

LECTURE V

SACRIFICE AS EXHIBITED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Mosaic and Levitical Sacrifices

THE civil and religious legislation generally described as Mosaic, cannot all be ascribed to the Mosaic age. As set forth in the Books of Exodus and Leviticus, it represents a code which, in its minute and complicated details, must have been formulated at a late period, by persons well acquainted with the Book of Deuteronomy and with the earlier prophetic writings. It is not the production of one man, or even of one generation, but the fruit of the experiences of centuries. Deuteronomy, however, surely implies the existence of a more ancient Proteronomy, and the Levitical law, composed of various portions, enlarged and modified to suit the necessities and conditions of successive ages, must have been based upon more archaic regulations. The theory of the authors of the Pentateuch, who ascribe to Moses and to the times of the Exodus the original basis upon which the whole system of legislation in Israel was subsequently reared, is surely as reasonable as is the

modern one that the creed and ritual represented in the Pentateuch were naturally developed from Semitic polytheism. We have only to compare Leviticus with the Brahmanas, the Yâsna, the Li Ki, to feel how immeasurable is the contrast presented in the Hebrew legislation, and to be convinced that however long may be the development which its latest codification represents, it must have originated in much higher and purer religious conceptions. It would be almost a miracle that a religion so directly designed to be a defence against polytheism, should prove to be its natural and legitimate outgrowth.

It is conceded that the great merit and distinctive honour of Moses as the founder or prophet of a new religion, lies in the fact that he clearly and indissolubly connected the religious idea with the moral life.¹ Jehovah, the God of Israel, was as righteous as He was powerful. The Mosaic conception may, indeed we believe that it does, represent an advance upon the patriarchal conception of Deity; but the development, if ever it can be traced, will not be one from cosmic to ethical ideas, but from a narrower monotheistic conception to a larger and purer one. Moses saw more clearly the one supreme object of worship, towards whom Abraham could only dimly look; just as the revelation vouchsafed to him was limited, compared with that made known to the later prophets. Scripture

¹ Kuenen, *Rel. of Israel*, vol. i. p. 282; Kamphausen, *Theol. Stud. und Krit.*, p. 201; Well-

hausen, *Hist. of Israel*, p. 397 note; Montefiore, *Hibbert Lecture*, pp. 47-49.

clearly instructs us that the revelation recorded in the Old Testament was communicated *πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτροπῶς*.¹ It was not concentrated in a single prophecy, or mediated by a single agent; it was distributed through many channels, and mediated by a succession of different agents.² But Scripture, from beginning to end, tells us only of Deity as One, Holy, Invisible. And the supporters of the theory that we have in the religion of Israel the result of a procession or progression of thought from polytheism to henotheism, from henotheism to pure monotheism, can only weave their ingenious web by destroying or pronouncing false the Bible account of the matter.

The account preserved in the Bible appears to be natural and consistent with the times and circumstances which it professes to represent. For example, from the narrative given of the ratification of the covenant with Israel at Sinai to that of the institution of the sanctuary, the priesthood, and public worship, there is no abrupt transition. For these were all required for the realisation of Israel's mission, and for the maintenance and renewal of the covenant. They were all such as the man who had been appointed to train the emancipated tribes into a nation—great, because holy to Jehovah—could originate and provide out of the resources at his command. He was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, initiated into the mysteries of its higher religion,³ and quite capable

¹ Hebrews i. 1.

³ Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, ix.

² Driver, *Discourses in Old Test.*, p. 120.

26, 27; Philo, *Vita Moscs.* ii. 1, 4.

of applying the lessons of his rich experience to meet the necessities of his vocation. The description, moreover, of the circumstances in which he felt called upon to provide these institutions, is upon the face of it much more credible than the allegation that they were conceived after the pattern of the Temple and its services by some literary forger in Israel's latest age. However modified and enlarged they may have been in subsequent stages of their religious and political history, we may be confident that further investigation will in the main confirm the conclusion, which has been drawn by scholars who cannot be accused of leaning to notions popularly regarded as orthodox, that the Torah and the institutions required to give effect to it, carry us back to Moses and the Exodus.

They were all required to meet the necessity expressed in the universal confession evoked by the manifestation of the Divine holiness, that the tribes were not qualified to assume towards other peoples, and especially towards Jehovah, the high relation which a kingdom of priests implied. Their entreaty for a mediator between them and Jehovah¹ marked therefore another stage in the Divine revelation, and prepared the way for the better covenant and for the true Mediator, who, though "like unto Moses,"² would, as far greater, do what Moses could not do. He, found afterwards "in fashion like a man," would be able to "look upon the face" of God and live; but Moses, although Jehovah spake unto him "as a man speaketh

¹ Exodus xx. 19.

² Deuteronomy xviii. 18.

unto his friend," could not see His face, but only caught a glimpse of the outskirts of "His march of mystery."¹ Unto him in a moment of supreme aspiration was revealed the truth, that Jehovah, eternally holy, was merciful and gracious; that while punishing iniquity and sin² He pardoned it. Yet how this could be so, how the Holy could be the forgiver of sin, was a mystery to the meekest of men. The method by which this reconciliation was to be effected was a secret into which the angels desired to look. Moses' proffer of his life for the lives of the sinful people had been rejected,³ but the very disposition which induced him to make it, may have involved insight as to the significance of the pure blood of atonement which had been employed in the initial and concluding rites of the Covenant which they had broken. In any case, through this sacrificial act there was divinely suggested a way of approach, by which, for the time, a sinful people, through their Mediator, could present their prayers to Jehovah, and receive His pardon and blessing.

Sinai—a holy place long before the tribes came to it—was sure to become, after the revelation of the Law and the conclusion of the Covenant, even more sacred in their regard. The idea of a holy place has an idolatrous tendency, suggesting a spot in which deity can be circumscribed, or from which deity may be excluded. To defend the tribes against such superstitions, Moses, whose civil legislation often represented reform of existing laws, felt himself divinely empowered to

¹ Exod. xxxiii. 11, 20-23. ² Exod. xxxiv. 6-7. ³ Exod. xxxii. 31-32.

originate the Tabernacle. Jehovah would be accessible to them, not upon the cloud-covered summit of Sinai, nor at such shrines as their ancestors had been familiar with before their descent into Egypt—at fountain, or grove, or high place—but from among themselves. From out of all the sanctuaries which man has discovered or devised, there comes an intimation “Come ye up hither and apart, and I will do thee good;” but from the sanctuary which Jehovah fixed and not man, went forth the assurance, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” The “whole earth is filled with His glory,” but His special presence is with the people. This was the old theocratic ideal from which the Temple and its services localised at Jerusalem were really a declension; and this probably accounts for the fact that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, not the Temple and its worship, but the Tabernacle and its ordinances, are always referred to as the shadow and pattern of heavenly things.

So there was provided for them out of the materials at their command, and by the skill which they had acquired in Egypt—nothing like any of the temples which they had witnessed there—an oblong portable tent constructed of acacia planks, plated with gold, and fitted together with silver. It was curtained by four coverings of divers materials and workmanship, the innermost and the costliest being adorned with mystic embroidery. By veils the interior was divided into an innermost space, a perfect cube of ten cubits, called the “Most Holy place”; another space of equal height and breadth, but twice as long, called the “Holy place”; and without, in front of

it, was a large court bounded by wooden pillars sustaining upon connecting rods the enclosing hangings. The whole structure rested upon silver sockets too heavy to be easily moved, too large to sink into the sand—representing the amount of the half ounce of silver which every fighting man in the tribes contributed as his personal acknowledgment of the ransom of his soul—a pathetic and significant memorial to themselves and to all the world that the foundation of all privileges, civil and sacred, must rest upon the fact of Divine redemption.¹

In the “outer court” were the laver, made of the copper mirrors of the women, and the altar of burnt-offering. This was a square case of acacia wood lined with copper within and without, with projections or horns of copper at its four corners. In the “Holy place” were the altar of incense—also horned, and all overlaid with gold—the table of the shew-bread similarly overlaid, and the golden candlestick, whose seven branches were ornamented with almond blossoms in gold. In the “Most Holy place” was the Ark of the Testimony—a rectangular acacia box plated within and without with purest gold, containing the two tables of stone and “the book of the covenant.” Its lid, called the Cappellet or mercy-seat, was a massive plate of finest gold, having at the ends two golden cherubim whose faces were toward each other, and whose wings overshadowed the space beneath. The actual form of the cherubim cannot be affirmed, but their attitude, and indeed the

¹ C. H. Waller, *The Silver Sockets*, p. 4; Lightfoot, *Gleanings from Exodus*, Works, Pitman edition, vol. ii. p. 390 seq.

employment of them in other religions, indicated that at least they were not objects of reverence. In their adoring gaze upon the mercy-seat they symbolised the worship of some part of creation. The only symbol of Deity was the "shekina," between and above them—"dark with excessive light"—and so no likeness of any thing in heaven above or upon the earth beneath confronted the solitary high priest, when upon the most solemn occasions he presented the atonement for himself and for the people.¹

The Tabernacle, and its divisions, furniture, and ornaments, were objects not wholly unfamiliar to the Israelites, for otherwise they would have failed of their purpose.² There was a vast difference, however, in the ideas suggested by them and the uses to which they were put. Every sacred structure which the Israelites had seen in Egypt was part of an idolatrous system, based upon and embodying only physiolatrous ideas. The arks which they had seen placed in the temples,

¹ Spencer, *De Leg. Heb.*, lib. iii. diss. v. cap. iv.; Oehler, *Old Test. Theol.*, vol. i. p. 119; Bähr, *Symbolik*, 2nd edit. p. 262 seq.; Wilkinson, *Religion and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*, p. 275.

