

# WRITINGS OF RF KINGSCOTE

by Rf Kingscote

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*A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Rf Kingscote, compiled for study and devotional reading.*

14 Chapters

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Chapter 1

## **01.0.1. Christ as seen in the Offerings**

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Title Page Christ as seen in the Offerings

by

R.F. Kingscote

## 01.0.2. Preface to this Digital Edition

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\*\*\*\*\* Preface to this Digital Module

I've been using computer Bible study software since the days of MS-DOS - early 1990's. From the first time I did a "CTRL-S" maneuver, I've never cracked open a Strong's again! (And no regrets about that!) As a busy preacher, I've tried to assemble a classic research library inexpensively. Access to the free digital materials included in the Bible study software packages I used increased my study library in amazing ways. The amount of free stuff I've accumulated would have cost a small fortune. Then one day I realized that I owed a debt. So I started looking for public domain resources to convert to digital Bible study modules. Now my personal journey has come full circle: from the excitement of discovering free computer Bible software to the excitement of helping and being a blessing to others.

Thank you, Michelle, Jeremiah, Isaiah & Micah, for understanding my debt and graciously tolerating my near compulsive computer use for hours on end. Thank you, Mr. Kingscote, for converting your studies to eternal print. And of course, most importantly, my thanks to the Lord Jesus who saved my soul for all eternity. This Edition There have been no changes to this material, except for the following:

1. Scripture references have been converted to Scripture hyperlinks using the "Format Scripture ToolTip."
2. A few obvious Scripture reference errors have been corrected, as well as some obvious spelling errors.
3. The copy and paste process has unfortunately removed some of the italicized print. While the words have not been changed, some of the emphasis may be missing. It is with regret that I have not taken the time to correct this. The sense is still accurate. [By the way - would you understand this paragraph without italics? Of course!] Also, the italicizing of the foreign words have been lost. It is my hope that the reader will be able to follow the flow regardless of these flaws. They - the flaws - are mine, not Kingscote's.
4. I am quite sure my edition of this work is rather imperfect. I pray that, nonetheless, it will be productively useful in the study of God's Word.

Finally Feel free to contact me with comments. You can reach me via e-mail at [Dave@DoctorDaveT.com](mailto:Dave@DoctorDaveT.com)

If you convert a classic resource to be used with eSword or TheWord, send me your work! I'd love to utilize it! Also - make sure you stop by [www.doctordavet.com](http://www.doctordavet.com) - for more digital Bible study modules. May the Lord bless you as study His word.

Dr. David S. Thomason

Florida, USA

2012

### **01.0.3. Copyright Information**

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## 01.0.4. Table of Contents

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## 01.1. The Burnt Offering.

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The Burnt Offering.

Leviticus 1:1-17; Leviticus 6:8-13. My intention is to take up in a simple way, as the Lord may help me, some of the offerings mentioned in the Book of Leviticus, because they set forth in a special manner the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, also, we may add, the blessings which have become ours through what He has done. Let us read, therefore, two verses in the last chapter of Exodus (Exodus 40:34-35), the whole of Leviticus 1:1-17, and "the law of the burnt offering" in Leviticus 6:8-13.

Probably most present here are aware that the offerings which are brought before us in the Book of Leviticus are, as I have intimated, types or pictures given by the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ's Person and work and of what results to us through that work too, thank God. But someone might say, "Are you sure that they are really types? Or is it only in the imagination of man that they are such?" In answering this inquiry we will turn to the New Testament, where we shall learn from the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as well as from the inspired words of an apostle, that the offerings of the Old Testament are indeed types of the Saviour and His work.

First, then, we will read a passage in Luke 24:1-53. The Lord Jesus, speaking to those two going to Emmaus, said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:25-27). The expression, "Moses and all the prophets," really comprehends the whole of the Old Testament. "Beginning at Moses," that is, the five books of Moses — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy — and then "all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures [that is, the Old Testament Scriptures] the things concerning Himself." Have you, dear friends, ever read the Book of Leviticus and learned from it the things concerning the Lord Jesus? Or have you done as many of the Lord's people to this day do? They commence to read through the Bible, but when they come to Leviticus they pass it over. They do not read it at all, because they think it is only a book of Jewish forms and ceremonies — a ritual that has nothing to do with Christians at all. But we learn from this passage in Luke that the Lord expounded to those two travelers "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." A little farther down in this chapter of Luke we read, "He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me" (Luke 24:44).

"The law of Moses" does not mean merely the ten commandments, but the first five books of the Bible.

"Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:45-46).

