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Jesus the Great High Priest

by J. C. Philpot

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Chapter I.

"My meditation of him shall be sweet," was the gracious experience and expressive language of the inspired Psalmist of Israel, when he had been favored with a view by faith of the grace and glory of the Lord; (Psalm 104:34;) and since to those who believe, Jesus is "precious," "the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely one" to all whose eyes have been divinely opened to see the King in his beauty, our meditation of him will be sweet too, if we are indulged with the same discovery of his beauty and blessedness, and are led by the same blessed Spirit into a similar train of holy contemplation. The Lord, in his infinite mercy and goodness, has provided his believing people with various means of renewing their strength, refreshing their spirit, feeding their soul, comforting their heart, and instructing their understanding, as they journey through this waste, howling wilderness. These are "the wells" in the "valley of Baca," "the pools" at which the pilgrims drink when "the rain" from heaven "fills" them. (Psalm 84:6.)

Such are hearing the preached gospel, searching the Scriptures, prayer in the closet, in the family, and in the assembly of the saints, the ordinances of God's house, Christian conversation, and secret meditation upon the divine realities revealed in the word of truth. Without the spiritual and continual use of these divinely appointed channels of communication, the soul cannot be kept alive and lively in the things of God. They are as necessary to its health, its growth, its continuance in every good word and work—as food and drink, warmth and shelter, are indispensable to the sustenance of the natural body.

Now, of these means of grace, as they are frequently termed, one of the most edifying, and yet perhaps the least practiced, is that of spiritual **meditation**. The reason of this neglect of one of the choicest means of grace is evident. It is the most spiritual of them all, and, therefore, the most difficult, the most opposed to the carnal mind, and most needing the immediate power and presence of God. In hearing **preaching**, we have chiefly to listen. It does not necessarily require the direct and immediate exercise of the spiritual faculties of the new man of grace. It needs, indeed, faith, for unless that be mixed with the word, it cannot profit; (Heb. 4:2;) but it is rather passive faith than active, a faith that rather feeds upon the bread which Boaz reaches to it, than which goes forth to glean for itself in the field, a faith equally the sovereign and efficacious gift and work of God, but one which rather stays at home to divide the spoil than, like the merchants' ships, brings its food from afar.

So also with **prayer**. Though a most blessed means of grace, a living channel of communication between the exalted Head and the suffering members, yet many of us know, from painful experience, how much there may be in it of the form and how little of the power. So also with **reading the Scriptures**, Christian conversation, sitting down at the ordinance—these may be all duly and regularly attended to, and yet little life or power, faith or feeling, be in active exercise upon the Lord of life and glory.

But spiritual meditation, especially if its object be the Person and work of the blessed Lord, so needs the immediate and sustained help and power of the blessed Spirit, that it can be neither begun nor carried on without him. In spiritual meditation, the soul is not as a fish in a pool, which may alike swim or sleep without any sensible difference, but like the bird in the air, which, unless its flight be continually sustained by the exertion of its wings, at once drops to the

ground. Some, however, of the Lord's family seem almost incapable of spiritual meditation, at least to any extent. Like a bird with wounded wing, they cannot rise. A wandering mind, an inability to fix their thoughts on divine things, hinders some; powerful temptations prevent others. Darkness, unbelief, infidel suggestions, blasphemous imaginations, doubts and fears of their own interest in the Lord Jesus, hardness of heart, the strong opposition of their carnal mind to everything spiritual and holy—all these besetments work to the same end, to grievously hinder if not wholly disable many who truly fear God, from sweet meditation on those heavenly mysteries which are the food of every regenerate soul.

But may not some help be afforded to those who thus feel their inability to meditate themselves upon the precious truth of God? May not the blessed Spirit employ the thoughts of others to aid those who cannot, from various causes, exercise their own? As in the ministry of the word the preacher breaks the bread of life on which the people feed, who perhaps could not break it for themselves, so may a writer upon the things of God afford a means of meditation to those who cannot well meditate for themselves, by bringing before them his thoughts upon the mysteries of the kingdom. This we attempted to do in our "Meditations on the Sacred Humanity of the Blessed Redeemer;" and as we have reason to believe that a blessing rested on our feeble attempts to set that subject forth in these pages, we have felt led to commence, with the Lord's help and blessing, a similar series upon the office characters of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This will form, we trust, an appropriate sequel to our papers, first on the Eternal Sonship, and then on the Sacred Humanity of our blessed Lord. In the one we viewed him as the Son of God, in the other as the Son of man; now we shall have to view him in his complex Person as the great and glorious God-Man, Immanuel, God with us. Not that we should ever view him purely as the Son of God, distinct from that humanity which he was to assume, nor purely as the Son of man distinct from his eternal Sonship and Deity; but as these two natures are really distinct, it may tend to clearness of understanding, and be a help to faith to view them sometimes, as we have done, separate from each other. But in these office characters which he sustains in behalf of his Church, there is no such necessity for viewing his two natures separately; on the contrary, to do so would much mar those spiritual views of him which are so full of blessedness to a believing heart.

We have called them the "Office characters" of the Lord Jesus Christ, meaning thereby those peculiar relationships which he sustains to the church of God as Priest, King, Prophet, Head, Husband, etc. And as of these office characters, that of the Priest is the most important, and that which laid a foundation for all the rest, we shall commence the present series by giving it the first and most prominent place. It will be necessary in so doing to bring forward much doctrinal truth; but as our object is not so much to furnish our readers' heads—as to edify and profit their hearts, we shall seek to blend instruction with experience, and as the Lord may enable, so to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ in his beauty and blessedness, grace and glory, that our faith may be strengthened, our hope enlarged, and our love drawn forth, and that thus our meditation of him may be sweet.

An objection has been taken by some good men to the word "office" as applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, as if the term rather lowered the dignity of his heavenly Majesty. The Lord ever keep us from using any term that may seem derogatory to the glory and honor of Him

whose name is above every name; but if it was no degradation to him to "take upon him the form of a servant," (Phil. 2:7,) and if the Father himself said to him in prophecy, "Behold my Servant whom I uphold," (Isa. 42:1,) it cannot be degrading to him if we speak of his "offices," as understanding thereby the part which he undertook to fulfill for, and the relation which he sustains unto, the church of God. But we have chosen rather to adopt the expression, "Office characters," as embodying a fuller and wider idea than the simple term, "office," and thus more completely embracing what the Lord Jesus Christ is as the great and glorious Mediator between God and man.

The High Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ is so wide and deep a subject that we can only hope at the best to bring forth a small measure of the treasures of mercy and grace which are stored up in it. But in order to prevent losing ourselves in so wide a field, we shall, the Lord enabling, endeavor to treat the subject as clearly as we can. We shall therefore consider,

I. The Origin and Nature of Priesthood generally.

II. The Priesthood of the Lord Jesus, as completely filling up all the requisites of that office.

III. The bearing which this has on the experience of a Christian.

The ORIGIN of priesthood lay in the mind of God from all eternity, for the whole of the Levitical priesthood, from which we gather our truest ideas of the priestly office, was but a type and figure of Him to whom God said, "You are a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek," (Psalm 110:4,) and who was "a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8.) But as regards its institution, which, as regards time, we may call its origin, when these hidden purposes of God first came to light, we may assign the garden of Eden as the place wherein, and the fall of man as the epoch when the office of priesthood was instituted. It was, in fact, virtually announced in the first promise; for "the seed of the woman" pointed to the sacred humanity of Jesus, as the bruised "heel" predicted his sufferings, and as the bruised "head" of the serpent proclaimed the victory gained thereby over sin and Satan.

Sacrifices are essential to priesthood—so essential that it is an acknowledged principle that where there is no sacrifice there is no priest. Thus the Apostle argues: "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Heb. 8:3.) Sacrifices meet us immediately after the fall as the only acceptable way of worshiping God; and as independently of a divine institution, there is no necessary or natural connection between sacrifice and worship, it is evident that they must be of divine appointment. But where can we so well place their institution as after the fall in Paradise? For why did "the Lord God make coats of skins" to clothe our first parents, except to show them the necessity and nature of a covering from his wrath by the righteousness of his dear Son? And as animal food was prohibited until after the flood, why were the beasts killed but as a sacrifice? We find, therefore, Abel offering sacrifice when he brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof—the fat being that part of the sacrifice which was always burnt on the altar. And that this offering of Abel was not a mere tribute of thankfulness, but a real slaughtered sacrifice, is clear from the words of the Apostle, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than

Cain." (Heb. 11:4.) We need not stay to enumerate the sacrifices offered by Noah, (Gen. 8: 20,) by Abraham, (Gen. 15:9, 10; 22:13,) by Jacob, (Gen. 31:54; 46:1,) except as clearly establishing two facts—1, that sacrifices were still the appointed means of approaching God; and, 2, that the head of the family was, antecedently to the Levitical dispensation, the sacrificing priest.

The NATURE of these sacrifices we shall not now dwell upon, at least at any length, as we shall have occasion to consider them more fully when we approach that part of our subject in which we shall hope to show how the blessed Lord fulfilled them all by the sacrifice and offering of himself. Still we may drop a few words of explanation upon the difference between what were sacrifices in the true sense of the term, and, what were more strictly offerings. This difference is expressed by the Apostle in the words—"Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices." (Heb. 8:3.) He here draws a distinction between what are called the unbloody offerings, such as those of corn, oil, meats, and drinks, which he terms "gifts"—and the true "sacrifices," in which the victim was killed, and its blood shed at the foot of the altar. Taking, then, a general view of both the sacrifices and offerings which were made by the high priest, we may divide them into three distinct kinds, according to the places where they were each offered—

1. Those of the court, or the brazen altar, by blood and fire.
2. Those of the sanctuary, at the altar of incense and table of show-bread.
3. Those of the most holy place, before the ark of the covenant within the veil.

The first, being truly and properly sacrifices wherein blood was shed and the victim wholly or partially burnt by fire, represented the death of Christ and his sacrifice on the cross; the second, being the burning of incense on the golden altar morning and evening, and the offering of the show-bread weekly upon the table, figured his present intercession in heaven; and the third, or the carrying in of the blood of the bullock and the goat, and the incense beaten small, into the most holy place, represented the effect of both in atonement and reconciliation, and those divine transactions which are still now being carried on by our exalted High Priest, as our advocate with the Father in the courts of bliss.

It is, however, with the sacrifices offered upon the brazen altar that we have at present chiefly to do, and these may be divided into six kinds, as enumerated Lev. 7:37—1. Burnt offerings; 2. Meat offerings; 3. Sin offerings; 4. Trespass offerings; 5. Consecrations; 6. Peace offerings. These were distinguished by two circumstances from all the other offerings—1, in that they were all "fire offerings," being wholly or partially burnt; and, were, 2, "most holy." They were thus distinguished from the "heave offerings" and "wave offerings," which were not burnt with fire, and were not "most holy," but, as the term may be rendered, were called "holy praises," being, for the most part, voluntary thank offerings. The substance of these sacrifices was of two sorts—1. Beasts; 2. Fowls or birds. Of beasts there were three sorts offered in sacrifice—one of the herds, that is, bullocks, and two of the flocks, that is, sheep and goats. Of birds were used two sorts—1, turtle-doves; 2, pigeons; and 3, in one case, that of cleansing the leper, (Lev. 14:4) sparrows. In all these sacrificial victims there were two necessary requisites—1, that they should be males, except in the sin and trespass offering; and 2, should be without blemish, figuring

thereby the ability and the spotlessness of the Lord Jesus, both as the Priest and as the Victim.

These minute details may appear to some of our readers uninteresting and almost unnecessary, and indeed would be so were it not for their reference to the blessed Lord, and the food which they afford to a living faith, as seeing in them all a representation of the sacrifice and blood-shedding of the Son of God. To a believing heart nothing can be unnecessary, nothing uninteresting which points to him, and which tends in any way to shed a sacred light on the Person, work, sacrifice, and sufferings of our great High Priest. By these rites and sacrifices he was represented to the faith of the Old Testament church; and since the substance being come, these shadows have now no place in our worship, yet can a living faith look back to them and see them illuminated by a divine glory, as testifying of Jesus, and of salvation by his blood and righteousness.

The Priesthood of the Lord Jesus. But having thus cast a glance at these "shadows of good things to come," we may now pass on to consider the Lord Jesus Christ under that blessed character which, as we said before, lies at the foundation of all his other covenant relationships, and shall therefore proceed to view him as the great High Priest over the house of God.

Several important considerations here at once meet our view, as,

i. What is the true nature of priesthood, what is its foundation, and whence did it take its rise and origin?

1. The essential office of a priest is to offer sacrifice. But sacrifice implies three things—1, the just desert of a sinner—death; 2, the substitution of a victim in his place; 3, the acceptance of the substitute by the offended Judge. There is no natural or necessary connection between sacrifice and forgiveness. To take an innocent lamb, cut its throat, sprinkle its blood, and burn its fat on an altar, as an act of divine worship, would rather, of itself, aggravate sin than atone for it, unless this mode of worship had been instituted by God himself, with an immediate and special reference to an atonement of his own providing. "It is not possible that the blood of bullocks and of goats should take away sins;" (Heb. 10:4;) and thus sacrifice has neither validity nor significance apart from the offering up of the Son of God as an atoning sacrifice for sin.