² For similarities between Egyptian temples and the tabernacle, see Lübke, *History of Art*, vol. i. pp. 21-24. For discussion as to the form of the cherubim, see same book, vol. i. p. 64. Save in the symbolism of wings, the cherubim were not Egyptian any more than they were Persian or Assyrian in their origin. A well-

known relieve of Cyrus shows an Egyptian head-dress and two mighty pairs of wings. In the vision of Isaiah the cherubim had six. Very interesting resemblances of ancient Assyrian temples to that of Solomon, both in respect of structure and furniture, are noted by Sayce (*Hibbert Lecture*, p. 64). In Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt, the "ark" figured very prominently, and was employed for the same purpose in their worship, but that purpose was antagonistic to the use made of it in Israel.

or carried abroad in solemn processions, were supposed to be the shrines of the reproductive powers of nature. The ark of Israel on the contrary enshrined the moral law, the sole foundation of the covenant and the charter of their freedom. The ideas suggested by all the symbolism of their Tabernacle were purely ethical, and all its arrangements were designed and contrived to lead the thoughts away from material objects to what is invisible and spiritual. It was as far removed from an Egyptian temple as was a Christian basilica from a Roman shrine. For in polytheism the temple was supposed to be the palace of the god, and therefore it was furnished with becoming luxury, while all its daily service revolved—as in India it still does—around the belief that the priests were ministering to his sleeping, awaking, dressing, feeding, and reposing again.¹ The Tabernacle was indeed designated “the dwelling,”² but it was also called the “tent of witness,”³ and the “tent of meeting.”⁴ The first designation suggested the great truth of God’s presence, the second the reality of God’s holy character, and the third the fact of His accessibility. Putting the three together, it is plain that the Tabernacle in the estimation of the tribes was not just a “tent of larger dimensions and richer materials prepared for the dwelling of their invisible Chief,”⁵ as

¹ Cp. Monier Williams, *Religious Thought in India*, pp. 442-3.

² “Mishkan,” “Ohel,” “Baith,” Exodus xxix. 43-44.

³ Exodus xxv. 21; Numbers ix. 15.

⁴ Exodus xxx. 6. “The Tent of meeting” in Authorised Version is wrongly translated as the “tabernacle of the congregation.”

⁵ Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 165.

“magnificent and palatial a habitation as they could rear for their Almighty King.”¹ Such was indeed the conception upon which all heathen shrines and temples had been reared;² but the Tabernacle was in the purest ethical sense a “sanctuary”³—which sensuality in any form would profane—a holy place wherein, under certain provisions, Jehovah would communicate with His people in order that He might instruct and sanctify them.⁴

Jehovah was approachable there, but approach to Him was arranged in accordance with the character of the revelation and the fitness of His people to receive it. Its threefold divisions and their furniture, and the increasing wealth of the materials of which they were constructed, indicated different stages of approach, and marked the limits within which approach would be profitable to them. None but members of the chosen race could enter the sacred “outer court.” Into the “Holy place,” though able to present themselves before it, the people of Israel could not enter. Only through the medium of the priests, their consecrated representatives, could they pass into that shrine; while into the “Most Holy place” none but the High Priest once a year, after the most solemn preparations, was permitted to come. Again the conditions of their

¹ Spencer, *De Leg. Rit. Heb.*, lib. iii. c. iii. § 2.

² Bähr reminds us that ancient royal palaces were constructed after the model of temples, just as royal ceremonials were copied

from the worship of the gods (*Symbolik*, i. 10-15 and 113-116).

³ *Kadosh; Mikdash.*

⁴ Faber, *Horæ Mosaicæ*, vol. ii. p. 234.

approach were clearly set forth in the uses to which the furniture of each division was put. In the outer court, the copper laver and the copper-plated altar of burnt-offering, marked that the fundamental requirement of all approach was purification and surrender to Jehovah. In the Holy place, the golden-plated altar of incense, and its two companion altars—the table of the shew-bread and the candlestick—indicated in a higher form the service which a people whose sins were covered by the blood of the sacrifice in the outer court, rendered through their priests. For that blood was smeared upon the horns of the golden altar which was placed against the inner veil, so as to be in face of the ark. The incense which was burned upon it expressed the prayers and aspirations of a forgiven and accepted people; the bread and wine placed upon the table on one side represented the fruit of their labours—not offered as upon heathen lectisternia for the food of Jehovah—but *shewn* before Him who rejoiced in the works of His people; and the oil—representing, it is said, the intellectual life and work of man—was offered on the altar of the candlestick placed on the other side of the golden altar of incense. Bread, wine, oil, and fragrant spices were all offered with the burnt sacrifice upon the copper altar in the outer court. So what was combined in one article in the court was in the holy place resolved into three, setting forth the ideas in a clearer and fuller light. For in the Holy place a people reconciled by the blood of atonement offered their sacrifice of thanksgiving for successful work, and of intercession that

all the ends of the earth might see the salvation of God.¹

Thus far was indicated the divinely-appointed way of His people's approach to Jehovah, but the innermost chamber and its furniture symbolised Jehovah's approach in His sovereignty and holiness to His people, to sanctify and bless them. The "ark of the testimony" was the foundation of the third altar, and upon it the Capporeth—or mercy-seat of solid gold—was interposed between the tables of the law and the Shekina, the symbol by which, above the adoring cherubim, the Divine Presence was suggested. Upon that altar on the great day of atonement, the blood of the holiest sin-offering was sprinkled, and from it the accepted High Priest brought back to the expectant people the Divine benediction. This sprinkling of the Capporeth or "*hilasterion*" with the blood of the sin-offering—corresponding to the anointing of the other altars with the blood of the ordinary sacrifices—marked the highest mediation of atonement in the old covenant. Upon the mercy-seat in the Most Holy place, Jehovah's most perfect act of grace was consummated, and from it went forth the mediator with the message of Divine reconciliation to His people. While every part of the Tabernacle therefore was sacred

¹ Wine, though not mentioned in any passage, is taken for granted as being shewn with the bread upon the golden table, in the frequent allusions to bowls and cans belonging to that table. Exod. xxv. 29, xxxvii. 16; Numbers iv. 7. Philo interprets (*Vita*

Moses, iii. 9) the golden altar, table, and candlestick, as symbolising the thanksgiving of all creation, for elemental food, human prayer, and heavenly light. Westcott, *Com. on Hebrews*, p. 245; Kurtz, *Sacrifice*, pp. 47, 318, 321; Winer, *Bib. Dict.*, pp. 170-72.

as suggesting the presence of Jehovah, it was specially at these altars that His presence was most realised. At the altar of burnt-offering in the Court, the people presented themselves before Jehovah; in the Holy place at its threefold altar, the priests representing the people met Him. And in the Holiest of all, the High Priest as mediator both of priests and of people was admitted at the altar of solid gold to the closest access that was possible in that stage of the Divine revelation. This, however, was effected only through the virtue of "*the blood of atonement.*" The only possible meeting-place for the holy Jehovah and a sinful race, was an altar anointed or sprinkled with the pure blood of a sacrifice.¹

We are not left to discover for ourselves the typical significance of the Tabernacle, for it has been interpreted for us by the unknown writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In his days many scribes, following Philo and Josephus,² found in the Tabernacle the symbols alike of the universe and of the nature of man. The analogies suggested by them were all physical or intellectual; but in reading that Epistle in the light of the Gospels, we find ourselves influenced by much loftier and purer conceptions of the Divine dispensation and of human destiny. We are instructed that the prophecy of God's accessibility to a sinful race was realised when the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us.³ In Christ, as Emmanuel, God in His holiness came so close

¹ *Cavo, Script. Doct. of Sacrifice*, p. 95.

Jud., v. 5, 4, 7; *Antiq.*, iii. 77.

³ Witsius, *Misc. Sacra*, book

² *Vita Moscs*, iii. 14; *Bell.*

ii. dissert. i.

to mankind that the poor in spirit and pure in heart, in their mourning for sin and in their hunger and thirst for righteousness, could see Him. This dispensation of God manifest in the flesh—of which the whole religion of Israel was a prophecy—was in itself a preparation for the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. In the development of the kingdom of God it corresponded with and fulfilled the sacrificial atonement and mediation required for the people in the outer court. That having been accomplished by Christ, His reconciled people, consecrated as a royal priesthood, offer now with confidence in the holy place, their sacrifices of praise and of intercession for the world. As His anointed, He no longer dwells *with* His Church, as when manifested in the flesh He made atonement and fulfilled all righteousness. He dwells *in* it, imparting to every true member of it the righteousness which is of God by faith, thus continuing His life in the Church which is His body, and fulfilling through it the Divine purpose of reconciling all things in heaven and on earth. So Sinai's covenant was fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Ghost, superseding the revelation of law by the communication of the spirit of life which renders law unnecessary, and thereby consecrating the Church for the redemption of the world. It is indeed a high vocation for the Church called forth from a sinful race to be brought so nigh to God; and yet a higher calling and more transcendent privileges await its members. For though the stage represented by the first division of the Tabernacle is ended, and the Church is passing through that symbolised by the

second, the stage typified by the third division is not reached. In the Holy place we are looking towards an innermost sanctuary which we cannot penetrate, as the goal of all aspiration and the eternal fountain of all our good. The institutions which bring most forcibly to our souls the reality of the Divine Presence and of our Divine communion, only awaken consciousness that it "doth not yet appear what we shall be." We are still before the veil, which separates us from that inmost shrine into which our Forerunner hath entered; but yet "a little while," and the separating veil shall be behind us. Then we shall know the full joy of service and the whole glory of God's secret, for "we shall see His face and His name shall be on our foreheads."¹

To these high spiritual ends, the constructors of the Tabernacle contributed, though they could not conceive what has been revealed to us upon whom "the ends of the world have come." In like manner, and as unconsciously, in the institution of the priesthood did they minister unto us the things of God's salvation. Before the Mosaic age, a priest "kohen," "hiereus," "sacerdos," in the sense in which the word is generally used, did not exist among the Hebrews. As among all peoples in the patriarchal stage of history, religious functions were exercised by the head of the family for himself, and for all the members of it. In the Passover—the first occasion upon which the tribes are found performing a common religious function—the father or house-

¹ Westcott, *Com. on Hebrews*, p. 240; Herzog, *Ency.*, vol. iii. 2289.

holder is the celebrant, though immediately after in the narrative, a hint is given of the first-born being devoted to religious service. The Hebrews like other Semitic peoples recognised, in the preference given in regard to inheritance and superior authority, the prerogatives and probably the sanctity of the first-born.¹ Moses appears to have utilised the belief by employing the first-born, "the young men,"² in the solemn ceremonial which marked the conclusion of the Covenant. It was natural that he should do so in a period of transition ; but when the old patriarchal order had wholly passed away, a very different institution was required to weld the tribes into a nation, and to train them to understand the solemn responsibilities which they had to confess they could not discharge as the peculiar people of Jehovah.