Oh, what a wonderful exposition that must have been! It was from the Old Testament Scriptures — the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms — that He expounded unto them the things concerning Himself. How wonderful then does this Book of Leviticus become in our eyes when we find that, instead of its being only some Jewish ritual, we have precious things in it concerning the Lord Jesus Himself. And when we find that each one of the offerings gives us a picture of the Lord Jesus, either in His Person or His work, how interesting does it become! It is indeed very gracious of God to teach us in this way, by means of types or pictures, for our poor, narrow minds could not apprehend at once the glory of the Person of the Lord Jesus or the value of His work. Therefore, God gives us these types in order that we may, so to speak, consider one aspect of the Person or work of the Lord Jesus at a time. Then, having looked at one type, we turn to another, which gives us a different aspect. Thus, putting all together, our hearts are filled with wonder, worship and praise, while we learn, in a way we could not otherwise have learned, what the glory of His Person is and what the value of His work.

We find in this Book of Leviticus that there were four chief offerings. Leviticus 1:1-17 presents the burnt offering; Leviticus 2:1-16 the meat offering; Leviticus 3:1-17, the peace offering; and Leviticus 4:1-35, the sin offering. Four offerings are brought before us by the Holy Spirit in order to make clear to our minds four different aspects of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as in the New Testament the Holy Spirit has given us, in the four Gospels, four different views of the Lord's Person.

Now if you turn to Hebrews 10, you will find all these four offerings mentioned:

"Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure" (Hebrews 10:5-6).

"Sacrifice and offering," in Hebrews 10:5, would answer to the peace offering and the meat offering, and in Hebrews 10:6 we have "burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin." So we find all these four offerings mentioned. Then in verse 7 the Lord Jesus is seen coming to accomplish the will of God.

It is very clear from these verses that the offerings are types of Him who said, "Lo, I come. . . to do Thy will, O God" — that is, of the Lord Jesus.

Another scripture that may be referred to is in Hebrews 9:1-28 :

"Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (Hebrews 9:6-8).

So, by Aaron's going only once a year into the holy of holies, the Holy Spirit signifies something. In fact, the act was typical; the whole ritual was so. We find indeed, from Hebrews 9:23, that the tabernacle and the things in it were called "patterns of things in the heavens."

I think we have now seen enough from the New Testament to show us very clearly that all these sacrifices are really types given us by the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Himself. We will therefore

return to our subject.

It is very helpful to connect the end of Exodus with the beginning of Leviticus. This is not often done, but I think we may lose by not doing it, and that is why I read those closing verses.

Twice over in them we find this expression: "The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34-35). "And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:35). Moses dared not go in because of the glory there.

Now read Leviticus 1:1 : "And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying." It was from within the tabernacle that the Lord spoke. He did not speak from Mount Sinai, where He gave the law. No. The glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle, and out of that glory He spoke to Moses, and said, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord." He gave out all those instructions, not about law-keeping, but about the sacrifices. Is that not significant? First, we find glory filling the tabernacle, and then God speaking out of that glory as to the way a sinner, like you and me, could be made fit for all eternity to dwell in that glory. How simply, how beautifully, it is brought out in this chapter! The burnt offering stands first, because it shows how a sinner by nature can be accepted before a holy God on the ground of sacrifice. It brings out clearly and blessedly how a sinner that is away from God, alienated from Him by wicked works, who hates God in his heart, who has a rebellious will, and is full of sin — how that sinner could be accepted before God on the ground of the value, in His eyes, of the sacrifice of Christ. That is what we have brought out in the burnt offering. I do not say that it is the first thought, but it is what we do find brought out.

Now, of what does this burnt offering speak? "The work of Christ," you say. But what aspect of the work of Christ? Well, the sin offering, which comes last in order, speaks for itself. That is a type of Christ bearing our sins, what we have done, putting them away forever. But what is the burnt offering? The burnt offering is that which typifies Christ coming to do the will of God, at all cost to Himself, in spite of all that awful suffering and agony of the cross. He came to accomplish the will of God and to glorify Him, even in death. Thank God, it was for us too. God's will was our salvation, and thus the Lord Jesus, in coming to accomplish the will of God, came to accomplish our salvation also. Suppose I were to ask this question of the Lord's people generally: "What do you think was the first object of the Lord Jesus Christ in coming into this world?" What answer do you think they would give? Nine out of ten would say that the first object was to save sinners, of course. Yet that was not the first object. It was an object. But what was the Lord's first object in coming into this world? Have we not just read from Hebrews 10?

"Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come . . . to do Thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:5-7). The first object the Lord Jesus had in coming into this world was to accomplish the will of God and to glorify Him. And when was this perfect obedience to the will of God more perfectly expressed than when He was made sin for us on the cross? when He, to do the will of God, went down into death, and that for us? It was when He took our sins upon Him and was made sin that God acquired His highest and greatest glory (John 13:31-32). It is most important to see that.