But a sacrifice requires a priest. We see this most clearly in the Levitical law, for in that no sacrifice was allowed to be offered but by a priest of the family of Aaron. It is true that the offerer might bring the victim to the altar and kill it, though this was usually done by the Levites, (2 Chron. 30:16, 17; 35:11,) yet none but the priest could offer the sacrifice, by taking the blood and sprinkling it round about then altar. (Lev. 1:1-5.)

But priest, as well as sacrifice, must be of divine appointment. This the Apostle expressly lays down—"And no man takes this honor unto himself, but he who is called of God, as was Aaron." (Heb. 5:4.) Moses, though "the man of God," unto whom alone "the Lord spoke face to face," did not take upon himself the office of priesthood. God chose his brother Aaron for the priesthood, as a sovereign act of his good pleasure—and fixed the priesthood in him and his family. (Exod. 28:1.) Similarly, the Lord Jesus Christ did not choose or appoint himself to the office of High Priest, as the Apostle declares—"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a

High Priest; but he who said unto him, "You are my son; today have I begotten you." (Heb. 5:5.) We are thus at once led up to the spring-head, the original source and fountain, of our Lord's priesthood. He was appointed and constituted a high priest by the express will of the Father; for he "glorified not himself to be made a high priest;" that is, he did not take to himself that glorious office of his own mind and will, without the express designation and appointment of his heavenly Father.

But **when** was he thus solemnly and divinely appointed? Surely in eternity. Time had neither place nor name, for as then it had neither birth nor being, in the eternal counsels of heaven. It has witnessed, it daily witnesses, their development, but it was not present at their conception. But without seeking to pry with too curious an eye into those solemn transactions in a dateless eternity wherein and whereby our blessed Lord was appointed to the office, and assumed the relationship of a High Priest to the house of God, we may perhaps draw a distinction between the counsels themselves and the open declaration of them. Prior to the open declaration of the Father to the Son—prior to the word of the oath, "You are a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek," Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the eternal Three-in-One Jehovah, took solemn counsel concerning the salvation of the church. Her miserable condition, as sunk and ruined in the Adam fall, was foreseen, and a plan devised in the eternal mind to save her from her destructions. This was "the counsel of peace," (Zech. 6:13,) the "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," (2 Sam. 23:5,) in which the Father proposed, the Son accepted, and the Holy Spirit ratified that solemn compact, whereby the Son of God undertook to become the Head, Husband, Advocate, Mediator, and Redeemer of that innumerable multitude which the Father gave him to be his people, that in them he might be eternally glorified. Now, it was when this covenant had been entered into and firmly ratified and sealed by mutual compact, that the Father "spoke in vision to his Holy One—I have laid help upon One that is mighty." Then was the Son of God consecrated to the high priesthood, and all that he subsequently did and suffered in the execution of that office was but the fulfilling of what he then undertook in harmony with the will of God.

ii. But let us now see his **fitness** for that sacred office. The infinitely wise God would not have chosen him for the work unless he had been perfectly qualified to fulfill it. For what a work it was—a work in which the glory of God, the salvation of millions of sinners, the utter defeat and overthrow of Satan, and the destruction of sin, were all to be accomplished; and that through seas of suffering, agony, shame, ignominy, and temptation, to be waded through and overcome by the Son of God in the flesh! But God knew both work and workman; what was to be done and who alone could do it; what was to be suffered and who alone could endure it. He knew that it was a work suitable for his own dear Son to accomplish, and that he alone was qualified for the work and the work alone qualified for him. Thus the dear Redeemer, with holy joy in the sweet consciousness of his Father's approving smile, could look up just before he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and say, "I have finished the work which you gave me to do." (John 17:4.)

1. In looking, then, at his **qualifications** for the work, let us first take a glance at his divine Person, as co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. None but a Person can mediate. This at once overthrows the Sabellian heresy, which denies the three distinct Persons in the Godhead. A name, a relationship, an airy nothing, cannot interpose between the Person of God and his guilty creatures. That he then should be a distinct and divine Person was absolutely necessary, or how

could he mediate between God and us? And to give him power and authority to mediate he must be also a divine Person. A creature, the highest creature, the loftiest and brightest of the burning seraphim, the noblest angel, such as Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, (Luke 1:19,) had not, could not have sufficient dignity to mediate between God and man. The seraph veiled his face with his wings before the Majesty of God when his glory filled the temple. (Isa. 6:2.) Could he then mediate on equal terms with the great and glorious self-existent I AM? One was needed who, as Job speaks, as a "arbitrator," or umpire, "could lay his hand upon us both;" (Job 9:33;) that is, one who, as God, could be equal with God, and as man be equal with man, laying one hand upon God in the fullness of Deity and the other hand upon man in the identity of his humanity—near to the Father as the Son of God; near to man as the Son of man. But this wondrous arbitrator could only be found in him who "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with h God," (Phil. 2:6)—in him who "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," (John 1:1)—in him who is God's "fellow," or equal, (Zech. 13:7,) as being the Son of the Father in truth and love.

2. We say it, then, not to stir up controversy, but as a part of divine truth, that his being the true, proper, and eternal Son of God gave him an additional and most special fitness thus to mediate between God and man. Who so suitable to plead with the Father as his only-begotten Son? Who, as ever lying in his bosom, so acquainted with his mind and will? Who so fit to come forth into visible manifestation as the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his Person? Who so able to reveal in his own Person the love, the pity, the mercy, the compassion, the grace of the Father? We may add, who so able to manifest his holiness, his purity, his hatred of sin, and all those glorious perfections of the divine character which, hidden from the sons of men in the blaze of that light which no man can approach unto, were all brought to light in the Person of Immanuel? As, then, we view by faith the Person of the Son of God, we see how suitable he was to undertake and execute the office of a high priest. This intrinsic and eternal dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God is the foundation of his priesthood, as the Apostle argues in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

We have laid thus far the foundation of the Lord's priesthood in his eternal Deity and divine Sonship, and shall hope, with God's help and blessing, to pursue our subject in the next chapter.

Jesus the Great High Priest

by J. C. Philpot

Chapter II.

In resuming our Meditations on the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ, we feel our need of that anointing "which teaches of all things, and is truth, and is no lie," (1 John 2:27,) and without which, as resting upon the lips or the pen, no preaching, however eloquent or powerful, no writing, however clear, fluent, or argumentative, can be of any spiritual profit or of any abiding benefit to the Church of God. But if this "unction from the Holy One" be necessary to the gracious understanding and experimental unfolding of every part of the truth of God, so indispensable to all true light upon and life from every portion of holy writ, that without it all is darkness and death, how much more is it needed when we have to meditate upon the Person and work of the blessed Lord, and to lead up the thoughts and affections of the living family to him who is now seated on his throne of grace and glory as the great High Priest over the house of God!

The special work and office of the Holy Spirit is to testify of Jesus, (John 15:26,) to glorify him, to take of the things that are his, and to show them to the soul; (John 16:14;) and therefore without these teachings and testimonies of the Holy Spirit we have no true, no saving knowledge of him, no living faith in him, no sweet communion with him, no tender and affectionate love toward him. And are not these the marks which peculiarly distinguish the living family of God, from the dead in sin and the dead in profession? A bare knowledge of the letter of truth can communicate no such gracious affections as warm, soften, melt, and animate the soul of a child of God, under the felt power and influence of the Holy Spirit; can create no such faith as gives him manifest union with Jesus; can inspire no such hope as carries every desire of his heart within the veil; can produce no such godly sorrow for sin as makes him loathe and abhor himself in dust and ashes; can shed abroad no such love as makes him love the Lord with a pure heart fervently.

But let us not be misunderstood. The same blessed and holy Teacher who takes of the things that are Christ's and reveals them to the soul, thus raising up faith, hope, and love, and bringing into living exercise every other spiritual gift and grace, first prepares the heart to receive him in all his gracious characters and covenant relationships by deeply and powerfully convincing us of our need of him as our all in all. Is he a Priest? We need his atoning blood and his all-prevailing intercession that we may have peace with God, and that our prayers and supplications may rise up with acceptance into his ears. Is he a Prophet? We need his heavenly instruction, that we may sit at his feet and hear his word, so as to believe his promises and obey his precepts. Is he a King? We need his powerful and peaceful scepter to subdue every foe, calm every fear, subdue every lust, crucify the whole body of sin, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

But it may well be said of the present day, as recorded in the roll of ancient prophecy as indicating "the time of the end," "Many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased." Is not this true of the professing Church as well as of the profane world?—as much fulfilled in the pulpit and the pew as in the railway train, the electric telegraph, and the scientific lecture room? From book to book, from chapel to chapel, from preacher to preacher many run, and by this increase their knowledge of Gospel truth; but how few run so as to obtain that spiritual and experimental knowledge of the only true God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent which is eternal life! The

truths of the Gospel are widely spread; the Person and work of the Lord Jesus are proclaimed from many pulpits; but it is still now as true as ever it was, that "many are called but few chosen;" that "strait is the gate and narrow the way which leads unto life, and few there be that find it;" that "no man knows the Son but the Father; neither knows any man the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him;" and that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Spirit."

It is not, then, the increase of knowledge—that knowledge which "puffs up," that either makes or manifests a true believer in Jesus. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are still hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes; and however plainly they may be set forth in the word of truth, or enforced by the lips of men, it still remains true—that only trembling hearts and wounded consciences know them in their saving power. For such we write, and if any word drop from our pen which may comfort and encourage such, we shall little heed the cavils of those who are settled on their lees and are at ease in Zion.

We attempted in our last chapter to show that the intrinsic and eternal dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God is the foundation of his priesthood; and we may further add that the Person of our blessed Lord is so intimately connected with his office characters that without a gracious and experimental knowledge of his Deity and Sonship we cannot have any true or saving experience of his love and blood. We insist upon this, not in a spirit of controversy, nor with a view directly or indirectly to be over pertinaciously bringing forward a disputed doctrine, whether necessary or not for the maintenance of our point or the elucidation of truth—but from a deep and solemn conviction of its truth, and that upon it, as the only firm basis, the priestly as well as every other office of our blessed Lord rests.

Among the devices of Satan to obscure the truth of God, this is not the least or last—first to raise up opponents to it, and then, when controversy arises, with its usual attendant warmth, to try and persuade the defenders of truth to soften down their statements, to keep back their views, or even quietly drop them altogether, lest further confusion should arise among churches, or weak brethren be stumbled. Apply this to the present case.

The true, proper, and eternal Sonship of our blessed Lord lies at the very foundation of his priestly office. Because he is a Son, and only because he is God's true and proper Son, is he qualified to mediate between God and us. His true and real Sonship, therefore, is as necessary, as indispensable to his assuming that office as his Deity. The grace and glory of this present dispensation, as unfolded by Paul, (Heb. 1,) is that, whereas "Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. But now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he made the universe and everything in it. The Son reflects God's own glory, and everything about him represents God exactly. He sustains the universe by the mighty power of his command. After he died to cleanse us from the stain of sin, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God of heaven. This shows that God's Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is far greater than their names." Hebrews 1:1-4

Thus, according to the Apostle's testimony, that Jesus is and ever was the Son of God, that as such he is and ever was "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person,"

and that "by him," as his Son, and therefore before his incarnation, "he made the worlds," is the distinguishing grace and glory of this present dispensation as a covenant of mercy and peace. He could not otherwise "by himself have purged our sins," nor could he have been "made so much better than the angels," unless, as the eternal Son of the Father, he had "by inheritance,"—his lawful inheritance as his true and only-begotten Son, obtained a more excellent name,"—the name because the nature of a Son, "than they." His name, his nature, his inheritance, all, therefore, necessarily preceded his covenant engagements, and were the foundation of them all.

Nor is he the eternal Son of God because his people were chosen in him from before the foundation of the world, as if eternal love to the Church were the foundation of his Sonship, but because such is the natural and necessary mode of his divine Personality as a Person in the ever blessed Trinity.

But having thus far seen his blessed fitness for the office of Priest as the true and proper Son of God, we may now direct our thoughts to a consideration of the office character which he thus assumed. In attempting to do this, it will perhaps be desirable to obtain a clear view of the nature of that office. A priest implies a sacrifice, and a sacrifice implies three parties—1, a guilty transgressor, for whom the sacrifice is offered; 2, a holy God, to whom the atonement is made; 3, a priest, who shall stand as a mediator between God and the sinner, and who shall offer the sacrifice required.