In Egypt, Moses had come into very close relations with a priesthood very different from that represented by the head of a family, or by the head of a clan like Melchizedec or Jethro. His training under them, his observation of the immunities and dignities which they enjoyed, and specially of their high culture in relation to all other classes of the people, may have prepared him for the reception of the idea of what a people consecrated to Jehovah ought to be in relation to the rest of mankind. When it became apparent that Israel was not fitted to realise that idea, and when the necessity emerged for a priesthood which would be to the nation what the nation was intended to have been to mankind, it is probable that through Egypt was furnished the

¹ Genesis xxv. 29-34 ; xlix. 3.

² Exod. xxiv. 5.

suggestion of the institution which was destined so powerfully to mould the character and shape the history of the chosen people. Yet the priesthood in Israel was no graft from the religion of Egypt. Just as we use the letters of the alphabet to express very contradictory thoughts, so the external details of a religion with which the tribes were familiar were employed to separate them from its essential idolatry.¹ The Israelite priesthood, very unlike the Egyptian in many respects, was specially contrasted to it in its original intention; for whereas the Egyptian fenced off and defended the people from deity by ceremonies and sacrifices, the Hebrew priest was ordained as a mediator, through whom, under Divine regulations, the people could draw nigh to Deity.

The development of the sacerdotal institution in Israel, according to Scripture, was gradual. The order of that development, and the length of time required to complete the system described in Leviticus—with its gradations of High Priests, Aaronites, and Levites—are questions which do not fall to be discussed in this lecture. What we have to consider is, the fundamental idea upon which the priesthood was based, and which was expressed by the functions which they discharged. It is said that this cannot be determined with certainty from the name "Kohen,"² for the primary meaning of its

¹ Smith, *Dict. of the Bible*, vol. ii. p. 916; Spencer, *De Leg. Rit. Heb.* ciii. 1, 5, 11; Wilkinson, *Ancient Egypt*, vol. iii. p. 116.

² Ewald connects it with "hēchin," "to put in order or arrange (a sacrifice)"; Bähr,

(*Symb.* ii. 15), traces it to an Arabic root signifying "to draw near"; Prof. Robertson Smith identifies it with "kahin," the Arabic for soothsayer, and would develop out of this functionary the priest in his highest office, as

root is disputed and doubtful. Whatever may have been the original etymology of the word, or whatever changes may have occurred in its significance in times before the Pentateuch was produced, there can be no mistake as to the conception of a priest, as set forth in Exodus and Leviticus. He was one who, through ordination and consecration, had been "brought near" to Jehovah—whose function was to come near to Jehovah, to receive blessings not peculiar to himself, but intended for the people for whom he mediated. In the estimation of the authors of the Pentateuch, an Israelite priest was no "soothsayer";¹ it was no part of his functions to serve as augur or diviner. Even the Urim and Thummim were only emblematic of the authority with which he was invested as judge or decider of difficult cases.² Nor was he, like the heathen, the

described in Leviticus as the revealer (see Plumptre in Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, art. "Priest"; and also Herzog, *Encycl.*).

¹ Montefiore, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 66, 68, 104.

² In ancient Egypt the chief judge wore, during his official duties, a golden chain round his neck, to which a golden figure representing the goddess of Truth, studded with precious stones of various colours was suspended (Wilkinson, *Manners of Ancient Egypt*, vol. ii. p. 24). The High Priest of Israel wore the breastplate, studded with stones representing the twelve tribes. Antiquarians are divided as to whether the Urim and Thummim

were identical with stones in "the breastplate of decision," or were sacred stones, worn in a pouch behind the breastplate, and used for casting the lot. The Urim and Thummim (Sept. *δὴλωσις καὶ ἀλήθεια*, Vulg. *doctrina et veritas*) were only consulted in very extraordinary emergencies. They were not regarded as possessing in themselves any supernatural power; they were sometimes worn for a "memorial" (Exod. xxviii. 29) of Aaron's official holiness and personal enlightenment when called upon to give a decision on some very solemn and critical occasion affecting the theocracy. The inspiration came, not from them,

guardian of any mysteries, or the depository of any sacred lore.¹ In the Ark, of which he had charge, there were only the tables of the law, the book of the covenant, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod. All the people knew of its contents, and the law and covenant were expounded to them by the priest, just as the Gospel is interpreted by a Christian preacher. If he possessed higher illumination than the people, he derived it from his greater experience, deeper study, and more constant application to the subject. It is true that, very early in the history of Israel, and indeed all through it, the priests did endeavour, like the heathen priests, to assert their supremacy. But the original idea of Moses condemned them, and in the latest age of the nation, when the influence of the priests was most dominant, the exposition of the sacred law was the acknowledged right of all who had ability and insight; and so it was that the scribes became more influential than the priests, because more respected and honoured for piety and wisdom.

The description often given of the Israelite priesthood as a hierarchy is inaccurate; or at least it is liable to be misunderstood. Leviticus reflects no hierarchy in the sense in which the word is generally applied, but a genuine theocracy. The law constituted a religious democracy, in which all the people were to be holy to

but from God; and yet the very sight of the gems, by powerfully reminding him of his awful responsibilities, must have disposed and prepared him for receiving the Divine illumination. (See

Kalisch, *Commentary on Exodus*, pp. 540-45; Lightfoot, *Gleanings from Exodus*, vol. ii. pp. 406-7).

² Curtiss, *The Levitical Priest*, pp. 57-58; Herzog, art. "Priest" in *Encycl.*; Sykes, *Essay*, p. 211.

Jehovah. The priesthood was rooted in the ideal priesthood of the people, and it was designed to promote their sanctification as a people brought nearer to Jehovah than other nations. An Israelite and his priest differed not in respect that the priest only was holy, but in the degree of their sanctification, even as the high priest differed from his brother priests. People and priests and high priest were allied by one vocation and covenant; so, in making atonement for the people, the priests had to perform similar offices for themselves. One with the people in nature, they differed from them in respect of calling; and to their vocation, not to themselves, was the holiness of their consecration attached. It was due solely to their Divine election. The nation was chosen out of all other nations, not because they were holy, but in order that they might become so; and in like manner the priests were consecrated unto holiness, not on account of it. The first-born, according to the heathen idea, were naturally holy, but Aaron, his sons, and the Levites were holy by Divine consecration. The rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram—as leaders of the tribe descended from the first-born son of Jacob—may have originated in this belief, and may indicate that the institution had to be established against the natural tendencies of the people. The priesthood, like the tabernacle, and every law and office in Israel, was represented as proceeding from the will of Jehovah. So the holiness attaching to the priesthood was not inherent in the men; it was divinely imputed to the office, and therefore the word employed to describe the

ordination or installation of a priest, was the correlative for his sanctification.¹

The ceremonial for their consecration, and that for the "purification of the sons of Levi,"² clearly exhibit the truths of their Divine election and their representative character. Most unlike the Egyptian ritual,³ there was no secret initiation, and no mysteries were celebrated apart. The whole transactions were witnessed by the congregation who, assembled in the court before the Lord, could understand each symbolic detail. Through all the successive stages of the solemn rites—repeated for seven days for themselves, till on the eighth day they began to exercise sacerdotal functions for others—both they and the people were instructed that, for the rest of their lives, Jehovah had separated and brought them near to Himself. Not for their sakes, nor for any righteousness that was in them, had He done so; but that by convincing them of their own sinfulness, and bringing them into quick sympathy with their sinful brethren, they might confess their common guilt, and express their self-surrender and their longing for reconciliation. The multitude of regulations affecting their persons, dress, relations, and manner of life, all exhibited the idea of a life consecrated for the sanctification of others, which was set forth in their ordination. As singled out from their brethren, and as belonging to Jehovah the Holy One for the service of their brethren, they had

¹ Exod. xxix. 1-37; Levit. viii. 1-36.

² Priests were "consecrated," Levites were "purified."

³ See description of consecration of Lucius from Apuleius; Warburton, *Div. Leg. of Moses*, book ii. sect. 4.

to observe prohibitions from which ordinary Israelites were free, and to perform duties which were not exacted from others. Like the sacrificial victims which they offered, they had to be physically perfect; their legitimacy was guaranteed by their genealogy, so that the distinctive mark of a priest, not of Aaron's line, was his being "without father, without mother." Their choice of a wife was carefully restricted, and by a very stringent and minute code their external purity was secured. By infringing the very slightest of these regulations, "they profaned the holiness of the Lord."¹ But above all, their chief duty was to lead a life of exemplary righteousness and piety, for it was Jehovah's will that "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me."² So absorbed were they expected to be in their great spiritual mission of instructing the people in Jehovah's law, of blessing them in His name, and of reconciling them to each other, that personal affliction and calamity were not to be allowed to interrupt or hinder their service, for "the Lord was their portion."

If every detail of the law for the priests was a symbol impressing the coarsest nature with the fact that privileges of closer access to Jehovah in official service involved them in severer moral and spiritual responsibilities than rested upon their fellow-men, the same lesson was more powerfully taught by the ceremonial for the ordination of the High Priest, and by the regulations to which ever after he had to conform. He was the pattern Israelite, representing what a divinely-elected Israel should be. It

¹ Levit. xxi. 6-8, and 17-23.

² Levit. x. 3.

was his intercession before the Mercy-Seat that rendered effective the priest's intercession before the veil. The priest mediated for the people as individuals or in groups, but in the High Priest the whole nation was embodied as its vicar. So, because his responsibilities were greater than were the priests', and because there were solemn functions which he alone could discharge, the rites for his consecration were more impressive, and the insignia of his office more splendid and symbolic. The rules for his manner of living were stricter, and the prescriptions for his ceremonial purity were more severe. He was forbidden to approach the corpse of his father or mother, and to express grief for their death in compliance with the ordinary custom of mourning. More than the priests, he was expected upon the most disquieting occasions, to preserve serenity of soul, to rise above the disturbing influences alike of joy and sorrow,¹ and to walk before the people as always conscious of the Presence of the Holiest. For "the crown of the anointing oil of his God was upon him." Holiness to the Lord was engraved upon his mitre, a perpetual memorial to himself and to others, that he only lived, "to bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their sacred gifts, that they may be accepted before the Lord."²

It was a magnificent ideal, a grand endeavour to sanctify the many by the consecration of the few, that the nation might be a blessing to all nations. It failed, not because it was wrongly conceived, but because of the nature of the materials with which its originator

¹ Levit. xxi. 10-12 ; compare Ezek. xlii. 20.

