quench that fire for the believer. By His resurrection a new world—a new creation—has been established in which no sense of distance can exist.

Therefore, because in the gospels things are taken up from our side, the order is reversed to that of the offerings in Leviticus. As we have seen in another paper, Matthew and Mark go together in answer to the trespass and sin offerings,* while Luke and John go together in answer to this first

* To page 16 of that paper might be added—the "Take, eat" of Matthew xxvi. 26 refers to the eating by the priest of the trespass offering, but the "eat" of Mark xiv. 22 is omitted by the best authorities, and very probably correctly so, because the supreme sin offering was not to be eaten. (Lev. xvi. 27; vi. 30.) Also in 1 Corinthians xi. 24 the "Take, eat" should be left out

section—Luke to the meat and peace offerings and John to the burnt offering. Luke opens with the detail of the birth of Christ, “that holy thing which shall be born of thee,” answering to “mingled with oil” of the meat offering, the descent of the Spirit at His baptism to “anointed with oil,” and then he speaks of the path of the dependent Man constantly found in prayer as He had to meet varied kinds of opposition from within the circle as in chapter iv. 16, or from without, as chapter vi. 7, from the Pharisees and doctors of the law (chap. v. 17), or the political element in Herod (chap. xiii. 31), and finally by the full onslaught of evil in man and the power of darkness (chap. xxii. 53), but the testings only proved the even smoothness of the fine flour—the spirit in which He pursued His Father’s business.

His gospel is marked also by the thought of peace, mentioned fourteen times (double perfection or completeness), starting with “the way of peace” (chap. i. 79), the proclamation, “on earth peace” (chap. ii. 14) and “the son of peace” (chap. x. 6), that is, one characterised by peace; but as being rejected here peace is transferred to heaven (chap. xix. 38) and the Lord institutes the supper, or the communion feast for a calling of Himself to mind during His present absence.* And further in Luke’s grouping of things before He is carried

in keeping with Luke xxii. 19, where strictly speaking we get the institution of the “Lord’s supper.”

* In Luke too He is ever in communion; Psalm xxii. is not quoted upon the cross, but twice the Father is addressed. That is given by Luke only.

up into heaven, how wonderful it must have been to those two pious Jews on their way to Emmaus in sorrow of heart, to hear that "Stranger," even Jehovah Himself, albeit unknown, begin at Moses to expound His own thoughts of the peace offering in its real and deep meaning! What a spiritual repast for their souls! and then confirmed by His blessing the bread and giving it to them. No wonder their eyes were opened and they moved at once to find the company of His disciples; and then later in the evening Himself to take His place in the midst of them and shew His hands and His feet, the evidences of His pathway, "who went about doing good," proving the reality of His manhood by eating of the broiled fish and the honeycomb they provided. Fish represents God's way in sovereignty; the broiled fish would speak of an accomplishment of His ways, and the honeycomb of sweetness with unity.

After such an experience and such an eating of the peace offering we may be quite sure they never went back to the material order of the old covenant, but realised what was foreshadowed when Solomon, after the establishment of his kingdom and the house of Jehovah had been built, made a great feast with burnt offerings, meat offerings and peace offerings, and on the eighth day sent the people to their tents joyful and glad of heart. (1 Kings viii. 64-66.) Indeed, the name Solomon means "having the quality of peace," or "peaceable." With these considerations we can understand how linked together the three offerings are, and that there could be no peace offering without first a burnt offering and its meat offering.

In his letter to the saints at Ephesus, the Apostle Paul gives the substance of the new covenant to these shadows of the old, when he speaks of our acceptance in the Beloved (chap. i. 6), foreshadowed by the burnt offering. And in chapter ii. when he speaks of peace and reconciliation, foreshadowed by the peace offering, and "one body" (ver. 16), referring to the meat offering.

But John's gospel, which distinctively answers to the burnt offering, appears to me to be at the same time the complement to the three offerings as presented from God's side in the first section of Leviticus. Therefore John opens with the Lamb of God, a reference to the continual burnt offering of Exodus xxix. and the lamb of Isaiah liii. 7* ; then He is presented as the living bread and the corn of wheat, both referring to the meat offering in its different forms, and in result the Lord twice pronounces "Peace." First, He does so when in resurrection life and power He comes into the midst with the Old Testament salutation translated sometimes "All is well" (Heb. "peace," in margin), and a second time after shewing His hands and His side, manifesting Himself to them in disclosing what He had done and the spring of His activity, love, saying, "Peace," in the fullest sense of the peace offering ; sin and distance removed — unruffled serenity in nearness and communion. Then in marvellous grace He identifies them with Himself, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." How living is the char-

* "The Lamb" of the Revelation is another word and refers to Jeremiah xi. 19.

acter of Christianity ! Perfect love has cast out fear, for where there is fear there is restraint, which in 1 John iv. 18 is the thought of the word rather than "torment."

While we dwell upon and enter intelligently by the Spirit into the teaching of the types, in the light of their fulfilment in Christ, may we more freely breathe the atmosphere of the "world to come, whereof we speak," and by the same Spirit live in the love of Him who has so loved us and given Himself for us.

" O love supreme and bright !
Good to the feeblest heart,
That gives us *now*, as heavenly light,
What soon shall be our part."

Ilford.

ARTHUR J. MARKS.