We see all this strikingly shown when the children of Israel sinned in murmuring against the Lord for his destroying Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The children of Israel were the guilty transgressors; the Lord God of Israel was he against whom they had sinned; Aaron, offering incense and making an atonement for the people, was the priest, the typical Mediator. As such he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. (Num. 16:48.) Thus we, as we know by painful experience, are guilty sinners before God; he, in all the perfections of his justice, purity, and holiness, his wrath against sin, and his inflexible determination by no means to clear the guilty, is our most just and righteous Judge; our adorable Lord, the Son of God in our nature, Immanuel, God with us, is the Mediator, the only Mediator between God and us; and he, as our High Priest, has offered a sacrifice, even himself, as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

We should, however, carefully observe that there is no necessary or natural connection between sin and sacrifice, or that God is at all bound by his moral perfections to pardon sin. It is wholly owing to the all-wise and all-gracious will of God that any pardon should be extended to any sinner, that any grace should be shown to him, or that any way should have been devised and executed to open a way of escape from the wrath justly due to his transgressions. It pleased God, in the depths of his infinite wisdom and mercy, that a way of salvation should be provided for the lost; but as justice must be amply satisfied, as the righteous law of God could not be violated with impunity, as his infinite purity and holiness could not be tarnished by passing by iniquity as if it were a slight thing for man to deface the image of God, and, by listening to Satan, to defy the authority of his Maker, this could only be accomplished through a sacrifice of God's own providing, which was no less than that of his dear Son, that "he should be made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

But here let us for a moment pause to apply these thoughts to our own consciences, and

to examine our spiritual and experimental acquaintance with them; for however clearly we may seem to see, or however boldly acknowledge these as important truths, however they may form a part of the creed for which we contend, yet what is all this short of their experimental power? And how deeply do we need that they should not only be at first made known to us by divine manifestation, but that they should be kept warm, fresh, and alive in our bosom as every-day realities for our faith, hope, and love to be actively engaged upon as the very life of our soul. We therefore need on all these points the special teaching and testimony of the Holy Spirit, not only to lead us feelingly and experimentally into them under the first convictions of sin and the early suings for mercy, but to seal them daily upon our consciences as living realities, so as to live continually under their power and influence.

The great mark of divine life in the soul is, that it makes itself manifest by its internal movements, and that all these movements, whether up or down, in or out, all really tend upward to the Fountain of life, who said, "Because I live, you shall live also." "I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." If I have no daily sight or sense of sin, no deep and abiding conviction of **my state** by nature before God as a most miserable transgressor, a guilty criminal of no common dye, I shall certainly neither know nor care to know anything experimentally and savingly of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But, again, if I have no spiritual view of that just, holy, and righteous **God** with whom I have to do, who in himself is "a consuming fire," and whose indignation as such burns to the lowest hell, what sense can I have of needing a sacrifice for my sins, and that that sacrifice should have been consummated by nothing less than the blood shedding, sufferings, and death of his co-equal, coeternal Son?

And further, unless I have some spiritual knowledge of and faith in the only-begotten **Son** of God—what can I know of his having shed his precious blood to redeem my soul from the lowest hell? Or again, whatever may be my views and feelings upon these points, how can I spiritually apprehend them, or live from day to day upon them, except the blessed Spirit be continually opening them up and applying them to my heart? But we are rather anticipating our proposed intention of showing the peculiar bearing which the priesthood of the Lord Jesus has upon the experience of the saint of God, and shall therefore pursue no further this train of thought.

Our present object is rather first to establish its truth on a firm, scriptural basis, and open up its nature and character, its end and object, before we enter upon the experience of its benefits and blessings as made known by a divine power to the soul.

Having, then, seen that the original and eternal dignity of the Son of God, as a Person in the glorious Trinity, is essential to his Priesthood, and that his being God the Son fitted him in a manner, full beyond all conception of ineffable grace and glory, to sustain that office, we may now look at what was further necessary that he might execute it according to the will of God, and in perfect harmony with "the counsel of peace which was between them both." (Heb. 10:9; Zech. 6:13.)

One main object of our blessed Lord's assuming, according to the will of his heavenly

Father, the office of a Priest was that he might "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26.) To offer sacrifice, we know, was one chief part of the priestly office, for priesthood and sacrifice are so indissolubly connected that it is a received axiom, that where there is no priest there is no sacrifice, and where there is no sacrifice there is no priest. Sin could not be put away without a sacrifice, and this sacrifice must be no less than the obedience, blood shedding, sufferings, and death of the Son of God, wherein and whereby he offered up himself as an atoning sacrifice to put away the wrath of God; for "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." (Heb. 10:4.)

Sin being such an abominable thing in the sight of God, such a violation of his word and will, such a daring rebellion against his majesty and glory, such a casting aside of his righteous government and authority, rendering the sinner so polluted and unclean, so filling him with a teeming mass of ungodliness, and so making body and soul a very temple of Satan—it could not be forgiven and put away without a sacrifice in some way commensurate to its flagrant and hideous enormity.

That sin should be visibly and effectually punished, the righteous character of God be fully and openly cleared, the claims of his holy law be thoroughly satisfied, his truth and justice be amply vindicated, his wrath be wholly appeased, and yet that his mercy and love might be displayed in all their gracious and eternal fullness in the complete salvation of an innumerable company of chosen sinners—this was the grand mystery of infinite wisdom, infinite love, and infinite power, to be accomplished and revealed in the Person and work of the Son of God, as "giving himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." (Eph. 5:2.)

But this sacrifice of himself he could not offer unless he took a body capable of doing and suffering the whole will of God. Deity, as pure Deity, can neither obey nor suffer. The Son of God, as the true and proper Son of God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, could neither obey, nor bleed, nor die. And yet without obedience, the law cannot be fulfilled; without blood, sin cannot be remitted; without death, the sacrifice cannot be completed. Yet must it be obedience without failure, blood without blemish, and death without desert. A Lamb, therefore, was needed "without blemish and without spot;" (1 Pet. 1:19;) a Lamb "slain," in the purposes of God, "from the foundation of the world;" (Rev. 13:8;) and that Lamb one which God had "provided for himself," as Abraham prophetically assured Isaac he would do. (Gen. 22:8.)

Here, then, we see, in some measure, the beauty and blessedness, the grace and glory of that pure and sacred humanity which the Son of God took in the womb of the Virgin Mary, under the overshadowing power and operations of the Holy Spirit, and whereby he became "Immanuel, God with us." This was "the body" which his heavenly Father "prepared" for him, and which was "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth," (Psalm 139:15,) when at one and the same instant the divine Person of the Son of God took a pure and perfect human body and a pure and perfect human soul in the womb of the Virgin. Then could he say, "Lo, I come to do your will, O God. Sacrifice and offering (that is, such as are offered by the law) you would not, but a body have you prepared me. (Heb. 10:5.)

But the question may now arise, When did our gracious Lord more particularly enter

upon the discharge of his priestly office? Was he a priest from the moment of his assumption of the body prepared for him, or did he enter upon his priestly office at any subsequent period? To answer this question we must draw a distinction between his virtual—and his actual taking up of his covenant offices. The Lord Jesus Christ was invested with all his offices from the moment of his conception and birth. He became, therefore, virtually the Priest, Prophet, and King of his Church and people when his human nature, as "the holy thing," was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, for he received all his offices, at one and the same moment by the unction of the Holy Spirit communicated to him in all its fullness. He was therefore "born Christ the Lord," (Luke 2:11,) and was consequently Prophet, Priest, and King at his birth; for as under the law prophets, (1 Kings 19:16,) kings, (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13,) and priests, (Exod. 29:7,) were consecrated to their office by being anointed with oil—so our blessed Lord, when anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, in the womb of the Virgin, received in that unction of the Holy Spirit all those graces, gifts, and abilities, and all that right and authority which qualified and entitled him to the discharge of all his covenant offices. And yet there was a space between his virtual and his actual entering upon his offices as regards their discharge.

We believe, then, that though he assumed the body prepared for him at the moment of his incarnation, and thus virtually took upon him the office of priesthood under the unction of the Holy Spirit, yet that strictly speaking he did not then actually enter upon his priestly office. There were, so to speak, degrees in his assumption of it. 1. There was first his taking up of it with his other offices at his incarnation. 2. There was, secondly, his visible and declarative anointing at his baptism, when the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove and filled him with all his graces and gifts. 3. And there was, thirdly, his especial dedication and consecration of himself to his work of suffering and dying when he said, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself;" (John 17:19;) that is, I dedicate and consecrate myself as a sacrificer and as a sacrifice.

Thus we may place the time when the Lord Jesus Christ more especially entered upon the execution of his priestly office in that intercessory prayer which he offered up John 17. It is true that he assumed it initially when he became the Lamb of God that bore the sins of the world; but as he did not enter upon his prophetic office until after his baptism, nor upon his kingly office until after his resurrection, so he did not enter upon his priestly office, that is, fully—until just prior to his crucifixion.

But as the distinction may not be immediately seen by all our readers, let us explain the difference between entering upon an office initially and completely. When he was yet a child of twelve years old, Jesus was found by his parents "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." (Luke 2:46.) There Jesus was entering initially into his prophetic office, though he did not really and fully enter upon it until he returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee after his temptation in the wilderness, and "taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all." So when he cast out devils, fed hungry multitudes, bade stormy winds and waves cease and be still, he was executing initially his kingly office. Yes, even when he stood before Pilate, and answering his question, "Are you a king, then?" replied, according to the Jewish mode of affirmation, "You say (that is, 'You say truly') that I am a king," he claimed then and there, even in the hour of his lowest humiliation, his regal dignity. Pilate, therefore, wrote a title which he put upon the cross, and which he would not alter for all the loud clamor of the chief priests, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." And yet he did not fully assume the

kingly office until after his resurrection, when he said to his disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Thus we see that entering upon an office initially differs from, and yet is perfectly consistent with, taking it fully and completely. So, therefore, in the priestly office, which our Lord assumed according to the will of God, he entered upon it initially before he fully and completely entered upon its discharge. He was, in a sense, bearing sin from the moment of his conception. His life was a life of suffering; he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and he was always perfectly obeying the law in thought, word, and action, and thus working out a robe of righteousness for the justification of his people. But this was not precisely the same thing as offering himself a sacrifice for sin on the cross.

We may illustrate this by the type of the paschal lamb; the lamb was to be taken on the tenth day of the month Abib, and kept up until the fourteenth day. When then it was taken out of the fold and kept apart by itself for four days, it was initially a victim, but it was not killed until the evening of the fourteenth day. So our Lord from his first separation unto the office was a Priest, and from his incarnation was a Lamb without blemish, but as a Priest he did not offer the sacrifice until the blood of his pure humanity was shed on the cross. But he more especially consecrated and dedicated himself as the Priest, when, as if anticipating that part of his priestly office which he now carries on in the courts of heaven, he offered up the intercessory prayer recorded in John 17.

With the Lord's help and blessing, we shall attempt to show in our next paper the nature of this sacrifice, and that indeed it was an atoning sacrifice for sin.

Jesus the Great High Priest

by J. C. Philpot

Chapter III.

"How can a man be just before God?" (Job 9:2) always has been, ever must be, a matter of deep and anxious inquiry when the mind is once enlightened to see, and the conscience awakened to feel the awful state of condemnation into which we are sunk by sin—before Him who, in his eternal purity, spotless holiness, and inflexible justice, is indeed "a consuming fire." But if even from natural convictions, the conscience, as if necessarily and distinctively, trembles under a sight and sense of sin before the great and glorious Majesty of heaven, how much more keenly and deeply must it feel these pangs of guilt and shame when the Holy Spirit, by his quickening operations on the heart, "judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet;" when "the hail" of God's manifested anger against all transgression "sweeps away the refuge of lies" in which self-righteousness has vainly endeavored to intrench itself, and the rising "waters" of his felt displeasure "overflow the hiding-place" of good works and good resolutions in which the convinced sinner has sought a temporary but most unavailing shelter!

"What shall I do to appease the wrath of God, to satisfy his justice, to fulfill the demands of his righteous law, to conciliate his favor, to escape hell, and win heaven?"—however in minuter features the beginnings of a work of grace may vary, such solemn searchings of heart, such eager and anxious inquiries from the lips must always attend the first operations of the Spirit of God upon the conscience. For where does grace always find us? In sin—if not in open yet in secret transgression. If a condemning law does not arrest us as plainly and manifestly guilty of vile, flagrant acts of iniquity, yet it comes upon us in its accusing sentence as "walking in the vanity of our mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us, because of the blindness of our heart." Being, then, convinced of sin by the quickening operations of the Holy Spirit, the alarmed sinner looks out to find some way of escape from the wrath to come, some refuge wherein his guilty soul may find safety and shelter.

Now to such a poor self-condemned wretch, to such a guilty criminal, the atoning blood and justifying obedience of the Son of God, as revealed to his heart by the Holy Spirit, becomes the only refuge of his weary soul, the only way of salvation from the wrath to come, the only door of hope opened to him in the valley of Achor. To him, therefore, as faith hears and receives the joyful sound, it is glad tidings, good news, that the Lord Jesus "now once in the end of the world has appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26.) The convincing operations of the Holy Spirit on his conscience have been those "preparations of the heart" which "are of the Lord;" and which, by breaking it up, give it that "deepness of earth," (Matt. 13:5,) without which there is no proper seed-bed for the word of life to germinate in and grow; for until the fallow ground of the heart be broken up by the ploughshare of the law, it is but a sowing among thorns to receive the mere doctrine of the atonement into the judgment. There being no living faith in a heart destitute of grace, there can be no spiritual view of the blood of the cross; no sight of the groaning, agonizing Son of God; no secret, sacred entrance into his sorrows, no holy fellowship of his sufferings, no inward conformity to his death. But where the Holy Spirit has convinced the soul of sin, and thus prepared the heart for the reception of atoning blood and dying love, he sooner or later reveals the Son of God as the Mediator—the only Mediator, between God and men, and especially in his character of "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8.)

As this train of thought at once leads us to the subject of the sacrifice offered upon the cross by the suffering Son of God, and as we proposed to show, with the Lord's help and blessing, the nature of that sacrifice, and that it indeed was an atoning sacrifice for sin, we shall here resume the thread of our Meditations upon the blessed Lord as the great High Priest over the house of God.