² Exod. xxviii. 38.

had to work. Two qualifications were essential to the perfect realisation of this mediatorial ideal, and these neither priest nor high priest in Israel ever possessed. The first and fundamental requirement was perfect sinlessness, and yet the history of Israel shows that the priests when not foremost were always deeply involved in national transgression and apostasy. The "sanctifiers," who were ordained to bring the people near to Jehovah, were frequently their tempters and corrupters to lead them away from Him. Even the purest of them, who bore the iniquities of the nation most heavily, and confessed them with the sincerest contrition, had to make atonement for themselves as laden with sin and compassed with infirmity. The other requirement, involved in the first, is perfect sympathy, qualifying men to mediate between the Holy Jehovah and the ignorant and sinful, with absolute pity. It is matter of history that as the nation became consolidated the priesthood of Israel were not characterised by this virtue, though some shining exceptions undoubtedly occurred. Yet even if all along the line they had conspicuously displayed it, such compassion as is required for a perfect priest no man who has sinned, no member of a fallen race, could possibly feel. The purity of the purest is sullied, and his pity is blunted by his sin, and in consequence man at his very best is either too rigorous in his verdict upon the sinner, or too lenient in his judgment upon the sin. Therefore man at his best is unable either to show mercy to pardon or grant grace to help. To enable him effectively to mediate between God and the race, so as

to do justice to both, he would require to stand in essential union with both. Thus only could he represent man to God with the efficacy of perfect sympathy, and with the efficacy of perfect holiness represent God to man.¹

So the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews instructs us that the typical significance of the priesthood in Israel was its failure to realise the Divine ideal. He considered the older kind of priest—the patriarchal Melchizedec, who in his name and united offices symbolised the ideal priest-king—a better type than was Aaron of the great high priest of our profession. The high priest whom humanity needs must not only be perfectly sinless and sympathetic, he must also be as perfectly able as he is perfectly willing to save. He must have power and authority to accomplish as king whatever as priest he may desire.² Such a high priest as becomes us we have found in Christ, who, although no priest like Aaron, no king like Melchizedec, has yet exhibited in himself the reality of which at their very best these priests could only furnish the shadow. He was Priest of God most High, because as Son of God most High He consecrated every attribute of His pre-existence to doing His Father's will, even to becoming Son of Man. Then having proved His faithfulness as a son in the house in which Moses was faithful as a servant, by purging our sin, and by writing—through the power of the Eternal Spirit—God's law upon hearts that love to obey it, He passed into the heavenlies to fulfil not *before*,

¹ Westcott, *Christus Con.*, pp. 41-44 ; also *Com. Hebrews*, p. 20.

² Milligan, *The Ascen. of our Lord*, p. 95, the Baird Lecture for 1891.

but *upon* the throne, the mediation at which all priesthood aims. So, in the sinless Son of Man, the only begotten Son of God, we have a High Priest—not *made* like the Aaronic priesthood after a carnal commandment, but *manifested* in the power of an endless or indissoluble life—exercising functions “in which He never had a predecessor and never can have a successor.” It is His office not to approach God with sacrifices of atonement, but to mediate from God the blessings of the one atonement once for all made, and to mediate from man his everlasting oblation of all possible praise for the same. Then in Him we have a High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, because He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Westcott has truly remarked that “the very saintliest of a sinful race can know only in part by the experience of defeat the power of temptation, but Christ by experience of perfect victory over it” felt its power to the uttermost. His pity, is thus the tenderest of all pity, because He alone realised the full significance of sin, and so His help is the strongest, as able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God through Him.

From consideration of the Tabernacle and its ministers we pass naturally to examine the prominent features of its sacrificial worship. As described in the Pentateuch it also shows us ideals which, only projected in the ordinances of the old economy, have been fully realised in the facts of the new one. The injunction of sacrificial worship in the religion of a people so prone

to idolatry as the Israelites were, implies a Divine acknowledgment of a temporary necessity for it. It confronts us therefore in the Pentateuch not as a survival of heathenism, but as a providential discipline designed to defend and withdraw from idolatry a people who were very prone to it.¹ Its ritual from the first is represented as being essentially symbolic in its substance and intention.² Its earliest authors, and others who helped to develop it, are described occasionally as explaining its significance. It is a notable fact that while demanding diligent observance of that ritual of sacrifice and offering, they as unfailingly demanded with it true repentance from sin and surrender to the will of Jehovah. The whole ceremonial law both in its scope and details, harmonised with the teaching of the prophets, and may be said to have suggested the ideas and furnished illustrations for those truths which in the prophetic Scriptures are now considered most spiritual. Unlike all other religions whose ceremonial observances were invariably contradicted or set at naught by the higher teaching of the wise, in the religion of Israel the Law and the Prophets run parallel for their mutual confirmation and support.³

Of the three classes of offerings recognised by the Law—the *first*, comprising all gifts dedicated to the erection and maintenance of the sanctuary; the *second*, all dues

¹ In the Pentateuch, sacrificial worship is assumed as required by man's necessities, but it is purified, regulated, limited, and so is distinguished from heathen sacrificial worship not only, as Well-

hausen, *Proleg.* p. 54, avers, in respect of the Being to whom it is offered, but also by the manner in which it was offered.

² Philo, *De Victim.* c. 58.

³ Kalisch, *Com. on Levit.*, p. xiii.

and tithes rendered to Jehovah as King, and applied to the support of priests and Levites—we have only to consider the *third* class, which comprehended all offerings presented at the altar and consumed wholly or in part upon it. The significance or intention of all these altar sacrifices was obviously identical with that of the sacrifices of Abraham and Noah and Abel. Mosaic and Levitical worship is represented as being practically patriarchal worship more fully developed and more clearly exhibited.¹

¹ Taking the Pentateuch for our authority, we find that it describes a historical development of sacrifice, different from, and opposed to, some old theories recently revived and some now ones recently started by Biblical critics. Following the lead of Plato (*De Legg.*, vi. 22), and Porphyry (*De Abstin.*, ii. 5, 22), Knebel and others represent the first sacrifices as eucharistic and as consisting only of the fruits of the earth. Proceeding from nearly the same point, others represent the first sacrifice as one of peace offerings connected with social feasting, such as is described by Homer (*Iliad*, i. 458, ii. 421, xi. 770), and very recently Professor Robertson Smith has professed to find the origin of these peace offerings in the very savage rites which we have above described. The Bible account is quite opposed to both sets of theories. Cain, it is true, brought of the fruit of the ground unto the Lord an offering, "mineha," a word in this case covering Abel's

animal offering, though under the Law restricted to vegetable or meat offerings as opposed to "zebach," a slaughtered victim. Noah's sacrifice consisted of burnt offerings, "olah," that which mounts, or "ishshah," that which is burnt. Sometimes "kálcel," "whole," because the entire sacrifice was consumed. Abraham took part, as we have seen, in a very solemn covenant sacrifice, but all the other references indicate that he offered only burnt offerings. In the sacrifices offered by Jacob at Mizpah on his reconciliation with Laban (*Gen.* xxxi. 54), and again at Beersheba, on his journey to Egypt, we have the first recorded peace offerings, "shelamin," in the Bible narrative. Jethro offered both burnt offerings and peace offerings when he met Moses and the tribes in the desert (*Exod.* xviii. 12), an indication of the similarity, if not identity, which subsisted between the religious belief and worship of the two branches of the Semitic stock. It recalls the earlier in-

Jehovah, to whom an Israelite sacrificed, would never regard the offering in itself; nor could the offerer ever hope to be accepted for the sake of his gift. Indeed, the offering was not left to the offerer to determine, for in every case the nature and amount of it were exactly prescribed, and to exceed the prescription was regarded as truly as a sacrilege as was the refusal to comply with

oident of the meeting of Abraham and Melchizedec.

According to the Bible, the most ancient form of sacrifice, in which the root idea of all sacrifice is to be sought, is virtually the burnt offering. Even in Abel's sacrifice, though called "mincha," and not said to be burned, special reference is made to the fat of his victim (Genesis iv. 4), which may have been left "before the Lord," but certainly was not partaken of by the sacrificer. The offering, as we have interpreted it, was eucharistic, but as expressing the entire surrender to God in faith of the penitent offerer. Evidently this is the foundation fact on which the whole system of Biblical sacrifice rests, viz. the complete surrender of the worshipper to God's will and God's way of salvation. In Homeric writings the peace offerings are the earliest, and no distinct mention is made of the burnt offering by any classical author earlier than Xenophon (*Anab.*, vii. 8, sect. 4; *Cyrop.*, viii. 3, 24). In patriarchal times there is no special reference to the sin offering, "chatta-ath," though, as we have

observed, the ideas from which it sprung into form were all there, germinating in the religious consciousness till the revelation at Sinai called them forth. The sin offering, and its cognate offering, the trespass offering, "asham," are to be regarded as institutions of the Law, for by the Law was the knowledge or consciousness of sin to be stimulated. And so, doubtless, as under its discipline this consciousness grew in strength, the sacrificial ritual would be modified and elaborated to give adequate expression to it, till it culminated in the solemn and significant ceremonial of the great day of atonements. In the first chapters in Leviticus, the order in which the kinds of sacrifice are presented agrees with the historical succession as traced in Genesis, and the whole indicates that in the mind of the authors of the Pentateuch, patriarchal sacrifice, originating in conceptions of man's relation to Deity quite opposed to those of heathendom, was the root out of which naturally the whole system of Levitical sacrifice grew.

it. This was regulated not according to the mere ability of the offerer; but partly by the occasion of the sacrifice and mainly by his position in the theocracy as layman, or prince, or priest. It was so arranged that the very poorest, in offering a pigeon, or, where that was impossible, the tenth part of an ephah of meal, was equal with the wealthiest in respect of privilege and responsibility. It was manifestly the intention of the whole law to testify that offering sacrifice was a spiritual service expressive of the thankful dependence of a sinful people upon Jehovah, and of their loyal submission to His will.¹ So it was that the offering had to consist of materials in essential connexion with the offerer. It must be his own property duly acquired or earned in the sweat of his brow, in the exercise of an honest calling, and such as could be used for his sustenance. All edible game or fish which man did not rear, all fruits which he did not cultivate, all products like honey which had grown ready to his hand, the very materials which were most

¹ There was no restriction as to *gifts* which might be freely dedicated to the sanctuary, but *dues* were restricted to the produce of agriculture and grazing. The gradation in the value of the victims is manifest in the ordinances as to the sin offering. For the high priest and for the whole nation a bullock was required (Levit. xvi. 8, 9-11); for the prince or chief of the people a male kid (Levit. xxiii. 19; Num. xxix. 5-11), and for the common people a female kid or lamb sufficed

(Levit. iv. 28). The ram was the thank-offering of the nation or of its chief, but never of a common layman, save as a trespass offering (Levit. v. 4) to expiate a violation of the rights of property. The lamb was required for the daily public burnt offering, and for private sin, trespass, and purification offerings. Pigeons represented the staple animal food of the poor; they were very abundant in Palestine and easily procurable by all.

freely presented in heathen sacrifice, were unacceptable at the altar of Jehovah. The offerings must be productions into which the personal life and energy of the offerer had flowed, and which as God's gifts were necessary to strengthen him for carrying out his vocation. So the domestic animals which he had reared and tended, the wine and the oil which he had pressed, the grain which he had sown and reaped and threshed—God's gifts received through daily labour—were the appropriate sacramental elements in ordinances through which communion with Jehovah could be obtained. The reality of an industrious life of a people dependent upon Jehovah for strength to labour, and for labour's reward and increase, is clearly mirrored in the Bible law of sacrifice.