Very naturally, therefore, the burnt offering comes first, because it presents Christ, not so much as taking our sins, but as offering Himself without spot to God, to accomplish the will of God and to glorify Him, and that in death.

If you turn to Ephesians 5:1-33 you will find that there are two sides of the work of Christ presented to us in one verse:

"Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us" (Ephesians 5:2); that is our side:

"An offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor"; that is the other side, and that is the aspect that is presented in this burnt offering — an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. I am sure we lose very much in our own souls through not looking at that aspect of the sacrifice of Christ — what it is to God, and not merely what it is for us. We get far deeper peace by looking at it in that way. We gain immensely by it. Let me ask you, Have you ever contemplated that aspect of the death of the Lord Jesus? I trust that everyone here is able to say from the heart, "The Lord Jesus died for me; in the love of His heart He gave Himself for me." Wondrous and blessed fact! We shall never forget it through all eternity. But let me ask you, Have you ever dwelt upon what that work of Christ was to God? Have you ever considered what were God's thoughts concerning that blessed One when He thus offered up Himself without spot? Returning to Leviticus 1 we read:

"If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it for his acceptance [this is the correct reading] at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord" (Leviticus 1:3).

Mark, the animal is not killed yet. It is first brought, or presented, without blemish, for the offerer's acceptance before the Lord. An imperfect animal could not be accepted. Just turn to a passage in Leviticus 22:1-33.

"Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the Lord for a burnt offering; ye shall offer for your acceptance [or, that ye may be accepted; see the Revised Version] a male without blemish, of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats. But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you. And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the Lord to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein" (Leviticus 22:18-21).

It must be perfect to be accepted, to begin with. If there had been a single spot, a single blemish, upon that bullock, it could not have been accepted, and if the bullock had not been accepted, the offerer would not have been accepted, for it was for his acceptance that the animal was offered. What does that point to? To the holy, spotless Person of the blessed Lord Jesus, born into this world, made of a woman, made under the law, the One who thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Php 2:1-30), but who made Himself of no reputation, emptying Himself, coming into this world, not a full-grown man as Adam, but a new-born babe, and then passing through this world as the holy, sinless One and offering Himself without spot to God. The whole of that blessed, spotless life (which I do not dwell on now, because it is typified in the meat offering), the whole of that life,

every word He spoke, every action He performed, ascended to God as a sweet savor. And then we find that He went into death. The obedience that characterized Him in His life was only perfected, so to speak, in His death. Or, as we read in Php 2:1-30, He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. We know the Father's thoughts of that blessed One. Twice over the heavens were opened, and the Father's voice was heard, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," or, "in whom I have found My delight" (JND). Every thought of His heart was to God a sweet savor. Then came the dreadful hour in the garden of Gethsemane, when there was brought before the Lord Jesus all that He would have to go through if He persisted in this blessed path of obedience — what He would have to go through if He carried out the will of God perfectly. It was all brought before Him in such wise that the Lord said, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). So He goes on to the cross in perfect and blessed obedience and there offers Himself up, a willing victim, to accomplish the will of God.

I ask you, beloved friends, not what your thought is about that wondrous work, that act of blessed obedience and devotedness to the Father's glory, but, Have you ever considered what is God's thought about that blessed One and His obedience unto death? If the Father could say of Him during His life here, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," how much more now that He has gone even into death itself, out of obedience and love to the Father. In John 14:31 we find the two things, His love and His obedience to the Father, both shown in His going on to death. "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence." He rose from the supper to go to the cross.

Suppose a friend whom we loved very much went through great trouble and suffering to do something we wished to be done, should we not appreciate his devotedness to us? Think then of the Lord Jesus Christ, at all cost to Himself, at the expense of that awful agony of the cross, in perfect obedience coming to do the will of God; as He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34). The Father ever delighted in Him. But now He was going to lay down His life in love and obedience to the Father, and He says, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again" (John 10:17). Therefore! Did not the Father always love the Son? To be sure He did. Yet He says, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life." There was a fresh cause, a new motive, so to speak, for the Father's love to flow out toward the Son; and when on the cross the Lord was made sin, never was He personally more the object of the Father's delight. His being made sin was the perfection of His obedience. He went into death out of obedience to God. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. O beloved friends, what does God think of that? It is expressed in our chapter in these words:

"But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water [that is, the sacrifice was made clean to show what Christ was by nature — perfect, pure and holy]: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord" (Leviticus 1:9).