Our readers will doubtless recollect that we have sought carefully to distinguish between the past and the present work of our great High Priest. Before "he gave up the spirit," and thus laid down his previous life as the last and crowning act of his suffering obedience, our gracious Lord cried out with a loud voice, "It is finished." (Matt. 27:50; John 19:30.) The sacrifice, therefore, according to his own testimony, was complete in and by the death of the sacred Victim. As the high priest could not enter within the veil on the solemn day of atonement until he could carry in the blood of the slain bullock, so his Antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, could not enter into the courts above until he had first bled and died below.

To constitute an efficient sacrifice several things were required:

1. The whole must be according to the Sovereign will of God. The victim must be of his choice, and the whole arrangement at his supreme disposal. This we see most clearly intimated in the minute directions given as to the Levitical sacrifices to which we shall have occasion presently more fully to refer.

2. The blood of the victim must be shed, for "the blood is the life;" (Gen. 9:4;) "it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul;" (Lev. 17:11;) and "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.)

3. The victim must die. As death was the original penalty for disobedience, ("In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die," Gen. 2:17,) so the sacrifice cannot be complete without the death of the victim. Thus Jesus "became obedient unto death," (Phil. 2:8,) "poured out his soul unto death," (Isa. 53:12,) and gave his life for the sheep. (John 10:11.)

4. The victim must also be without spot or blemish, in most cases be a male, and in one—the paschal lamb, a male of the first year. (Exod. 12:5.) The stronger sex typified strength, the ripe age maturity, and the freedom from blemish spotless purity; all which three marks blessedly met in the Christ of God; for as strong, he bore our sins in his own body on the tree; as mature, he was made perfect through suffering; and as a Lamb without blemish and without spot, he was the Holy One of Israel.

We have already alluded to the sacrifices offered under the law, and intimated that we would have occasion to consider them more fully when we approached the present part of our subject. This, therefore, we shall now, with the Lord's help and blessing, attempt to do, as hoping thereby to throw some light upon the only true Sacrifice which Jesus offered upon the cross of Calvary.

It is to the early chapters of the book of Leviticus that we must chiefly turn to examine

the sacrifices which were appointed by God as types and representatives of this great, this all-atoning Sacrifice.

1. The first sacrifice which there meets our view is "the Burnt offering," the nature and emblematic intention of which we shall now therefore consider. "The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting. He said, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When any of you brings an offering to the Lord, bring as your offering an animal from either the herd or the flock. ' If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to offer a male without defect. He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that it will be acceptable to the Lord.'" (Lev. 1:1-3.) Our space will not admit of our bestowing upon this remarkable sacrifice all the attention that its importance demands; it must suffice, therefore, to furnish our readers with some hints for their own profitable meditation.

The "burnt offering" was one of the earliest modes of sacrifice. The first recorded instance of its firing offered was by Noah, after the flood:* "And Noah built an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." (Gen. 8:20.) This was doubtless typical of the sacrifice offered up on the cross by the Lord Jesus, for we read that "the Lord smelt a sweet savor;" (or "savor of rest," margin;) for did not Christ give himself "for us an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savor?" (Eph. 5:2;) and does not the Father "rest" with ineffable complacency and delight upon the sacrifice thus offered to offended Justice by his only-begotten Son?

*We do not instance Abel's offering, of whom it is recorded that "he brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof," (Gen. 3:4,) as the express mention of "the fat" seems to indicate that the fat only, and not the whole victim was burnt on the altar.

The next instance, we believe, of this mode of sacrifice is when God commanded Abraham to take his son, his only son Isaac, whom he loved, and offer him for a burnt offering upon Mount Moriah; (Gen. 22:2;) and though the sacrifice of Isaac himself was arrested by the voice of the Lord out of heaven, yet Abraham offered up the ram caught in a thicket by his horns—(type of Jesus, caught, as it were, in the thicket of our sins,) as a burnt offering in the stead of his son. Other instances previously to the giving of the law, are those in Job, (1:5; 42:8,) and of Jethro, (Exod. 18:12,) but as they convey no peculiar instruction, we need not here dwell upon them.

It is sufficiently evident from the two instances of Noah and Abraham that the rite of burnt offering existed, and no doubt by God's own appointment, before the setting up of the tabernacle in the wilderness. The ceremonial law then instituted only gave it a peculiar and additional sanction, put it, as it were, on a fresh basis, and furnished its offerer with more specific and minute directions, that the type might be more complete. Its distinctive feature was that it was wholly burnt; which was typical of two things—1, of the anger of God, as a consuming fire, wholly burning up the victim, as it will burn body and soul in hell; 2, as we shall presently more fully show, of the flames of self-sacrificing love, in which the body and soul of Jesus were as if wholly consumed in the devotedness of his heart.

1. But as we have proposed to direct our attention chiefly to the opening chapters of

Leviticus, we shall name a prior feature, that is, that it was wholly voluntary. "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will." It was not like the sin offering or the trespass offering, a sacrifice specially offered for some particular sin, wrung from him, as it were, by guilt of conscience, but it was brought willingly of the man's own accord. Now this peculiar feature of the burnt offering, which, it will be observed, well harmonizes in that point with the voluntary burnt offerings offered by Job for his sons, (Job 1:5,) points to that marked character of the sacrifice offered by our great High Priest that it was on his part wholly a voluntary act—"Lo! I come to do your will," was the language of the Son of God in taking the body which the Father had prepared for him.

The eternal love with which the Son of God loved the Church before he gave himself for it; (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 5:25;) his covenant engagements on her behalf; (Psalm 89:19, 35, 36;) his anticipation of the time of his incarnation by his various appearances in a human form under the Old Testament, were all so many marks and indications of the holy eagerness with which he undertook the work which the Father gave him to do. As the Son of the Father in truth and love, as lying from all eternity, as his only-begotten Son, in his bosom, he knew the will of the Father, for he and the Father are one—one in essence, one in nature, one in will. (2 John 3; John 1:18; 10:30.) The will of the Father was that he should take a body which the Father, in his infinite wisdom and grace, had prepared for him, and offer it up as a sacrifice, and thus redeem and sanctify the Church with his precious blood. The whole of his suffering and obedient life was a doing of the will of God, for he could ever say, "I do always those things that please him;" (John 8:29;) but, as we have already pointed out, it was more particularly when he sanctified or consecrated himself as the High Priest in his intercessory prayer, (John 17:19,) that he did the will of God by forever perfecting by one offering those who are sanctified. (Heb. 10:14.) His whole heart, therefore, panted to do that will.

Thus, on his last journey, after he had passed through Jericho, we read that he "went before" his disciples as they were in the way ascending up to Jerusalem, (Luke 19:28,) as if he would reprove their lagging footsteps, and go before them, not only to show them the way to the cross, but as himself advancing with all holy eagerness to meet it. In this spirit he said, on a previous occasion, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how and straitened ('pained,' margin) until it be accomplished." (Luke 12:50.) This baptism was the baptism of suffering and blood in which he was to be immersed when all the waves and billows of God's wrath went over him; but his holy soul was straitened, or as if drawn together with the cords of love, and "pained" with the delay, time itself moving on with pace too slow for his ardent desire to do and suffer the whole will of God.

This voluntary offering, then, of himself to be wholly offered up to God, as the burnt offering was entirely consumed, is a most blessed feature of the sacrifice consummated on the cross by "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." (Heb. 3:1 .) As "the Apostle," or messenger of God, bringing in his heart and hands a message of mercy, he came forth from the Father's bosom in self-sacrificing love. "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" (John 15:13;) "Who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) Whatever amount, therefore, of sorrow or suffering he had to endure, Jesus could still say, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book," (the book of God's eternal counsels and fixed decrees,) "it is written of me, I delight to do your will, O my God; yes, your law is in my heart." (Psalm 40:7,

8.)

Thus "he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth." (Isa. 53:7.) The whole of his obedient and suffering life was a voluntary offering up of himself to do and suffer the will of God; but it is in its last acts, as offering himself in sacrifice, that we see it especially manifested. In this spirit, as we have already pointed out, he comes up to Jerusalem, for there must he die, as he himself said, "Nevertheless I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (Luke 13:33.) In this spirit, he entered Jerusalem, in meek yet holy triumph, sitting on an donkey's colt. (John 12:15.) In this spirit, he sat down with his disciples at the paschal supper, when he said unto them, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) And in the same spirit, he freely, voluntarily laid down his life as the last act of his willing, suffering obedience, according to his own words, "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment, (that is, this enjoined part of my priestly office—for he is here speaking not of his essential, but of his mediatorial life) have I received of my Father." (John 10:17, 18.)

2. But let us now view another feature, indeed what may be considered the leading and main characteristic of the burnt sacrifice. It was to be wholly burnt. "The priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord." (Lev. 1:9.) In the other sacrifices only the fat, (that is, the internal fat,) the kidneys and the liver were burnt upon the altar, for that was "the food of the offering made by fire, for a sweet savor, and was the Lord's;" (Lev. 3:16;) but the burnt sacrifice was wholly burnt. The burnt sacrifice, therefore, represents the offering up of the pure humanity of Christ, not only in the flames of the anger of God against sin, without which it would not have been a sacrifice at all, but also in the pure and holy flames of filial love and devotedness to the Father's will.

It did not, therefore, so much represent the atonement made for sin by the sacrifice of Christ in its aspect towards man, for that was more fully typified in the sin and trespass offerings, and especially in the sacrifice of the bullock and the goat offered on the great day of atonement, as it represented the atonement in its aspect towards God. There were certain actings of ineffable love between the Father and the Son, when Jesus was doing and suffering the will of God upon earth, of which we get only faint glimpses in the word of truth; but these actings were, in a mysterious and inscrutable manner, connected with the obedience unto death of the Son of God. Thus, the Lord himself said, "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." (John 10:17.) Here we have the love of the Father connected with the obedience of the Son—a love not distinct from, not independent of, the eternal love with which the Father ever loved him as his only-begotten Son, but a love to him as the God-man Mediator, a delighting in his obedience as his own sent servant—"Behold my servant whom I uphold; my elect"—the elect Head of the church, "in whom my soul delights." (Isa. 42:1.)

The patience, the meekness, the submission, the resignation, the faith, hope, and love, the humility, the brokenness of heart, the pure and holy, unswerving, unshrinking obedience of Jesus in his sacred humanity were ineffably delighted in by his approving and accepting God and

Father. His eternal love to him as his only-begotten Son, the brightness of his glory and the express image of his Person, was thus drawn as it were, into a new stream of ineffable complacency and delight. Thus, as the eternal Father looked down from heaven upon the Son of his eternal love with ineffable delight and complacency when baptized in Jordan, as thus fulfilling all righteousness, (Matt. 3:15,) and showing forth in type and figure his future baptism of suffering and blood, and gave audible expression to that delight by a voice from heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," (Matt. 3:17,) so as Jesus hung upon the cross, consumed in the flames of his own self-sacrificing obedience and love, it was an offering of sweet savor to his heavenly Father; not that the Father took delight in the sorrows and sufferings of his co-equal, co-eternal Son, viewed in themselves, but as doing his will and thus glorifying him. How solemn are the words when Jesus consecrated himself as the High Priest, in the opening of his intercessory prayer, and what a holy and sacred light do they cast on those transactions between the Father and the Son, to which we have called our readers' attention! "Father, the hour is come; glorify your Son that your Son also may glorify you." (John 17:1.)

The burnt sacrifice, therefore, represents rather what Jesus on the cross was to his heavenly Father than what he was for and unto man. The cross of our blessed and suffering Lord has thus, as it were, two aspects, one turned towards God, the other turned towards man. "I do always those things that please him;" (John 8:29;) "Father, glorify your name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;" (John 12:28;) "Put up your sword into the sheath—the cup which my Father gives me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11.) These passages give us as it were a glance into those deep and mysterious yet blessed transactions between the Father and the Son, wherein and whereby the Son glorified the Father by becoming "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," (Phil. 2:3,) and the Father glorified the Son by first accepting his obedience on behalf of the Church, and then as a declaration of his divine Sonship, (Rom. 1:4,) and that he might be a partaker of his throne, (Rev. 3:21,) raising him from the dead, and highly exalting him to his own right hand and giving him a name which is above every name. (Phil. 2:9.) Thus the burnt sacrifice represented two things—1, the offering of Jesus for sin in the flames of divine wrath; 2, the offering of his obedient body and soul in the flames of self-sacrificing devotedness to the will of the Father.

This latter aspect of the cross is, we think, not sufficiently borne in mind by the people of God. We naturally view the sacrifice of Jesus, the atoning blood and finished work of the Son of God on the cross, more as regards our own personal, individual salvation than as it regards the honor and glory of God. But there is in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ something far deeper and higher than the mere salvation of the Church from the ruins of the fall. Though in most complete and blessed harmony with every divine perfection of Jehovah, though in it are treasured up, not only the exceeding riches of his grace, but infinite depths of manifold wisdom, (Eph. 1:7; 3:10,) yet the salvation of the Church was in the mind of God but secondary to the manifestation of his own glory. That must ever be the supreme and ultimate end of all his counsels and purposes, of all his ways and works. "Glory to God in the highest," was the first note in the angelic song, and preceded "on earth peace, good will toward men;" (Luke 2:14;) "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord;" (Num. 14:21;) "To the praise of the glory of his grace;" (Eph. 1:6;) "Of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory. Amen." (Rom. 11:36.) Thus speaks the Holy Spirit in the word of truth.