All altar sacrifices were ranged into two divisions of bleeding or animal, bloodless or vegetable sacrifices. These vegetable offerings—which acquired all their virtue from the animal sacrifices with which they were associated—were divided into such as were consumed upon the altar in the court, and such as were distributed on the threefold altar in the holy place. The animal sacrifices were divided into sin and trespass offerings, expressive of contrition and penitence; burnt offerings, expressive of submission and consecration; and peace offerings, expressive of gratitude and communion.¹ If we properly consider the ritual for the offering of these sacrifices, and

¹ Another class consisting of purification offerings may be included in the first class, they sym-

bolised and marked return to a state of communion after lapse from it by reason of uncleanness.

especially if we observe "the elements and actions" which gave them all their efficacy, we shall see how they also served with the sanctuary and its ministers as shadows and figures of the grace wherein we stand.

We have noted that among very barbarous peoples communion in the blood of the victim was the highest act of sacrifice, but upon no occasion could an Israelite partake of blood without being guilty of sacrilege.¹ Upon all sacrificial occasions the blood immediately

¹ In Genesis, though the sacredness of blood is distinctly stated in the law of Noah (Genesis ix. 4) there is no trace of any special treatment of the blood of the victims in sacrificing. The peculiar significance attached to it, and specially to its manipulation, is in Exodus ascribed to Moses, the prophet of the religion of Jehovah. This also, like the sin offering, was due to the sense of sin which the revelation of the law of the Holy One roused into deeper intensity in the Israelites. In the Passover the power of pure sacrificial blood to *protect from judgment* was shown forth, and at Sinai its power in connexion with the burnt offerings and peace offerings of the covenant to *consecrate* for a priestly mission and to *qualify for near approach* to Jehovah, was exhibited. It was only under the law that they learned its power to *atone*, or *cover sin*. This power was recognised in every form of sacrifice under the law, but only subordi-

nately in the burnt offering and the peace offering. (In meat offerings of course blood had no place, but these offerings derived all their efficacy from their connexion with the animal sacrifices with which they were offered.) It was in connexion with the sin offering that its sacrificial meaning was most prominently brought to view. It was both the *symbol* and the *vehicle* of life; "the soul = life of the flesh, is in the blood" (Lev. xvii. 11); "the soul = life of all flesh is its blood with its soul = life" (ver. 14), *i.e.* its blood and life is soul together, and this *life*, this immaterial principle which survives death, was given to make an atonement for man's soul. Heathen writers, specially Greek and Roman ones, may have observed the intimate connexion of life with the blood (see instances quoted by De Maistre, *Eclaircissements sur les sacrifices*, and Von Lassaulx, *Die Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer und ihr Verhältniss zu dem einen auf Gol-*

after the slaughter of the victim was solemnly applied to the altar. The use thus made of it marked not a sacramental act of communion with Jehovah, but a divinely-appointed means of removing a hindrance in the way of such communion. Very definite ideas of what prevented communion are set forth in the law. The Israelite felt that before communion was possible the obstacle caused by his sin must be surmounted. The law of sacrifice originated in this feeling, and was designed to meet this necessity. It was an earnest endeavour to control and educate the religious instinct, which the sense of sin might have driven into frantic extravagance, by a symbolic act, designed to pacify the conscience of a penitent by teaching him that his iniquity was forgiven and his sin was covered. The covering of sin therefore was the first blessing to be gained by sacrifice; the ultimate aim of sacrifice was to secure reconciliation with Jehovah, yet this was only possible by the act of atonement or covering. Not that sin was supposed by covering to be compensated for; not that the covered sin was regarded

gotha); but we find no trace of this knowledge of the physiological truth, so distinctly and so consistently set forth in Leviticus. The very significant connexion, moreover, in which it is there set forth is a refutation of the theories which would evolve the pure Biblical ideas of sacrifice from the beliefs which inspired heathen and barbarous sacrificial rites. We find in several religions that sacrificial blood was regarded as the portion of the demons, or applied

to propitiate hostile powers, or as a magical charm to heal. The savage, moreover, drank it or ate it in the living flesh to be stronger, but neither in savagery nor in civilised heathendom do we find any trace of the blood as the vehicle and seat of life either being conceived of or used as it was in connexion with the ritual of Israel as represented in the Pentateuch. Compare *The Speaker's Commentary on Leviticus*, pp. 504-8, 597.

as having never been committed, or that it was represented afterwards as having no existence. That was impossible; but by covering sin, it was deprived of its power to come between man and Jehovah. Its accusatory power was destroyed or rendered impotent by penitential application of the blood of a proper victim to the altar and its horns. Blood, as we have seen, was not the symbol of death; it was the vehicle of soul or life. "The soul of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the soul."¹

For the covering of the sin of accountable man, the life of an unblemished victim—irresponsible indeed but sinless—was required. The offerer, with great solemnity and intense energy of soul, consecrated or ordained it to vicarious sacrifice by pressing with both hands heavily upon its head,² then having slaughtered it as

¹ Leviticus xvii. 11; Kahnis, i. p. 271.

² The idea of the ceremony was dedication, not in the sense of making over property, but in that of instituting to some office. The interpretation given by some of the rabbin and the early Christian fathers, that it expressed as in the Egyptian rites the transfer to the victim of the guilt or evil from which the offerer prayed to be forgiven, is too narrow to account for all applications of the ceremony. Its meaning would vary in every one of the different

kinds of sacrifice, for it indicated that sacred moment "when the sacrificer laid all the feeling which gushed from him, in the sin offering the feeling of contrition, in the burnt offering the feeling of submission, and in the thank-offering the feeling of gratitude in fullest glow, upon the head of the creature whose blood or life was to appear for him before Jehovah." It thus became his substitute, as the Levites were substituted as vicars of the first-born, and the action gave expression to the prayer, "In my

quickly and painlessly as possible by his own hand, the priest, the mediator of Jehovah's saving grace, at once by his action qualified its life-blood for the atoning or covering office. For neither in itself, nor by the act of consecration of the offerer, was the life in the blood qualified to cover. It acquired its atoning efficacy when it was brought by the priest into contact with the altar, the place where Jehovah came near to His people to bless them.¹ The application of the blood was never represented as man's way of appeasing Jehovah, nor as a Divine exaction from sinful man meriting death. On the contrary, it was set forth as a means of grace devised and provided by Jehovah, so that through it He might reach and bestow His forgiveness upon His creatures. It was only and purely symbolic, for the substitution was manifestly insufficient; there was no real union between the offerer and his victim, which was only his property, and not his equal. Its death was involuntary, and though sinless it was only so as being beneath the sphere in which sin was possible. In no way therefore could its death be accounted as expiation procured by man for his guilt. Upon man's part it meant confession that death was his due as a sinner, and that sinless life could alone cover the sin in his life. Upon Jehovah's part it was a foreshadowing of the truth that one Holy Life united with Him in absolute surrender is a real source of purification

sacrifice behold myself." (Ewald, *Sacrificial Worship*, p. 83.)
Alter., p. 47; Oehler, *Old Testament Theology*, i. p. 627; Kurtz,

¹ Exodus xx. 24.

and reconciliation. Still, while the symbol pacified the conscience of all who in simple faith grasped through it the promised pardon, the real substitution upon which the pardon was based could not be perceived, even by those whose perpetual prayer was "Lord, open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."¹

When the sprinkling of the blood was completed, the ceremonial passed into another stage, in which were assumed the bloodless sacrifices, the corn and wine and oil, which like flesh were the food of man. Of the sacrificial victim only the choicest portions, save in the case of the whole burnt offering, were devoted to the altar, and these with the meat and drink offerings were consumed by fire as the "Bread" or "Food of Jehovah."² Not that any observer of the Levitical ordinances ever dreamed of offering food to Jehovah in the heathen sense. Had this been the understanding, the range of selection of the materials would, as in heathendom, have been greatly extended, and would certainly have included leaven, which makes bread more palatable, and honey, which in the East was considered a choice delicacy.³ The offerings were presented to an invisible King, who was not to be conceived of under any corporeal conditions; but yet as regarding

¹ Oehler, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. i. p. 417; Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship*, p. 122.

² Leviticus iii. 11-16; xxi. 6-8; xvii. 22, 25; Numbers xxviii. 2.

³ Hence the "sweet food of the gods," which they eagerly desire.—Porphyry, *De Abstn.*, ii. 19; Euseb., *Præp. Evang.*, iv. 20; Spencor, *De Leg. Heb.*, lib. ii. xi. 2.

hunger and thirst for reconciliation with Himself as His delight. Man, according to the Deuteronomist, liveth not by bread alone,¹ but by the words of Jehovah; and Jehovah required of His worshippers not their material gifts, but the trustful and loving surrender to Him which these betokened. The offerings, as all required for man's sustenance and as the products of his industry and skill, symbolised the consecrated fruits of man's consecrated service of Jehovah, and this, from first to last, is represented in Scripture as an offering of a sweet-smelling savour, required and desired by the God of salvation.²

The burning of the offerings upon the altar must not be understood as having any symbolic reference to suffering and destruction as the due penalty of sin.³ The Hebrew word designating destructive burning ("saraph") is not employed, but one signifying to "cause to steam" or "smoke" ("hiktir"). The burning marked their complete surrender to Jehovah, but it also indicated their acceptance by Jehovah as well pleasing. He took no pleasure in the death of the wicked; and had the altar fire been regarded as the symbol of wrath, the vapour from the victim would never have been described as a "sweet smell," as it is in the regularly recurring formula for an acceptable sacrifice.⁴ The altar fire is

¹ Dent. viii. 3.

² Hengst., *Diss. on Pent.*, vol. ii. pp. 531-2; Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament*, pp. 62-3, 161.

³ De Maistre, *Eclaircissements sur les sacrifices*, p. 234.

⁴ Lev. i. 9, iv. 31, xiii. 7; Herzog, *Encycl.*, x. p. 693; Edersheim, *The Temple, its Ministry and Services*, p. 91.

always represented as Jehovah's fire, and as having originally descended from heaven to consume the first sacrifice of Aaron, His anointed priest. Therefore it must never be allowed to go out, but must be continually nourished by sacrifice. From it the sacred fire used for the offering of incense appears to have been taken,¹ and by its use as proceeding from Jehovah Himself there was symbolised the truth that He accepts and perfects every sacrifice that has been offered in the right spirit and in the appointed way. The altar fire, like the more terrible flames of Sinai, was a perpetual reminder of the holiness of Jehovah. To approach it in a profane spirit was dangerous in the extreme, for Jehovah, who was "a glory to His sanctified," was a "devouring flame" to His enemies and "a terror to the hypocrite and sinful."²

The altar fire purified and transformed the sacrifice of every worshipper who put the devotion of his whole being into his offering, and he, instead of being impoverished by its destruction in relation to himself, was enriched by the sense of the Divine favour and fellowship. Admitted to the table of Jehovah, he and his family, and the poorer Levites, after the priests' portion had been removed, partook of the rest of the victim in a hearty love-feast before the Lord. It was now Jehovah's gift to him, and a token of a blessing, which, as too large for himself to contain, was to overflow to others, even for the refreshment of the poor and needy. In it was exhibited the highest sacramental point in the whole process of

¹ Lev. x. ; Oehler, *Old Test. Theol.*, i. p. 421.

² Cp. Isaiah x. 17, and xxxiii. 14 ; Mal. iv. 1.

the sacrifice, the progressive development of which from the sprinkling of the blood, through the burning of the victim, to the festal meal, becomes to us an object lesson in the fundamentals of Christian theology.

The lesson is more clearly and emphatically taught when we observe the distinctive features and the order of succession of the different classes of Levitical sacrifice. Generally speaking, they may be arranged according to their objects, as sin and trespass offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings. Frequently these were combined in one solemn function, and upon such occasions the sin offering preceded the burnt offering, which was succeeded by the peace offering. This order seems to indicate their gradation in rank, as does also the designation "most holy," applied to the sin offering, while the peace offering is simply called "a holy thing."¹ The distinction in the rituals for each of them is also significant. The presentation, the imposition of hands, and the slaughtering by the offerer, were the same in all; but in the remaining functions, such as the application of the blood and the disposal of the victim, there were characteristic differences. In each one of the three kinds of sacrifice one action was peculiarly emphasised. The application of the blood was the culminating point in the sin offering, the burning the main point in the burnt offering, and the characteristic point in the peace offering was the sacrificial meal. The purpose of each of these sacrifices as disclosed by these different actions, was clearly per-

¹ Lev. vi. 18-22.

ceptible by an Israelite. The application to the altar of the blood of the sin offering was to cover and atone sin ; the ascending smoke instructed him in the duty of entire surrender to Jehovah ; and the sacrificial meal was the seal of the earnestly desired reconciliation with Him. Atonement by Jehovah, consecration to Jehovah, communion with Jehovah, these were the three great articles of faith which lay at the root, and vitalised the whole system of Levitical worship. It required the lapse of ages to unfold the Divine realities of which they were the figures ; yet by means of them the believing Israelite entered into essentially the same worship by which our spiritual life is now nourished and consoled. Although what seemed to them finality is found by us to be only a stage in a continuous development not yet completed, we feel that we can touch hands with them across the gulf of centuries, as comprehended with ourselves in the "common salvation."

Though all Hebrew sacrifices are related to our subject, as involving a consciousness of sin in the sacrificer and of the necessity for atonement to secure his reconciliation with Jehovah, one class, peculiarly Hebrew, bears very directly and specially upon it. The sin and trespass offerings, altogether unknown in heathen religions, were under the Levitical code demanded not because of sin in general, but on account of its specific manifestations and effects. To ascertain their functions we have first to discover what were the breaches of the covenant which they were ordained to atone. They were presented (1) in the offices for the

purification of the unclean ; (2) in those required for the atonement of specific offences against the law ; and (3) in those demanded for the atonement of undefined sins. In regard to the first class, there were according to the Law certain physical conditions which made it sacrilege for those who were subject to them to approach the sanctuary. The enactments concerning them vividly recall beliefs very widely spread at a certain stage of human experience ; but here again, under apparent similarities in the rites associated with them, there was direct contradiction in their real significance and intention. The idea and motive in the Levitical injunctions was purely religious. Their object was not to promote sound physical health in the community, though they tended to secure it, but to stamp upon certain human experiences a significance which confirmed belief in the doctrine promulgated in the very opening of the Pentateuch, namely, that man's present condition is not his natural and original one, but one abnormal and fallen. The impurity of leprosy and of death, the uncleanness associated with the begetting and bearing of children, all suggest the consequences of the Fall. It appears to be a legitimate inference therefore that the Levitical doctrine of ceremonial uncleanness was a recognition of the depravity of the natural man ; and if so, then it was an indispensable antecedent to the proper worship of Jehovah that provision should be made for the cleansing of consequences of sin clinging to men in virtue of the law of heredity.¹

¹ Cave, *Script. Doct. of Sacr.*, p. 100 ; Koil, *Arch. Trans.*, vol. i. p. 378.

The sin offerings in the second division were presented for the atonement of specific sins in certain well-defined instances. They were demanded from the High Priest, from the Ruler, from the Nation, and from the ordinary Israelite, when through ignorance, error, rashness, or frailty they had transgressed. Those in the third class, presented upon prominent festivals on behalf of the nation, were not occasioned by special sins, but were intended to atone all the unnoted transgressions which produce the sense of sinfulness in a people, who, though covenanted, were prone to transgress through inherent or hereditary frailty or through force of habit. All these sin offerings therefore sprang from that consciousness of moral depravity which has always proved an unfailing source of aspiration after spiritual improvement. What was aimed at by them was not external cleansing but inward purity, the removal of what was felt to be morally offensive to Jehovah. They were efficacious as atoning transgressions into which men had lapsed through not being sufficiently watchful against fallen human nature. In the case of presumptuous sins, proceeding not from frailty but from deliberate defiance of the Divine authority, no atonement was provided. Forgiveness was extended to the imperfection but not to the perversity of human nature; to unintentional transgressions due to human corruption, but never to wanton impiety; and the essential condition of obtaining that forgiveness was inward repentance. The atonement which sealed and pledged forgiveness to the penitent was Jehovah's gracious gift. He alone could indicate the way and provide the means

of restoration. So the kind of victim was not left to the option of the offerer, but was prescribed in every case according to the status of the penitent. It was thus invested with a distinctly personal character, being graded, from the ox required from the high priest, to the tenth part of an ephah of meal presented without oil or incense, which sufficed when the Israelite was too poor to procure two pigeons.¹ The sacrificial instinct was thereby restrained at the very point in which in the highest heathen religion it was allowed to run into extravagant excess; and yet through these ordinances was proclaimed the truth that the higher the theocratic rank and privileges of the transgressor the greater the moral guilt involved in his offence.²

In all the cases, the manipulation of the blood indicated the prominence of the atoning element in the sacrifice. In sin offerings of even the lowest rank, the blood was not dashed against the sides of the altar, but with it the horns, its most sacred part, were carefully anointed with the finger. In the sacrifice for the congregation and for the High Priest, the blood was taken into the Holy place, solemnly smeared upon the horns of the altar of incense, and sprinkled upon the veil, and what remained was carried back and poured out at the base of the altar in the court. In the principal sin offerings on the day of atonements, the act was carried to a still higher point; for the blood was then taken into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled upon the "Capporeth" or mercy-seat. Again, as ranking among the "most

¹ Lev. iv. and v.

p. 214; Mages, *Discourses and*

² Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship*, *Dissert.*, Dis. xxxvii.

holy" sacrifices, the victims were so disposed of as to shield them from profanation. The priests ate freely of the flesh of the sin offerings of the people when the blood had been applied to the altar horns in the court, not as enjoying an official perquisite, but as fulfilling a mediatorial office. It symbolised the Divine acceptance of the sacrifices, for Jehovah would not otherwise have authorised His servants to partake of them. The priests, however, were not allowed to partake of the sacrifices when blood was offered for or associated with themselves in the Holy place, for in this case they occupied the relation of unholy persons whose sin required atonement. They could not eat of sacrifices which had been brought nigh to Jehovah for them, and so these had to be consumed by burning in a clean place without the camp. The motive in all this was the very opposite of what made the heathen taboo some portions of their sacrifices. In the case of the heathen the object to be gained was to defend themselves from what through contact with the god had become dangerous and even deathful. The intention of the Levitical ordinance was to defend and protect things which had become holy, through being brought nigh to Jehovah, from being profaned by man's own impurity.¹

Associated with the sin offerings, but distinct from

¹ Outram, *De Sacrificiis*, xvii. 1, 2, 3, quoting Porphyry, *De Abst.*, ii. 44, and Maimonides, *Ad Zebach. in Mishna*, c. 12, interprets the law demanding the burning of the piacular sacrifices by the supposition that they had

become defiled, and communicated pollution to those who burned them. This, however, seems only to be correct in the case of the scapegoat, to be subsequently explained.

them in respect both of enactment and ritual, were the trespass offerings, as *piacula* for offences against Jehovah and man which admitted of compensation. Any violation of a social right was understood to imply infraction of the Divine right. Not only, therefore, was reparation demanded for the transgression of public order, but confession and supplication for pardon had to be made by the transgressor to Jehovah. In some cases where the offence was distinctly traceable to the evil which clings to the nature of man, sin offerings in addition to the trespass offerings were required; the prominent idea in the sin offering was *atonement*, while in the trespass offering it was *satisfaction*. One feature common to both classes was the confession connected with the rites. It is said that imposition of hands "was never used without some form of supplication, and that hence solemn prayers were included under the description of laying on hands" even when not expressly mentioned.¹ It is certain that in all cases of sin and of trespass offerings confession was necessary. "The offerers of sin and of trespass offerings, sacrificed for faults committed with or without knowledge, unless they repent and confess their sins in express words, are not purged by their sacrifices." The more fully the circumstances of the sin were detailed the better in later times was the confession considered, "for he who is frequent and long in confession is worthy of praise."² As trespasses

¹ Outram, *De Saor.*, xv. 8-12.