Sin broke in upon the original glory of God, as manifested in the creation of man in his own image, after his likeness. "Behold, it was very good," (Gen. 1:31,) was God's own testimony to his glory in creation. But the entrance of sin marred and defaced it in marring and defacing the image of God in man. Thus, by the entrance of sin the justice of God was outraged, his work defaced, his command trampled under foot, his holiness insulted, and Paradise, his own garden, wherein dwelt peace and happiness, purity and innocence, polluted by the poison of the serpent. When, therefore, the Son of God undertook, in the solemn counsels of eternity, by his own obedience unto death, as the suffering Surety, to vindicate the honor of his Father, to fulfill his broken law, to glorify his justice, and at the same time, and by the same way, to manifest his mercy and reveal his grace—attributes of Jehovah hitherto undiscovered to angelic minds, (1 Pet. 1:12,) the glory of God was his chief end and aim. But this could only be accomplished by the cross, for that is "the wisdom of God" as well as "the power of God;" (1 Cor. 1:24;) and by that alone, could all the glorious perfections of Jehovah, such as his justice and his mercy, his holiness and his grace, be fully harmonized. (Psalm 85:10, 11; Rom. 3:26.)

When, then, the suffering Son of God "offered himself without spot to God," in the flames of the intensest love and devotedness to the will of his heavenly Father, seeking his glory, not his own, in the moment of, and through his own deepest and lowest humiliation, even when burning in the flames of his anger against sin, and crying out under the hidings of his countenance—then it was that the eyes of the Father rested with ineffable complacency and delight on the Son of his love. What eye but the Father's could read his heart, melting in the flames of wrath like wax, and yet melted into the intensest devotedness and love? (Psalm 22:14.) Who else could mark his perfect and unswerving obedience to the Father's will in drinking the cup put into his hand to the last and lowest dregs? Whose but the Father's all-searching eye could read the zeal for his honor and glory which even then, in the flames of self-devoting love, was eating him up? (Psalm 69:9.)

As the blessed Lord hung upon the cross, what angelic, still less what human eye marked the breadths, and lengths, and depths and heights of that love which passes knowledge? (Eph. 3:18, 19.) Who could view this amazing scene of sorrow and of obedience even unto death, so as to read fully the very depths of the heart of Christ, but the all-seeing God? Where were the disciples? Fled. Where his Virgin mother? Weeping and lamenting at the foot of the cross, a sword piercing through her own soul also. (Luke 2:35; John 19:25.) Where the angels? Wondering in silent awe, as they bent down to see the solemn mystery. Where his foes? Triumphant in mockery and scorn, for their short-lived hour and of the power of darkness was come. Where was the very sun? Hiding his face, as if shocked to see his Maker die. Where the solid earth? Rocking to its very base, as if unable to bear the weight of the suffering Son of God. Where the rocks; cleaving to their center, as if they could no longer hold the bodies of the saints committed to their charge, but must let them forth to witness the death of their Lord. What eye, then, but the eye of the Father, saw the suffering Son of God in all the depths and fullness of his bleeding, dying love, in all the intensity of his self-sacrifice devotedness, and in the most resigned filial submission unto, as well as perfect execution of his sovereign will?

3. But we must now mention another distinctive feature in the burnt sacrifice, in which, doubtless, is typically couched some gracious instruction for the Church of God—"And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into its pieces." (Lev. 1:6.) The flaying of the burnt offering, or

removing the outer skin, would necessarily lay bare the inner flesh with all the muscles and joints of the body, and thus bring to view two things—1, the exquisite cleanness of the inner flesh; and, 2, the nature and strength of its moving parts; for we know how clean is the flesh in a flayed animal as the skin is stripped off, and how plain are the muscles and joints when divested of their outward covering. Thus the flaying of the burnt sacrifice seems typically to represent—1, the purity of the inner flesh of Jesus, for his sacred humanity was inwardly as well as outwardly, in soul as well as in body, "a holy thing;" (Luke 1:35;) and, 2, the purity and strength of all his motives.

Could we bear to be stripped of our skins—our external life, our outward and visible profession of godliness? Should we be found clean were all this flayed away? The secret joints and muscles of our nature, the hidden motives of many of our words and actions could not bear to have the skin of profession stripped off them; but the holy flesh of Jesus, and all the joints and muscles of his pure humanity, the secret motives of all his words and works, could bear to be looked at and into by the all-seeing eye of God, and viewed with ineffable complacency in all their purity and all their strength.

Among the sons of men, some, like Joseph and Daniel, may seem almost without spot or blemish; but what are they within? What would they be were they flayed, were all the skin of their profession thoroughly stripped off? But God desires truth in the inward parts; (Psalm 51:6;) for he, as well as his word, "is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened* unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4:13.) But the pure heart of Jesus could bear this all-seeing scrutiny. Beneath his holy external life and walk lay concealed from man the spotless purity of his holy soul, whereby he was internally as well as externally a Lamb without blemish and without spot.

* Literally, "necked," that is, the neck and throat exposed to view, as was the case with the sacrifices when they were flayed and laid upon the altar with their neck cut through and laid open.

4. The cutting of the burnt sacrifice into pieces was typical of the sufferings of Jesus in the garden and on the cross. Thus, "the sweet incense" which the high priest, on the solemn day of atonement, carried within the veil, for a similar reason, was "beaten small," (Lev. 16:12,) that it might indicate the broken heart, the bruised soul of Jesus. As, then, the cut pieces of the burnt sacrifice lay on the altar, so the bruised body and soul of the Lamb of God lay on the cross; and as, when those pieces were burnt on the brazen altar, a smoke ascended from them heavenwards, so, when Jesus gave himself for us, "an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor," (Eph. 5:2,) the smoke of his meritorious obedience and death rose up with acceptance before the face of his heavenly Father.

5. Another mark we must briefly dwell upon—"The inwards and legs" of the burnt sacrifice were to be "washed in water." Water, we know, was typical of the purifying, sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit. Our blessed Lord did not need the purifying operations of the Holy Spirit, for he was "holy, harmless, undefiled;" (Heb. 7:26;) but as his sacred humanity was formed under the overshadowing influences and operations of the Holy Spirit, so was it anointed

by him with all his gifts and graces for his mediatorial work; (Isa. 41:1-3; 42:1;) and in an especial way sanctified for his atoning sacrifice. Thus we seem to have a typical representation of the power and grace of the Holy Spirit as connected with the sacrifice of Jesus. Upon his sacred humanity the Holy Spirit rested in all the fullness of his gifts and graces. We therefore read of Jesus that he "through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God." (Heb. 9:14.) As in the burnt sacrifice the inward parts and legs were washed with water, and thus were typically sanctified, so the heart of Jesus, as well as the actions of Jesus, were as if consecrated by the unction of the Holy Spirit, and thus presented holy and acceptable to God upon the altar of the cross.

But here our limits admonish us to pause. We intended to consider in our present paper the sin offering and the trespass offering, and the sacrifice of the bullock and the goat on the great day of atonement; but these and other points tending to throw light upon the sacrifice of our great High Priest we must now defer to a future opportunity.

Jesus the Great High Priest

by J. C. Philpot

Chapter IV.

The priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ divides itself into two distinct branches, corresponding to those two mighty works of grace and love of which one was finished by him upon earth, and the other is now being carried on by him in heaven. These two distinct works were, 1, to offer sacrifice for sin; 2, to make intercession for his people. We have termed them distinct works, rather with a view to help our conceptions than with any intention really to separate them; for, in point of fact, they are most closely and intimately connected with each other and in a measure blended together, for when our blessed Lord offered himself without spot to God he made intercession by his blood, and now that he is in heaven the merits of that blood are still pleading before the throne. Thus we find the prophet connecting together the bearing of sin with intercession for sinners, in those striking words, "He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors," (Isa. 53:17,)—his intercession for transgressors being made at the time and by the very means of his bearing their sin. "Father, forgive them," was his interceding breath at the very time when he was bearing sin in his own body on the tree. (Luke 23:34.)

So, in type and figure, on the great day of atonement, the high priest took of the blood of the sin offering within the veil and sprinkled it upon and before the mercy seat, thus connecting together the sacrifice at the altar without, with the intercession in the most holy place within. When we approach that part of our subject in which we shall have to contemplate our gracious Lord as even now at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us, (Rom. 8:34,) we shall endeavor, with God's help and blessing, to enter more fully into the connection between his bearing sin on the cross and his interceding in heaven; but our chief object at present is to open up the mystery of dying love and atoning blood which was consummated in the garden and on the cross.

As the Levitical sacrifices throw much light on the one offering whereby Jesus perfected forever them that are sanctified, we have already made much use of them, and if our limits admitted should be glad to enter still more largely into their nature and spiritual interpretation; but, as our space is necessarily restricted, we think it best to confine ourselves to two offerings prescribed under the law—the burnt offering and the sin offering. These were not only the two most important sacrifices of the Levitical dispensation, and are therefore specially named, Psalm. 40:6, "Burnt offering and sin offering have you not required," but have an especial claim upon our attention as representing our suffering High Priest under two distinct aspects, yet each full of grace and glory.

The **burnt** offering, as we have already pointed out, represents him chiefly as he was to God; the **sin** offering as he is to man. In both he was represented as a sin-bearer, for in both of these sacrifices a transference was made of sin by the priest laying his hand on the head of the victim; (Lev. 1:4; 4:4;) in both the blood of the victim was shed and sprinkled; (Lev. 1:5; 4:4-6;) in both atonement was made for sin; (Lev. 1:4; 4:20;) and both were burnt either wholly or in part upon the altar. (Lev. 1:9; 4:9, 10.) Those were their points of union sufficiently close to show that they corresponded in representing the sacrifice offered by our great high Priest on the cross.

But there were distinctive differences between them of a character sufficiently marked to show that they represented this sacrifice under different aspects. Thus the burnt offering was voluntary, the sin offering was compulsory; the burnt offering was flayed, cut into pieces, and the inwards and legs washed in water; but not one of these three things was required in the sin offering; the blood of the burnt offering was merely sprinkled round about upon the altar, (Lev. 1:11,) but the blood of the sin offering was put upon the horns of the altar, sprinkled seven times before the Lord before the veil of the sanctuary, and poured out at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering; (Lev. 4:6, 7;) the whole of the burnt offering was burnt upon the altar, (Lev. 1:13,) but the fat only of the sin offering, that is the internal fat which covers the kidneys, was burnt on the altar; for the skin and flesh, even the whole of the bullock, was to be carried forth without the camp, into a clean place, and there burnt on the wood with fire. (Lev. 4:11, 12.) We see, therefore, that though in some points the burnt offering and the sin offering resembled each other, yet that in others they widely differed; and as we may be sure that the Holy Spirit intended to convey instruction by these differences, we may, with his help and blessing, attempt now to enter on their mystical and spiritual meaning.

1. The burnt offering was wholly voluntary. This was one of its most distinctive features. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, you shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock. If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish—he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord." (Lev. 1:2, 3.) But the sin offering was compulsory. "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall 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; if the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people, then let him bring for his sin, which he has sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin offering." (Lev. 4:2, 3.)

When the sin was discovered, no choice was given whether atonement should be made for it, but it was imperatively required that the sin offering should be made. It is called indeed a sin of ignorance, but much more was intended, both by that expression and by the sin offering made for it, than at first sight might appear. We shall therefore attempt to explain by-and-by what was intended by "sins of ignorance;" but at present our object is to show the distinction between the burnt offering and the sin offering, in that the former was voluntary and the latter compulsory. In one sense the sacrifice of the blessed Lord was voluntary, in another compulsory; and thus the two kinds of offering represent these two distinct features of the one propitiation for sin which he offered upon the cross.

The word of truth brings before us, very vividly and clearly, in various passages, both these aspects of our suffering High Priest. Thus we read that Jesus "loved the church and gave himself for it." (Eph. 5:25.) "Who loved me," says the Apostle, "and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) "As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:15, 17, 18.) In these passages our blessed Lord is represented as freely loving and freely giving himself for his Church and people, as freely and voluntarily laying down his life for his sheep, and freely taking

it again. No compulsion is here. As Judah freely offered himself to his father Jacob, to become surety for Benjamin, (Gen. 43:9,) so Jesus freely offered himself to his heavenly Father, to become Surety for his brethren. He could therefore say, "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do your wills O my God; yes, your law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:7, 8.)

In this voluntary offering of himself to do the Father's will, in these promptings of love to give himself for the Church, in these actings of pure mercy to come forth from the Father's bosom to take the sinner's place, and, as the suffering Surety of his people, to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is signally displayed. Where is love equal to his love? Where was sorrow equal to his sorrow? These promptings and actings of pure, free, and voluntary love, as apprehended by a living faith, and realized in sweet experience, make the Lord Jesus Christ unspeakably precious to believing hearts. "You know," says the Apostle, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9.) "We love him," says holy John, "because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19.) This pure, unmerited love of Jesus, to become an atoning sacrifice for our sins, as shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, constrains redeemed and regenerated sinners to love him, and to live to his praise, as one testified, to whom it was given not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake, "For the love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead—and that he died for all, that those who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:14, 15.) In our contemplations, therefore, of Jesus as the High Priest, we must fix our eye steadily on the free and voluntary character of his undertaking, when, in the councils of the eternal covenant, he graciously undertook to become the Father's servant; and though he was a Son, an eternal, a true, and real Son, to learn obedience by the things that he would suffer. This phase of our blessed Redeemer's character is beautifully typified by the sacrifice of the burnt offering.