² Maimonides quoted by Out-

ram, *De Sacrificiis*, c. xv., see

10, 11, for forms of confession.

against man were considered lighter than offences against Jehovah, His sanctuary and His law, the ceremonial for the trespass offering was less solemn than for the sin offering. The blood for example was only dashed round about the altar, and never applied to the horns, while the flesh was always given to the priests as their portion. The victim never varied, but was the same for all occasions and for all conditions of men. The ram, as among the ancient Greeks and the kindred Italic race, was the *πρωθή*¹ generally prescribed, though for the cleansing of the leper and the restoring of a Nazarite who had broken his consecration, a lamb was selected.

The Israelites were thus made to feel that their relation to Jehovah was disturbed and defiled by transgression of any kind. Long and protracted periods of education may have been required before their conceptions of sin and trespass offerings were formulated as they are in the Pentateuch. As their knowledge of God increased, their consciousness of sin, originally crude and undefined, gradually expressed itself in clearer and purer conceptions. The growth, however, of their intelligence did not find its starting-point in

¹ *πρωθή*, the price of blood, in the Homeric age was estimated in money, but the ram was the substitute of the shedder of blood. In Israel the ram was always valued by the priest (Lev. v. 15), and as in ancient times the sheep was the ordinary medium for the payment of fine or tribute, the valuation may have been meant

to make it equivalent to the amount of the trespass. In addition to the sacrifice of the ram, valued from two shekels upward, compensation had to be made to the injured person, through the increase of one-fifth. Hengst., *Diss. in Pent.*, vol. ii. p. 176; Keil and Delitzsch, *Pentateuch*, vol. ii. pp. 313-17.

such cosmic ideas of trespass offerings as are represented by the golden mice and emeralds with which the Philistines made compensation for the capture of the Ark. Their selection of that peculiar kind of expiatory gift accorded with a widely-spread heathen custom, survivals of which may be seen in the votive offerings hung upon the walls of many a Romish Church. That custom was rooted in the idea that after recovery from illness or rescue from calamity, an image of the member healed, or of the danger from which there had been deliverance, was an offering due to the god that had inflicted the evil or had delivered from it.¹ The purity and simplicity of the Levitical ordinances imply a higher origin than this belief. The trespass offering was not regarded as a fine paid to a ruler, but as an act of confession made to the great Searcher of hearts. The question whether the sin offering developed from the more archaic trespass offering, or whether the trespass offerings were evolved from the sin offering—though most interesting for the Biblical archæologist—does not fall to be discussed here. What we have to note is the high level of thought in regard to sin which through these peculiar Levitical institutions Israel reached. The fact is a very exceptional one in the history of religion. Temporary and imperfect though their ceremonial law was, its administrators succeeded in branding deep upon the popular conscience a true sense of sin—not as a breach of ritual to be made good, not as a debt which might be

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Com. on 1 Sam.*, p. 63.

compounded for—but as an offence against the Holy Jehovah, who had chiefly to be reckoned with even in making restitution in cases of social wrong, for He was the only One who could atone and pardon it.

All that Levitical religion was able to effect in regard to the atoning of sin was summed up and embodied in the supreme solemnity of the sacred year, the complete expiation of the priesthood and of the people, of the sanctuary and of its furniture, which had been contaminated by the sinfulness of those who worshipped before, and of those who ministered in it. The description given in Leviticus of the ceremonial of the day of atonements,¹ no doubt represents the form which the celebration had assumed at a date later than the Exile. We may, however, agree with Ewald that its essential features stamp it as “a very ancient rite, a genuine Mosaic festival,” modified in the course of ages.² Days of expiation were common, as we have seen, among very barbarous peoples, and were celebrated by peoples as civilised as were the Egyptians and Romans. The natural inference is that here again the new religion took up a universal and deeply-rooted custom, impressed it with a high moral significance, and devoted it to a purely spiritual purpose. The heathen days of expiation were intended to get rid of physical evils by purely physical means, or to expel malevolent powers by sorcerous or magical rites. In some of the more civilised nations the annual piacula represented the penal satisfaction rendered by the

¹ Leviticus xvi.

² Ewald, *Alterth.*, p. 477.

whole community for some ancient crime. From all these institutions the day of atonements in Israel differed materially, both in respect of the evils to be got rid of, and the means by which they were purged. The evils to be cleansed were all impurities and sins in our sense of the words, and the ritual of cleansing was designed to beget in minds "too crude for reflective modes of exercise," a set of impressions answering to those which we have been trained to form of the holiness of God, and of His willingness to purge away the guilt of all who will be led by Him in the way of salvation.¹

By the sin offering, which had been presented throughout the year, atonement was made of special sins, committed in error or through infirmity, but upon "The Day," the "Sabbath of Sabbaths," the tenth day of the seventh month, atonement was made of "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,"² whether known or unknown, whether expiated or not. Upon all the details of its most impressive ritual³ we do not require to dwell, but if we observe some of its principal features, we shall find them symbolic of Israel's expectation of some more effectual method of reconciliation with Jehovah than was provided at the altar of burnt offering in the court, and also some typical guarantees of the great realisation of that expectation, to which we are witnesses.⁴ Characterised by complete cessation of labour

¹ Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 438. ² Lev. xvi. 21.

³ For the Ritual itself see Maimuni Hajad-hachazaka, trans-

lated by Delitzsch in *Comment. on Hebrews*, vol. ii. pp. 464-81.

⁴ Oehler, *Old Test. Theol.*, vol. ii. p. 43.

for holy convocation, and inaugurated by a whole day's fasting, the great day's function began at early dawn. Then, after the morning sacrifice, the High Priest, who had lived for a week previous in the sanctuary, washed not simply his hands and his feet, as on ordinary occasions, but his whole person. Having robed himself, not in his "garments of glory"—as when he appeared "before the people" as the delegate of Jehovah, but in pure white linen, befitting one who was to appear "before Jehovah" in the simplicity and sincerity of his divinely-ordained office—he presented, out of his own resources, an ox for his sin offering, and a ram for his burnt offering. A ram as their burnt offering, and two goats as their sin offering, were then presented by the people; and upon the goats at the door of the Tabernacle the lot was cast, according to which one of them was destined for sacrifice, and the other for dismissal. The ox which the High Priest had presented having been slain, while a priest stirred the blood which had been carefully received, the High Priest, filling a censer with live coals from the altar, and taking two handfuls of beaten incense, carried them behind the veil into the Most Holy place. There, without looking around, he threw the incense upon the embers, so that its rising cloud might cover and protect him in the presence of the glory; and leaving his censer there, he retired backward to the altar of sacrifice in the court. Bringing with him the blood of his own sin offering into the Most Holy place, now filled with smoke, he made atonement for himself by sprinkling it with his finger to-

wards the mercy-seat, and seven times on the ground in front of it. Qualified thus to officiate for the people, he carried the bowl with the blood of his sin offering back into the Holy place, and leaving it there, he returned to the court, where the goat upon which the lot of Jehovah had fallen, was now slain. Carrying its blood into the Most Holy place, he performed for the people a sprinkling similar to that which he had performed for himself. Retiring again to the Holy place, with the mingled blood of both victims, he anointed the horns of the altar of incense, and seven times sprinkled the ground in front of it. Then followed the atonement or reconciliation of the altar of burnt offering in the courts by his applying the blood to its horns, and sprinkling its sides seven times with his finger, to "cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."¹

These solemnities having been completed, the other goat was presented alive before the Lord at the altar of sacrifice as the other half of the people's sin offering. Laying both his hands upon its head, the High Priest confessed over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel; and by a man ready at hand he sent it away, bearing all their iniquities into a "separated land," a land whence no road led back to the dwellings of the people. As in the rite for purifying the leper, the double victim was required by the two elements, which had to be represented in the action. Jewish tradition recognised the relation by

¹ Lev. xvi. 19.

prescribing that the goats should be alike in colour, size, and value. By the application of the blood of its companion, sacrificed as Jehovah's, to this second goat, the people were placed in a condition in which they could send away from themselves to where they could not be found, the sins which had been forgiven and atoned. In later times the High Priest is said to have not only confessed their sins, but also to have invoked the punishment due to them upon the head of the goat, which was then led away amid the execrations of the people, to be cast down to death from a precipice in the mountains. This, however, seems to have been no part of the essential rite, for its after-fate is not mentioned in Leviticus, nor is it even suggested there that it was meant to perish in the wilderness. It was sent away, "la Azazel," a curious word, of which divergent explanations have been given. It has been interpreted as describing *the place* to which the goat was sent, as designating the *goat* itself as freed or escaped, as the *name of a demon* supposed to haunt the wilderness, and as an *abstract noun*, signifying "for complete removal."¹ Azazel was probably the name of a demon before the word Satan came into use. Before the Exile, the desert was believed to be the dwelling-place of demons,² and of many demons Azazel,³

¹ Oehler, *Old Test. Theol.*, vol. ii. p. 59; Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship*, p. 307; Hongst., *Books of Moses*, p. 171; Edersheim, *The Temple and its Services*, pp. 278-286.

² Isaiah xiii. 21, and xxxiv. 14.