But, when in the councils of eternity, ratified by the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, he had undertaken to become Surety, then what was before purely free and voluntary became in a sense compulsory. There is a sense, a gracious sense, in which the word compulsion may even be used of God himself. For instance, when he had sworn by himself to bless Abraham, (Gen. 22:16, 17,) he was bound, so to speak, by his own oath to perform what he had promised; and therefore the Apostle tells us it was to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel. Moses, therefore, when he pleaded with the Lord on behalf of the people who had worshiped the golden calf, urged this oath as his most prevailing plea—"Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever." (Exod. 32:13.)

As, then, when God had bound himself by oath to bless Abraham, he was, so to speak, tied by his own oath; so, when our blessed Lord had once bound himself by covenant engagements to stand in his people's place and stead, he was no longer free. He had become like the Hebrew servant, who, though free to go out in the seventh year, yet if he said, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free;" and if, in pursuance of this free determination, his master had bored his ear to the door-post, was then free no longer. So, when

our blessed Lord said to his heavenly Father, "My ears have you opened," (margin, "dug," in especial reference to this voluntary servitude of the Hebrew bondman), he was no longer free. He was now God's "servant, whom he upheld, his elect in whom his soul delighted;" (Isa. 42:1;) his servant in whom he would be glorified, given as a light to the Gentiles, that he might be his salvation unto the ends of the earth. (Isa. 49:3, 6.) Not that he wished to be free, not that he repented of his eternal engagements; on the contrary, he could say, in the days of his flesh, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." (Luke 12:50.)

But we find, from various passages, which give us, as it were, a view into the depths of his suffering experience, that there were shrinkings in his holy soul from the cup which he had undertaken to drink. Thus, even before the hour of Gethsemane's suffering, as if in anticipation it even then cast its gloomy shade over him, he said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour;" (John 12:27.) "Father, save me from this hour;" there is the shrinking of the victim. "But for this cause came I unto this hour;" there is the holy resignation to the Father's will. And when he came into that overwhelming trouble of soul, of which he says, "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me;" (Psalm 69:2;) when in Gethsemane's gloomy garden, he was "in an agony, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground;" (Luke 22:44;) when before the chief priests and elders, and all the council, "he held his peace," (Matt. 26:63,) and in the presence of Pontius Pilate "answered him not a word," (Matt. 27:14,) fulfilling thereby the prophetic declaration, "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth;" (Isa. 53:7;) and more especially on the cross, when, as the bitterest ingredient in his cup of suffering, his Father hid his face from him—in all these circumstances of sorrow, shame, and ignominy, we see not only what the blessed Lord suffered as bearing the weight of sin, but why his holy soul shrank in the prospect of bearing the load.

That he voluntarily undertook to suffer did not make the sufferings less. No, the weight of the suffering enhanced the freeness of his grace. "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," was but the utterance of the agony of his holy soul in the first tasting of the Father's wrath, when, bowed down with grief and sorrow, he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him who was able to save him from death. (Heb. 6:7.) But he had undertaken, and must go through. The word had gone forth, "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." (Psalm 118:27.) The sin offering was now to be sacrificed. As the burnt offering, Jesus had voluntarily yielded himself up to be wholly consumed in the flames of divine wrath, yet of self-sacrificing love. But now he stands as a sin offering by the altar; for God "made him to be sin for us who knew no sin;" (2 Cor. 5:21;) and as the literal victim was bound with cords to the horns of the altar, that its struggles might be restrained while its blood was being shed, so was its Antitype, the holy Lamb of God, spiritually bound to the horns of the altar, not only by the cords of his own loving heart, not only by the firm cords of the fixed, immutable will of his heavenly Father, but by the no less strong cords also of his own eternal covenant engagements. He had promised, and must perform. Thus, though free, he was bound.

This union of perfect freedom and self-imposed bondage we see not only in the case of

the Hebrew servant which we have already adduced—but as a matter of continual experience in human affairs. Thus I may be asked to become surety for a person. I am free to accept the request—or free to decline it. But if I accept it, and become his surety, I am free no longer, but am bound by my engagement, and the still stronger ties of the law. Or if a friend needs my help, I am free to give it, or to withhold it. But if I once promise to grant his petition, I am no longer a free agent, but am bound to perform my promise. "Pay that which you have vowed. Better is it that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay." (Eccl. 5:5.) Jesus, therefore, was bound by his own engagements to finish the work which the Father had given him to do. Justice arrested him, as standing in the sinner's place. Being "made under the law," (Gal. 4:4,) the curse of the law fell upon him, for he was made a curse for us; (Gal. 3:131;) and having become Surety for his brethren, as they could not pay the weighty debt, he groaned (Prov. 11:15) under it, that he might discharge it to the utmost fraction.

2. And this leads us to another feature of the sin offering, in which this substitution of Christ in the sinner's place is more clearly and distinctly typified. Before he slaughtered the victim, the sacrificing priest laid his hand on its head. "If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, he must bring to the Lord a young bull without defect as a sin offering for the sin he has committed. He is to present the bull at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the Lord. He is to lay his hand on its head and slaughter it before the Lord." (Lev. 4:3, 4.) This act represented the transference of sin from the transgressor to the victim. It identified, as it were, the one with the other. It typified the substitution of the victim for the transgressor, and declared by a visible sign that it bore his sins and endured their penalty, which was suffering and death. Watts has well expressed the feelings of a believing heart, as realizing this substitution, when he writes,

"My faith would lay her hand

On that dear head of yours;

While, like a penitent, I stand,

And there confess my sin."

But as this transference of sin was more fully and completely brought out in the case of the scapegoat, we shall direct our readers' attention to that solemn transaction on the great day of atonement. "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness." (Lev. 16:21.) How striking is the figure whereby Aaron is represented as laying "both his hands," as if they were filled with the sins of Israel, upon the head of the live goat, and confessing "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat." How we see by faith all the iniquities of the children of God and all their transgressions with all their sad slips and falls, all their base backslidings, and all the horrid crimes which have lain with such guilt and weight upon their bleeding consciences, put upon the sacred head of Jesus; "made to meet," as the prophet speaks, (Isa. 53:6, margin,) like a mighty flood rushing upon him from a thousand confluent streams. Jesus was, from his

first entrance into this evil world, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. As the Lamb of God, he was bearing the sin of the world, (John 1:29, margin,) at the very time when John the Baptist bore testimony of him in the wilderness. When yet going about doing good to the bodies and souls of men during the exercise of his public ministry, he was by imputation taking our infirmities and bearing our sicknesses. (Matt. 8:17.)

But it was in the garden and on the cross that the Lamb of God chiefly bore the weight of imputed sin. As Berridge says, "The garden scene begins his woes"—not that they had not begun before, but hitherto he had but tasted the bitter cup which there he drank to the very dregs. This commencement of the hour of suffering made him say in the opening of his intercessory prayer, when, as we have before shown, he entered more fully on his priestly office—"Father, the hour has come." (John 17:1.) What hour was this but the hour of agonizing suffering, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and yet the hour for which he came into the world; (John 12:27;) the hour of ungodly men and of the power of darkness; (Luke 22:53;) the hour when the Father cried aloud, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man who is my fellow, says the Lord Almighty." (Zech. 13:7.)

Would we, then, see, feel, and realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, it is not by viewing the lightnings and hearing the thunders of Sinai's fiery top, but in seeing the agony and bloody sweat, and hearing the groans and cries of the suffering Son of God, as made sin for us, in the garden and upon the cross. To look upon him whom we have pierced will fill heart and eyes with godly sorrow for sin, and a holy mourning for and over a martyred, injured Lord. (Zech. 13:10.) To see, by the eye of faith, as revealed to the soul by the power of God, the darling Son of God bound, scourged, buffeted, spit upon, mocked, and then, as the climax of cruel scorn and infernal cruelty, crucified between two thieves—this believing sight, this fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, will melt the hardest heart into contrition and repentance.

But when we see, by the eye of faith, that this was the smallest part of his sufferings, that there were depths of soul trouble and of intolerable distress and agony from the hand of God as a consuming fire, as of inflexible justice and righteous indignation against sin wherever and in whomever found, and that our blessed Lord had to endure the wrath of God until he was poured out like water, and his soft, tender heart in the flames of indignation became like wax, and melted within him, (Psalm, 22:14,)—then we can in some measure conceive what he undertook in becoming a sin offering. For as all the sins of his people were put upon him, the wrath of God due to them fell upon him!

As when Joseph's cup was found in Benjamin's sack, the penalty of the transgression fell upon the guilty one, who might have said, "Then I restored that which I took not away," so, when the sins of the elect were found on the head of Christ, really innocent—though by imputation guilty, justice viewed him and treated him as the guilty criminal. Separation from God, under a sense of his terrible displeasure, and that on account of sin, that abominable thing which his holy soul hates—is not this hell? This, then, was the hell experienced by the suffering Redeemer when the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all. (Isa. 53:6.) What heart can conceive or tongue express what must have been the feelings of the Redeemer's soul when he, the beloved Son of God, when he who had lain in the bosom of the Father from all eternity, he whose whole joy was in their mutual love and fellowship, whose ineffable bliss it was to be ever "by him as one

brought up with him, and to be daily his delight, rejoicing always before him," when he, the Father's only begotten Son, was as if put away from his bosom as, by imputation, a sinner. In proportion to his love to the Father were his distress and agony at his displeasure; in proportion to his intense holiness was his grief at being treated as a transgressor.

The prophet, speaking to the afflicted Church of God, says, "For the Lord has called you back from your grief—as though you were a young wife abandoned by her husband." (Isa. 54:6.) What so grievous to the spirit of a loving wife, one who had been married in all the warmth and affection of youth, as to be forsaken of her husband, and that all her advances to reconciliation should be refused? But what is her grief of spirit, what are all her deep wounds of suffering love compared to the grief of spirit felt by the Son of God when his Father, his own Father, hid his face from him? This brought into his bosom the pangs of hell; for let us ever bear in mind that there was a solemn and dreadful reality in the wrath of God as felt in the heart of Jesus. Was not the bodily suffering of the cross real? Did not the nails really pierce the tender hands and feet, while every nerve of the agonized body was wrought up to the most exquisite and excruciating height of pain? No less real, and far more severe, were the agonies of his soul, for the wrath of God in the Redeemer's heart was as real as the nails that pierced his hands and feet!

What is bodily pain compared with mental anguish? Under the heaviest bodily pain martyrs have rejoiced in the flames; but a wounded spirit who can bear? Of all trouble—soul-trouble is the heaviest; and of all soul-trouble, what is to be compared with a sense of God's wrath drinking up the very spirit, and burning in the conscience to the lowest hell? Yet the depths of this trouble—depths in which he himself as man could not have stood, but from the sustaining energy of his own indwelling Deity and the gracious support of the eternal Spirit, Jesus sustained when he bore our sins in his own body on the tree. We have still several other points of the sin offering to consider, but as these contain in them much spiritual instruction, we shall defer their consideration to our next chapter, when we hope to close our meditations on the Priesthood of Jesus.

Jesus the Great High Priest

by J. C. Philpot

Chapter V.

In dwelling so much upon the typical character of the two principal sacrifices of the Levitical dispensation, the burnt offering and the sin offering, our object has been not so much to open up their spiritual meaning in all its minute details, as to seize those prominent features in them which cast a light upon that one great and all-sufficient sacrifice, whereby, by the offering of himself without spot to God, Jesus perfected forever those who are sanctified. Pursuing, then, this intention, we have still to consider two or three remaining features of the sin offering, before we proceed to direct the thoughts of our readers to that part of his priestly office which Jesus, as ascended on high, now executes at the right hand of the Father.

3. The sin offering, it will be borne in mind, was expressly for sins of ignorance. (Lev. 4:2.) To understand why an atonement was provided for sins of this nature, we must bear in mind the distinction made both in the Old Testament and the New between sins pardonable and unpardonable. There were sins under the Old Testament dispensation for which no atonement was provided, such as blasphemy, (Lev. 24:15, 16,) witchcraft, (Exod. 22:18,) willful murder. (Exod. 21:14.) These were "presumptuous sins," for which no sacrifice was provided. So, under the New Testament dispensation, there is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which John calls "the sin unto death," (1 John 5:16,) and which the Lord himself declares is absolutely unpardonable. (Matt. 12:32.) By "sins of ignorance," then, we understand not merely sins of inadvertence, such, for instance, as accidentally eating unclean meats, but, to use the language of the Holy Spirit in express reference to this very sacrifice, those sins "against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done," (Lev. 4:2,) into which a man might fall without being guilty of willful presumption. To illustrate the distinction between pardonable and unpardonable sin, compare the case of Paul with that of the blaspheming scribes and pharisees. (Matt. 12:24; Mark 3:22.) Speaking of himself and of his sin in the persecution of the saints, Paul says, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious—but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1:13.) He sinned with his eyes shut; but they with their eyes open. It was in him headlong zeal and blind fury; in them enlightened, deliberate malice, for they had both seen the Lord's miracles and heard his discourses, and yet they ascribed his wondrous works of mercy and love, and his words full of grace and truth, to his possessing "an unclean spirit." There was, therefore, an atonement for Paul's sin as a sin of ignorance, but none for theirs, as being blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. (Mark 3:30.) Paul, it is true, persecuted Jesus in his members; (Acts 9:4;) but he did not tread the Son of God under foot, nor did he count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, nor did he do despite unto the Spirit of grace. (Heb. 10:29.)