³ Some Rabbinites say the name was given to the angel of death. (Buxtorf, *Syn. Jud.*; Rosenmuller, *On Levit.* xvi. 8.) Origen clearly states that Azazel denoted the devil, *Contra Cels.*, lib. vi.; Gesenius, *Thesaur.*, p. 1012, and Ewald, *Alterthum*, p. 408,

like Satan, may have been considered the chief, and the most hostile to all that was good. To such an one probably the goat was sent, bearing the forgiven or covered sins that had been laid upon it. "By this action, the kingdom of evil and its prince were renounced, for the sins to which he had tempted the individual or the nation, so that they might become his own, were repudiated." Moreover, the truth was symbolised that not even "Azazel, Satan, the accuser of the brethren,"¹ can be of any avail against those whom God has reconciled, for once that they are covered by the blood of an acceptable atonement, the sins of His people are thrown into everlasting oblivion.²

identify Azazel with the serpent of Genesis, the Satan of Job and Zechariah, and with Typhon in Egypt.

¹ Job i. 6; Zech. iii. 1.

² Hengst., *Egypt and the Books of Moses*, pp. 160-72; Fairbairn, *Typol.*, vol. ii. p. 315.

A very early interpretation of the sending away of the second goat, La Azazel, was that it was meant as a bribe to Azazel to prevent him from spoiling the efficacy of the sacrifice. The idea is old and was very generally distributed all over the heathen world. The Septuagint translators are supposed to have rendered La Azazel in verse 8 as τῶν Ἀπορομμάτων under this belief. Josephus in *Antiq.* iii., 10, 3, has certainly adopted this view; so have several Rabbins; while among moderns Spencer, *De Leg. Rit. Heb.*, and Gesenius

in his *Lexicon* and *Thesaurus* confidently affirm it. Bähr in his *Symbolik*, Hengstenberg in *Egypt and the Books of Moses*, Kurtz and Oehler and others have shown how contradictory this is to the teaching of Jehovistic religion. Yet while we may confidently conclude that this cannot be the interpretation of the ceremony, there seems no consensus of opinion among commentators as to what it did signify. What we have given in the text reads as too much a New Testament interpretation, although the part assigned to Satan in the prologue in Job lends colour to it. Our own opinion, if we may venture humbly to express it, is that the essential point emphasised in the action was the *sending away* of the atoned and confessed iniquities, as ended for ever in their

When the goat was sent away the High Priest went again into the Holy place, divested himself of his white linen robes and left them there; then having washed himself in the court, he donned his ordinary raiment for "glory and for beauty," and proceeded to offer first his own burnt offering, and afterward that of the people, along with the choice portions of the sin offerings already slain. The remains of these sin offerings were carried outside the camp and burned with fire. Only now could the festal sacrifices, consisting of sin offerings, burnt offerings, and meat offerings be offered,¹ and afterwards to crown the day the evening sacrifice was proceeded with. Meanwhile the man who burned the carcasses outside the camp, and he who led away the goat into the desert, had to wash their clothes and bathe themselves before they returned to the congregation. They had, like the High Priest, to do with sacrificial victims which, as having been brought nigh to Jehovah, had become "very holy"; but in performing their office they had also been "outside the camp," which with the sanctuary in the midst of it was the place of purity. The pre-eminent sanctity of the day of atonements required that even the barest possibility

relation to a penitent people. The idea as to *whom* they were sent may after all not be contained in the description, but that of *the place whither* they were sent, viz. a "separated land." "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and

the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found" (Jeremiah i. 20). "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm ciii. 12). "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah vii. 19).

¹ Numbers xxix. 7.

of contracting uncleanness by being without the camp should be obviated. And hence those who had contracted ceremonial uncleanness had to be ceremonially purified before they could rejoin their brethren. The solemn ablution of the High Priest before he clothed himself with his garments of glory, cannot be explained as due to any sense of defilement which he had acquired from the performance of his official duties in the sanctuary, but yet in the performance of his duty defilement may have arisen from his own sinful nature. Moreover, as a man compassed with infirmity, he was beginning a new function for the people in the offering of the festal sacrifices. And so he must enter upon it with the customary symbolic confession of impurity, just as in that function, notwithstanding the high and comprehensive atonement which he had made for himself and all the people, he must begin it by presenting another sin offering. Jehovah must be sanctified in all who drew nigh to Him.¹

¹ Professor Robertson Smith, (*Religion of Semites*, pp. 482-83), finds in all these washings a survival of the heathen belief that persons brought into close contact with sacred things were "sanctified" to the peril of all with whom they came into contact, and that ablution both of the body and raiment was required to break the charm and render intercourse with them safe. Such an idea may have been widely prevalent in heathenism, but as we have all along affirmed it was the aim

of the religion of Jehovah to separate Israel from heathenism in all its essential ideas, and we may be sure that the compilers of Leviticus were inspired with very different and indeed opposite beliefs. Jehovah was in the midst of His people as their glory to bless them. The aim of religion was not to defend them from Him but to bring them nigh to Him. The only dangerous thing was not His holiness but their sin or impurity, as separating them from Him their invisible King and Defender.

In such a ceremony repeated year by year continually, the religion of Israel culminated. It was founded upon the belief that Jehovah was in the midst of them, not to destroy or be a terror to them, but to bless and save them by reconciling them to Himself in righteousness. To this end they must observe all the commandments and statutes and ordinances which He had appointed to them. The commandments and the statutes commended themselves to their conscience as just and righteous, and these ordinances—especially these rites of atoning sacrifice—as founded upon a deeply-felt necessity for them, were to them “a reasonable service.” All their worship was inspired by a sense of the necessity for atonement, and without such an embodied confession of sin, approach to the sanctuary under any circumstances whatever would have been sacrilege. The presence of Jehovah evoked at once in the suppliant the consciousness of his unfitness to appear before Him, and that further continuance in His presence was only possible under the protection of the covering which in the blood of an acceptable sacrifice He had provided. “Without that covering every sacrifice even of praise and self-consecration was sinful, every priest was unholy and every place profane.”¹ So we cannot classify the Levitical sacrifices as we do those of other religions into honorary and piacular. Even the distinction generally made between the peace and thank-offerings and the sin and trespass offerings is only superficially correct, for all offerings as rooted in

¹ Cave, *Script. Doct. of Sacrifice*, p. 143.

the sense of sin and expressing the desire for reconciliation and communion with Jehovah, were piacular in the highest and truest sense of the word.

The Levite could not see with our eyes, nor in our light, but he and we are brought face to face with the same reality, though in his case the reality was exhibited in forms more level to his comprehension. In the Old and New Testaments, two volumes of one work, we have recorded the revelation of one Divine purpose to destroy the alienation from God involved in human sin. "The mind of God and the spiritual necessities of man have been substantially the same since sin entered the world, and hence the truth revealed to meet these necessities must have been essentially one in every age; while yet the precise amount communicated, and the form in which it was presented, must have varied from time to time."¹ It was disclosed as men were able to hear it, and always in the shape in which they could apprehend it. In the earlier stages when the reflective faculties were not sufficiently developed, it had to be revealed through symbols, and these symbols became types to the later or higher stages of religion. The partial exhibition of a truth is a prophecy of a fuller revelation of it, and so the truth symbolised prepared the way for its being exhibited in a higher form. The bond of union between the symbols and types of the old economy and the realities of the new, is the fact that one truth is funda-

¹ Fairbairn, *Typology*, vol. i. p. 64.

mental and essential in both, and that is the truth that without atonement or covering of sin, no reconciliation of sinful man to holy Jehovah is possible.

Of that atonement Jehovah Himself was the Author and Finisher. He did not demand from Israel blood of covering; He provided it for them and gave it to them. What atoned was not the blood of their own life surrendered in symbol, but the blood of a sinless life substituted for them. How it could make atonement an Israelite could not explain; he could only say that the symbol was divinely appointed, and, therefore, that its use was essential for the pacifying of any conscience anxious that its sin might be pardoned and that its uncleanness might be removed. In this respect he resembled ourselves in relation to the mysteries represented in the holy sacraments. These institutions are symbolic to us, but they are typical of realities to be disclosed in a higher dispensation. When we partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in faith, we apprehend in part realities which by and by we shall wholly comprehend. In like manner the atoning sacrifices of the old economy were sacraments divinely instituted, wherein "by sensible signs" the forgiveness of sin and the removing of uncleanness "were represented, sealed, and applied to believers." The blessing was according to faith, and in proportion to faith would be the insight into their significance. Without faith how puerile and trivial our sacraments appear to be; only the sprinkling of a little water, and the giving and receiving bread and wine. To faith, the one becomes

the laying of Christ's pierced but omnipotent hand upon the head of those who pass for ever under His protection; and the other becomes a more than royal feast with angels and archangels ministering to the glory of the Lord. And yet, the stronger our faith is, the deeper becomes our conviction that our symbolic sacraments are but shadows of a more glorious substance—rudiments which will become as antiquated in a higher and more spiritual state, as all Mosaic and Levitical ordinances have become in the present dispensation.

The end and head of the material creation is man, to whom in the long successive stages of creative energy all things pointed, although he appeared as no product of material creation, save in respect of the body which had been prepared for him out of it. The end of the higher creation represented by humanity is Christ, who owed nothing to humanity save the nature in which He was incarnate. To provide for His manifestation and mission "it was necessary to create a basis of language to express and bring into familiar use the sublime facts and renewing truths of the miracle and mystery of atonement disclosed in His holy life and suffering death. There were no types in nature out of which the words could grow that would signify a matter so supernatural. The only way, therefore, to get a language from them at all was to prepare it artificially, and therefore the ancient ritual of sacrifices appears to have been appointed partly for this purpose."¹

God had no pleasure in the blood of sacrifice, nor

¹ Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice*, p. 392.

was there any efficacy in it to cleanse away sin. "He never accepted any propitiation for sin, save the single one in perspective,"¹ the life which was worth infinitely more than the life of all sinners together, and whose sufferings surpassed in importance the sufferings of all men. To set forth this propitiation, however, so as to gain intelligent and sympathetic acceptance of it, the universal instinct to approach God by sacrifice, was in His providential dealings with a chosen people brought under Divine control and direction. God thus approached man to point out and sanction the way by which a broken covenant could be restored, and that way led through the sacred altars of the Court, the Holy place, the Holy of Holies, to the Cross of Calvary. As we observe all that was done at those ancient altars, we are being taught that sin can be taken away ; and as we consider the vacant Cross of Calvary upon which the Apostle and High Priest of our profession was once sacrificed, and as we are divinely certified that in virtue of that sacrifice He is now enthroned above the Mercy Seat in the holiest of all, we discover that He hath, indeed, appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and that if we truly look for Him, He shall appear the second time without or apart from sin, unto salvation.²

¹ Ruskin, *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, p. 11.

² Heb. ix. 28.