But as the wide range which we have given to the "sins of ignorance," for which the sin offering was provided, may not appear, at first sight, sufficiently grounded on scriptural truth, we shall offer several reasons to substantiate our opinion.

It is evident that our blessed Lord offered a real and actual sacrifice to put away the sins of his people; for this is the express testimony of the Holy Spirit—"Now once in the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26.) "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12.) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" (1 Pet. 2:24;) and thus

"washed us from our sins in his own blood." (Rev. 1:5.) As, then, the sacrifices under the law were "examples and shadows of heavenly things," (Heb. 8:5; 10:1,) we may well ask—What were the precise offerings under the Old Testament which were meant to be the standing types of that one great sacrifice which Jesus offered when he, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God? (Heb. 9:14.)

The burnt offering certainly was one, and the sin offering another. The typical character of the former we have already explained, and have shown that it represented the sacrifice of our great High Priest in its peculiar aspect to God. But we need a type also to show him as bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, as bleeding and dying in our room and stead, as putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and thus representing him in his peculiar aspect to man. Now where shall we find this type but in the sin offering? If we exclude the sin offering from being a typical representation of the sacrifice offered by our blessed Lord for all manner of sin, as being appointed only for sins of ignorance, where shall we find another sacrifice under the law to represent it? The "meat offering" was an unbloody offering, and therefore not a type of atoning blood at all; and the "peace offering," as being eaten by the worshiper, represented the effects of the sacrifice of Jesus in the sweet experience of feeding on his flesh by faith, and so finding peace, rather than was a type of the sacrifice itself. The "trespass offering" (Lev. 5, 6;) is so similar to the sin offering that, as a type, it may be considered almost identical, and therefore does not come under present consideration.

That this view of the typical nature of the sin offering is not mere conjecture or a plausible guess, but is grounded on sound Scripture testimony, is evident from two passages in the New Testament—"For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" (2 Cor. 5:21;) and again, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8:3.) In both these passages express reference is made to the sin offering, for in both the same term is used as in the Hebrew, with this difference, that in the first the exact Hebrew word is used in a translated form, in the second the Greek version of it,* as continually found in the Septuagint.

* The Hebrew word (Lev. 4, &c.) translated "sin offering," is literally, "sin," and is so rendered, Deut. 9:21, Prov. 10:16, 21:4. In the Septuagint, or ancient Greek translation, as we have before pointed out, the Hebrew word "sin offering," or "sin," is rendered, "for sin," which is the exact expression used by the Apostle, Rom. 8:3, which may be also translated, as in the margin, by "a sacrifice for sin," or, "on account of sin."

But there is another still stronger argument to show that the sin offering was the peculiar type and representation of the sacrifice of Christ, which he offered upon the cross when he once "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Pet. 3:18.) It was the offering made on the great day of atonement. On that solemn day Aaron was to offer for himself and his house a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. He was also to take two goats for the people, one for a sin offering, on which the Lord's lot fell, and the other for a scape goat. Here we have evidently the sin offering as the chief typical sacrifice, for it was the blood of the bullock and of the goat which was to be taken within the veil, and sprinkled upon and before the mercy seat.

4. But this leads us to another feature of the sin offering, to which we shall briefly refer before we enter upon the typical meaning of the taking of the blood within the veil, as was done by the high priest on the solemn day of atonement. The blood of the burnt offering was merely sprinkled round about upon the altar; (Lev. 1:11;) but the blood of the sin offering, in ordinary cases, that is, when not taken within the veil, was partly sprinkled seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary, and partly put upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense, and all the rest poured out at the foot of the altar of the burnt offering, that is, the brazen altar. (Lev. 4:6, 7.) The meaning of the sprinkling of the blood we shall presently explain; the point to which we would direct present attention is the pouring out of the blood at the foot of the brazen altar.

This represents what the prophet calls "the pouring out of his soul unto death," when our suffering High Priest laid down his life for the sheep. (Isa. 53:12; John 10:11.) The life is in the blood. (Gen. 9:4.) There was, therefore, a necessity that the blessed Redeemer should pour out his life with his blood. Two things were indispensable to a sacrifice offered as an atonement for sin—1, that the victim should die; 2, that the victim should bleed, and thus die a bloody death. If our blessed Lord, therefore, had died without blood shedding, for instance, had he been stoned to death like Stephen, there would have been no atonement for sin by such a death, for "it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul," (Lev. 17:11,) and "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) And again, had he shed his blood without dying, as at his circumcision; or had he been scourged and then released, as Pilate suggested, (Luke 23:22,) in that case there would have been also no redemption, for death being the penalty of disobedience, (Gen. 2:1.7,) there could have been no ransom price but by obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8.) Thus that wondrous scheme of eternal wisdom, that our divine Redeemer should die upon the cross, secured the two indispensable requisites to an atonement for sin—blood-shedding, and death. And yet no bone was broken, (Exod. 12:46; Numb. 9:12; Psalm. 34:20; John 19:36,) which would have been derogatory to the pure humanity, as well as unbecoming his resurrection from the dead on the third day.

There was something also very significant in the pouring out of the blood at the bottom of the brazen altar. That altar was typical of Christ, and the fire ever burning upon it of the ever-burning anger of God against sin. At the foot, then, of this altar, was the blood of the sin offering fully and freely poured out; for here full reconciliation was effected, here thorough atonement made, here the debt wholly paid. Thus, as the worshiper stood at the brazen altar, himself a guilty sinner, and yet with his hand on the head of the victim, his eyes now fixed upon the fat rising as with a sweet savor unto heaven, and now on the atoning blood partly sprinkled on the horns of the altar, and the rest poured out at its foot, he might, as blessed with a living faith in the Son of God, at the same time tremble and rejoice—tremble at the majesty and holiness of God as a consuming fire, and yet rejoice at the putting away of all his sins by the blood of the Lamb.

5. One point more in the sin offering demands a few moments' attention, before we proceed to the special application of the blood as carried within the veil on the great day of atonement. After the fat had been burnt on the brazen altar (Lev. 4:9, 10)—significant emblem of the acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus as a sweet-smelling savor, the skin, head, legs, inwards, etc., of the bullock were to be carried outside the camp, into a clean place, and there burnt on the

wood with fire. (Lev. 4:11, 12.) This carrying forth of the body of the sin offering was significant of two things—1. That Jesus suffered outside the camp, as the Apostle speaks—"For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate." (Heb. 13:11, 12.) He was to be despised and rejected of Israel, and therefore was not crucified within the walls of Jerusalem, but "near to the city," (John 19:20,) or, as Paul testifies, "outside the gate." Jerusalem was considered "the holy city," (Matt. 27:53,) as through the temple bearing the same sacred relation to God as the camp of Israel of old through the tabernacle. (Deut. 23:14.) Jesus, therefore, as a condemned criminal, was cast out of the city as unclean, as afterwards they cast Stephen out of the city before they stoned him, (Acts 7:58,) no execution being permitted within the city, as defiling its holiness.

6. But the carrying of the sin offering outside the camp, there to be burnt in a clean place, has a reference also to the spiritual position of those that believe in the crucified Son of God. Their place in worship is where his place was in suffering—clean, though outside the camp. Thus the Apostle says, "Let us go forth, therefore, unto him outside the camp, bearing his reproach." (Heb. 13:13.) Jesus was despised, hated, and cast out by the professing Church of his day. It was not the mass of the people, though their fickle minds were wrought upon to cry, "Crucify him, crucify him!" who a day or two before had cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" but it was the chief priests and scribes and pharisees, who conspired to put him to death.

And as the disciple is not above his master, we must drink in our appointed measure of the same cup. The Holy One of Israel was cast out of the professing Church, crucified outside the gate as a malefactor whose very death within the walls would pollute the holy city. Where is our place, then, as believers in the crucified Son of God, but where he suffered, bled, and died? In the camp are the scribes and pharisees, the chief priests and the elders, and all who cry, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we;" holding the form, but denying the power; wrapped up in the letter, but destitute of the Spirit; satisfied with a name to live while dead in sin; professing the gospel, but the veil of ignorance and unbelief upon the heart. Must we not leave all such, come out from among them, and be separate; and go forth unto Jesus outside the camp, bearing his reproach?

But before we pass on to look at the next point which meets our view, that is, the sprinkling of the blood of the sin offering on and before the mercy seat, we wish to impress one point deeply on our own and on our readers' hearts—the reality and the greatness of the sacrifice which Jesus offered when he died the just for the unjust, and by laying down his life upon the cross, offered himself without spot to God. And why do we wish to view with believing eyes, and to realize in our hearts the greatness of this sacrifice, with all the grace, mercy, and love which shine forth in and through it, but because all salvation is wrapped in it? By the blood-shedding and death of the Son of God, all our horrible filth and defilement, however black, monstrous, aggravated, and abominable, however deep and dreadful, was thoroughly and forever put away, cast behind God's back, blotted out as a cloud, yes, a thick cloud, and drowned in the depths of the sea. In the pierced hands, and feet, and side of Immanuel a fountain was opened for all sin and uncleanness; (Zech. 13:1;) and the iniquity of the land removed in one day. (Zech. 3:9.) At the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ justice and mercy met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other; yes, mercy rejoiced over judgment, and where sin abounded there grace

did much more abound. (Psalm 85:10; James 2:13; Rom. 5:20.) By the blood-shedding and death of our great High Priest, justice, with all its inflexible requisitions, was thoroughly satisfied; the law, with all its holy, unbending demands, fully magnified; every perfection of God eternally glorified; every apparently barring attribute entirely harmonized; so that Jehovah, in all the blaze of ineffable purity, majesty, power, and holiness, can now be just, infinitely just, and yet the justifier of those who believe in Jesus. (Rom. 3:26.)

Here, then, at the foot of the cross, is pardon and peace for guilty criminals; here is thorough justification for the self-condemned and self-abhorred; here is salvation, complete and everlasting, for all the redeemed family of God; here is a fountain, ever open, full, and free; here is a robe, in which the spouse of Jesus stands without blemish and without spot before the throne of God; here mercy is magnified forever; here dying love displays itself in all its breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and here grace, all-glorious, all-triumphant grace, reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

To know, to realize, to experience, and to enjoy these heavenly mysteries of the cross of Christ in sweet manifestation and divine revelation, by the work and witness, teaching and testimony of the Holy Spirit, is the sum and substance of all vital godliness. A persuasion of this made Paul "determined to know nothing among" the saints of God, "except Jesus Christ, and him crucified;" (1 Cor. 2:2;) this was the gospel which he preached, "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect;" as well knowing that "the preaching of the cross is to those who perish foolishness, but unto those which are saved the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:17, 18.) For a knowledge of Christ and him crucified he had suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but rubbish, that he might "win and be found in him;" yes, the whole desire of his soul was to "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Happy are those who, taught by the same Spirit, have the same faith, and hope, and love, and are pressing toward the same mark, "for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:8-10, 14.)

II. But we now approach that part of our subject where we have to view **our great High Priest as executing his priestly office in the courts above.** We have several times called the attention of our readers to this point, that our gracious Lord is still the great High Priest over the house of God. As the Apostle speaks, "Here is the main point: Our High Priest sat down in the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. There he ministers in the sacred tent, the true place of worship that was built by the Lord and not by human hands." (Heb. 8:1, 2.) To offer sacrifice was but a part of the priestly work. He was to be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek; and therefore his office did not cease when he said with expiring breath, "It is finished," and laid down his life that he might take it again.

It is sweet to view our great High Priest offering himself without spot to God; sweet yet sorrowful to see the atoning blood flow from his pierced hands and feet and side; sweet to enjoy pardon and peace as the fruit of his sufferings and death. But we must not ever tarry at the cross or the sepulcher; for he tarried not there, but rose from the dead, ascended on high, and entered into the immediate presence of the Father, there to be a ministering High Priest at the right hand of God; for after the similitude of Melchisedek, he was "made not after the law of a carnal commandment," as was the high priest under the Levitical dispensation, "but after the power of

an endless life." (Heb. 7:15, 16.) This is beautifully stated by the Apostle in that glorious epistle in which the High Priesthood of Jesus is, as it were, the illuminating sun, casting light and glory on every page. "Another difference is that there were many priests under the old system. When one priest died, another had to take his place. But Jesus remains a priest forever; his priesthood will never end. Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save everyone who comes to God through him. He lives forever to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:23-25.)

But let us now trace the connection between the sacrifice offered by our great High Priest on earth and the present exercise of his priestly office in heaven. There is the closest and most intimate connection between those two parts of the priestly office of our divine Redeemer; and their union and harmony were beautifully shown in type and figure by the entrance of the high priest within the veil on the great day of atonement. The veil, we need not remark, separated the holy from the most holy place. Into the most holy place, sometimes called "the holy of holies," the high priest was permitted to enter but once a year. "The Lord said to Moses—Warn your brother Aaron not to enter the Most Holy Place behind the inner curtain whenever he chooses; the penalty for intrusion is death. For the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—is there, and I myself am present in the cloud over the atonement cover." (Lev. 16:2.)

Now when the high priest entered once a year on the solemn day of atonement within the veil into the most holy place, he took in the blood of the bullock and afterwards that of the goat, which he had previously sacrificed as sin offerings, the one for himself and his house, and the other for his people, and sprinkled each upon and before the mercy seat. This was a typical representation of Jesus as the great High Priest entering the court of heaven, represented by the most holy place, with his own blood, which in a mystical and spiritual sense, he sprinkled before and upon the throne of God. And thus the Apostle speaks, "So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that great, perfect sanctuary in heaven, not made by human hands and not part of this created world. Once for all time he took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. He took his own blood, and with it he secured eternal redemption for us." (Heb. 9:11, 12.)

There are several things, however, in this entrance of the high priest within the veil on the great day of atonement which demand our earnest attention.

1. Let us then first observe the priestly vestments which he wore on that day. These were all pure linen, and were called "holy garments;" and it is added, that there might be cleanness underneath as well as outside, "Therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on." (Lev. 16:4.) These holy garments thus washed, and therefore clean flesh, typified the pure and holy humanity of our blessed Lord, with which, in all its integral perfection, he entered the immediate presence of God and sat down at his right hand, there to make intercession for us. (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25.)

2. But the high priest was directed to enter the most holy place with a cloud of incense. "He will fill an incense burner with burning coals from the altar that stands before the Lord. Then, after filling both his hands with fragrant incense, he will carry the burner and finely-ground incense behind the inner curtain. There in the Lord's presence, he will put the incense on the burning coals so that a cloud of incense will rise over the Ark's cover—the place

of atonement—that rests on the Ark of the Covenant. If he follows these instructions, he will not die." (Lev. 16:12, 13.) There is much here, though veiled in type and figure, of blessed significance. The burning coals of fire from off the brazen altar typified the burning wrath of God; "the finely-ground incense" represented the bruised body and soul of the suffering Redeemer; the "cloud of incense" rising up from the burning coals and covering the mercy seat typified the merits of the sufferings and sacrifice of the Son of God as propitiating divine wrath, and filling the court of heaven with the sweet smell of his blood and obedience when "he gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor." (Eph. 5:2.)

Thus, as the typical high priest entered the most holy place in the holy garments, so Jesus entered heaven in his pure and holy humanity; as the cloud of incense lighted by the burning coals filled the most holy place and covered the mercy seat, so the merits of Jesus, rising up from his sufferings under the wrath of God and his obedience unto death, filled and ever fills the courts of heaven with the grateful odor of his finished work. And thus there is a sweet and blessed connection and harmony between the sacrifice below and the incense above.

3. But this harmonious connection of the two parts of the Lord's High Priesthood is still more clearly seen in the special directions given to the typical high priest about sprinkling the blood of the sin offering when he had taken it within the veil—"Then he must dip his finger into the blood of the bull and sprinkle it on the front of the atonement cover and then seven times against the front of the Ark. Then Aaron must slaughter the goat as a sin offering for the people and bring its blood behind the inner curtain. There he will sprinkle the blood on the atonement cover and against the front of the Ark, just as he did with the bull's blood." (Lev. 16:14, 15.) The blood of the bullock, as a sin offering for himself and his house, and the blood of the goat, as a sin offering for the people, were alike to be sprinkled upon and before the mercy seat. What a striking and beautiful type was this of the carrying, as it were, of the blood of Christ into the very presence of God, that, being mystically, not really, sprinkled upon and before the mercy seat, the throne of grace, it might ever plead, ever be present before the eyes of the Father. Seven times was it sprinkled—a perfect number, to show the perfection of that blood of sprinkling. It was sprinkled before the mercy seat, as the actual blood of Jesus was shed upon the cross; and it was sprinkled upon the mercy seat that there might be enduring marks of it from year to year.

Thus we see a blessed connection between the past and the present work of our great High Priest. He came down from heaven to earth to do the will of his Father, which will was, that he should by one offering perfect forever those who are sanctified. (Heb. 10:10-14.) Having accomplished this will, and finished the work thus given him to do, (John 17:4,) he has gone up on high, and has sat down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting until his enemies be made his footstool; for this was the ancient promise given unto him when he was made a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." (Psalm 110:1; Heb. 10:12, 13.)

III. But we now come to **the spiritual bearing and gracious influence which the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ has on the experience of a Christian.** This, indeed, is to us personally of the deepest importance, for only so far as we have, in our own bosoms, some vital experience of the High Priesthood of Jesus, have we any real, any saving knowledge of those heavenly truths connected with and flowing out of it which have thus far engaged our

attention. This experience, however, divides itself into two leading branches, corresponding to the two parts of the Lord's priesthood, though, as is the case with it, a close and intimate union and harmony connect them with each other.

1. First, then, view the sufferings, blood-shedding, obedience, and death of the Lord Jesus as suitable to our state and case as sinners before God. We commence with this, for here and here alone the cross meets us in our deep and desperate necessity, in our utterly ruined and lost condition.

"To be healed before we're wounded,

To be saved before we're lost,"

is neither law nor gospel, neither Scripture nor common sense. But until we are quickened into spiritual life, and the conscience is aroused and alarmed by the entrance of the word with power, we neither know nor indeed care to know, anything of atoning blood or justifying righteousness. The cross of Jesus is to us what it was to the unbelieving Jew and to the infidel Greek—a stumbling block and foolishness. Dead in sin, or dead in a profession, whatever be our religion—it is not that of the life of God, or the fruit of the teaching of the Spirit. But when we are made alive unto God by quickening grace, we are taught in his light to see, and in his life to feel our lost and desperate case as poor, vile, guilty sinners, condemned by the law and by our own conscience. The curse of the law effectually backed by the verdict of our own guilty conscience, slays outright all our own goodness, turns all our loveliness into corruption, reveals the wrath of God against sin, and thus cuts off all help and hope of salvation by our own righteousness.

Here, then, we are, in all our sin and guilt, exposed to the wrath of God as a consuming fire. Where now is any help or hope in self, or in any wisdom, strength, or righteousness of our own? But this very state of condemnation prepares the soul to receive the atonement, (Rom. 5:11,) or the reconciliation effected by the blood shedding and death of our great High Priest. As, then, the gospel comes near, proclaiming salvation by the blood of the Lamb, the eyes of the enlightened understanding are turned towards the light which shines around and from the cross; and as its words of truth and grace fall upon the ear and are applied to the heart, a measure of faith is raised up in the soul, whereby it looks unto Jesus hanging there, and bearing all its sins in his own body on the tree. This is the first real act of faith upon Jesus as our High Priest, putting away sin by the blood of the cross.

But when, after many conflicts, many ups and downs, many doubts and fears, many prayers, tears and supplications, and many deep searchings of heart, he is more fully and blessedly revealed to the soul by the power of God, and his blood more manifestly sprinkled on the conscience by the work and witness of the Holy Spirit, this gives deeper and clearer union and communion with a suffering, bleeding Lord; and as faith embraces him in his dying love, his precious blood more fully purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

But all the living family of God are not so highly favored as to enjoy this sweet communion with the Lord Jesus, and yet there may be a measure of faith in him short of this

clear manifestation. There may be true faith, and yet many doubts and fears, many exercises, many temptations to unbelief and infidelity. There may be a faith of adherence where there is not a faith of assurance, a faith able to rely though not able to realize. Guilt may press very hard; sin lie with almost crushing weight on the soul; lusts and corruptions be very strong; Satan grievously buffet; the conflict be very long, and victory at times seem very doubtful. All this is the trial of faith whereby it is tried like gold in the fire. But be the faith weak or strong, be the conflict brief or prolonged, all whose eyes are divinely enlightened to see, and hearts graciously touched to feel, are eyeing the atoning blood of the Lamb—even where much darkness pervades the mind and much doubt and fear possess the soul.

There is in all believers a looking, a longing, a seeking, a desiring, a sighing and groaning, a suing and a begging, a watching and expecting of salvation through atoning blood, even where there is not a sweet assurance of interest in it, or a blessed enjoyment of a bleeding, dying, loving Jesus. It is most desirable to enjoy a sweet sense of his atoning blood applied to the conscience, and his dying love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. Indeed there is no real peace of conscience or assurance of salvation without it. But it is his own free gift, bestowed as, when, how, and to whom he will; and we are not to cut off those as unbelievers whose faith though real is weak, whose hope though good is feeble, and whose love though sincere is often damped by doubt and fear. For these doubts and fears, by which so many are deeply tried, are not as to the foundation, not as to the Person, work, blood, grace, and suitability of the Lord Jesus, but as to their own interest in the atoning sacrifice. But if Jesus by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, any measure of the sanctifying work and influence of the Holy Spirit secures a manifested interest in that one offering. Thus the very sighings of the quickened soul under the guilt of sin, its earnest and genuine repentance, its looking and longing for manifested mercy, its separation from the evil of this ungodly world, with every gleam of hope, every ray of light, every act of faith, every word of encouragement, every token for good, every prospect of approaching deliverance, every stretching forth of eyes and ears after the Lord that it may see his atoning blood and hear his pardoning voice—are evidences of the soul's having received the Spirit of holiness; for these feelings spring from his secret and sacred influences. But while these evidences are good, to rest in them is not good. The soul should press forward after communion with Jesus as its suffering Lord; after a sweet experience of his bleeding, dying love, even of that perfect love which casts out all fear that has torment, and should never rest satisfied until, embraced in the arms of a loving Lord, it can look up with adoring eyes, and say, "You have loved me—and gave yourself for me."

2. But there is also an experience of the present work of Jesus at the right hand of God. Here faith is especially alive as drawn forth by the power of God. In all our approaches to the footstool of mercy we feel our need of such a Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor as Jesus is at the right hand of the Father. He ever lives to make intercession for us; not, indeed, by vocal prayer, but by the merits of his blood filling heaven as with sweet and acceptable incense. He has gone before to prepare a place for us; he sits at God's right hand as our ever-living Mediator, through whom, by one Spirit, we have access unto the Father.

The Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is the great object of faith. In all our approaches, then, to the Father of all mercies and the God of all grace, we only draw near acceptably as we come to him through Jesus Christ, for he is the way, the truth, and the life—and no man comes

unto the Father but by him. He is the Mediator, the only Mediator between God and men; (1 Tim. 2:5;) but only so as High Priest, for in that character only is he "the Mediator of the New Covenant." (Heb. 12:24.) The office, then, of faith is to view him as "sitting on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;" (Heb. 8:1;) and in all our approaches to God to look to him alone as our Advocate with the Father. This believing view of Jesus, as ever making intercession for us, will encourage and embolden us from time to time to come before the throne, and there spread all our wants and woes. Our blessed Lord has said, to encourage us thus to pray, "And whatever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:13.) And again—"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7.) Faith hangs upon these and similar promises, knowing that they are all Yes and Amen in Christ Jesus; and every gracious answer encourages it more and more still to plead in his all-prevailing name. "Without faith it is impossible to please God;" (Heb. 11:6;) and he who lacks wisdom, and asks of God, who gives to all liberally and upbraids not, must ask in faith, nothing wavering. (James 1:5, 6.)

But this faith will eye not self—but Jesus, as the Mediator ever making intercession for his people, and presenting their prayers and supplications as perfumed by the incense of his own blood and obedience. Thus we see what an abiding influence the present intercession of Jesus has on the experience of every believer, for he cannot, even for the relief of his own necessities, pray acceptably without it. He having by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, gives his people power and privilege to enter spiritually and experimentally where he himself had gone actually. The Apostle, therefore, says, "And so, dear friends, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. This is the new, life-giving way that Christ has opened up for us through the sacred curtain, by means of his death for us. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's people, let us go right into the presence of God, with true hearts fully trusting him. For our evil consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:19-22.)

We in ourselves are, and always shall be while here, poor sinful creatures, fickle in feeling, mutable in frame, changing and changeable in affection, from day to day and from hour to hour. Whence, then, can we gather up any strength or encouragement but from the sweet persuasion that it is not our sins and backslidings that the Father regards, no, nor our prayers and supplications for what they are in themselves, but is ever looking upon his dear Son at his own right hand, and accepts us in him? But O how apt are we to lose sight of this Mediator and Intercessor, ever presenting the merits of his blood-shedding and death before the throne; and getting again and again entangled in unbelief, or doubt and fear, how little and how rarely do we realize the blessed truth that "if any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" and that he is the "atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 2:1, 2.)

Our limits warn us to draw our "Meditations" to a close, or we would much desire to show also the influence which a gracious experience of the high priesthood of Jesus has on the life, conduct, and conversation of a true believer. The tree

is known by its fruit; and those branches alone which bring forth fruit unto God, are in manifest union with the only true Vine. (John 15:5.) The love of Christ is the constraining principle of all holy obedience. "If you love me, keep my commandments," was his dying

injunction to his disciples. As, then, his bleeding love is experimentally known, there will be a conformity to his image, an obedience to his will, a walking in his footsteps. And as his dying love produces motive, so his risen life secures power, for he has said, "Because I live you shall live also." Having gone up on high, he has led captivity captive and received gifts for men; and thus, by sending forth the blessed Spirit as the fruit of his former sufferings and present intercession, he makes his people willing in the day of his power, and works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Here, then, we close our Meditations on the High Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and may the God of all grace smile on our feeble attempt to set forth that name which is above every name. And to him in his Trinity of Persons and Unity of Essence, be ascribed all power and glory, majesty and dominion, forever and ever. Amen.