"An offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord." What idea do those words convey to your minds? Is not a sweet savor something in which we delight, something that is pleasing to us? These are the words the Holy Spirit uses to make known to us God's thoughts of that blessed One and His sacrifice. "An offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord." What does "fire"

mean in Scripture? Fire signifies generally God's testing judgment. Fire and the sweet savor go together. Look at that blessed One on the cross. When He was there, all the waves and the billows of the judgment of God rolled over His head. When He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; when He was there, bearing the whole weight of our judgment, in His infinite grace, what came out? Nothing but infinite perfection, nothing but a sweet savor to God, nothing but what God found infinite delight in. He was tested to the utmost, and the more He was tested the more sweet savor came out. The more we are tested, very often, the more our imperfections come out. The more He was tested, the more His perfections came out — the more the sweet savor came out before God. How blessed to look back and see the Lord Jesus made sin for us, and yet the sweet savor of what He was going up to God! In that sweet savor we find ourselves accepted, as we shall see further on.

Up to this time we have been thinking of what Christ is to God, and if we ask, "What does God think of the wondrous sacrifice of the Lord Jesus? What does He think of that blessed One who went to the cross to accomplish His glory at all cost to Himself?" the subject is so great that we can never know it in its fullness. But the Holy Spirit has expressed it for us in these words: "An offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" (Ephesians 5:2).

Now, what is our part in the burnt offering? Where do we come in? It has been truly said that the burnt offering was all for God; the priest was to "burn all on the altar." But we must remember that atonement is spoken of, blood-shedding is spoken of, and in verse 4 it says, "And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him." That is our part — our getting the benefit of it, so to speak. It is the sin offering that tells us how Christ "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." That relates to what we have done. The burnt offering deals more with the question of what we are — our state before God as sinners, as in Romans 5:19 : "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners" — what we are by nature. That is really the question to be settled, and how a sinner by nature can be accepted before a holy God. This is a difficulty to thousands of the Lord's people. Many say, "I have no difficulty about my sins; I know the Lord bore them all. Yet I cannot say that I have settled peace before God." How is that? You say, "I see my sins are forgiven, but I feel I come far short of what I ought to be as a Christian. I seem to have so little love for the Lord and for His Word."

I believe the burnt offering represents that which fully meets this question, because it deals more with our state by nature, and how we are accepted before God. This is not the first time we read of a burnt offering in Scripture. Abel's offering bore the character of a burnt offering, and by it he obtained witness that he, a sinner by nature, was righteous, God testifying of his gifts — that is, bearing witness to the value of the sacrifice (Hebrews 11:4).

Noah also offered a burnt offering after the deluge. And the Lord smelled a sweet savor there and said in His heart, "I will not again curse the ground," although "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21). Again, Job offered burnt offerings for his sons. "For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts" (Job 1:5).

You will notice that Leviticus 1:4 of our chapter says, "He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering." That action means that the offerer was identified with all the value of the sacrifice. In other words, if God accepted the sacrifice, He accepted the one who brought it, but if God rejected the sacrifice, He likewise rejected the one who came with it. If God found the sacrifice a

sweet savor and found delight in it, He found the same delight in the one who came with it. The offerer was fully identified with the value of the sacrifice before God. As we read, "And it shall be accepted for him," instead of him. Oh, how simple and how blessed that is! The sacrifice of Christ accepted by God for us, according to all the value that He puts upon it — Christ accepted instead of us. Instead of being before God with our sins and hatred to Him, instead of our disobedience and lack of devotedness, we are accepted according to all the value of that work on the cross, where our sins were all atoned for and where Christ's obedience, devotedness and love to the Father were fully manifested. "It shall be accepted for him."

Whatever the offerer was, whether he was devoted or not — whatever were his feelings, his experiences or his thoughts as to the value of the sacrifice — all this had nothing to do with his acceptance. The question was what the value of the offering was in the sight of God. The offerer might have said, "If God accepts the sacrifice, I am accepted; if He rejects the sacrifice, I am rejected too. If God finds delight in the sacrifice I bring, He finds delight in me too." How simple when we apply that to our case! In other words, it is Christ and His work accepted by God instead of me. That is really it. Thank God, if we have once come as lost sinners and taken our true place before Him, we find ourselves accepted, in spite of all that we are — our unworthiness, our lack of devotion, and our hatred and rebellion against God — accepted on the ground of what Christ was to God when He offered Himself a willing sacrifice — when He was made sin for us, who knew no sin. Does not that make it plain? I am sure we lose a great deal by not dwelling more on what that work was to God.

We must remember that these things give only different aspects of the same work. It was when the Lord was made sin for us, bearing our judgment, that the sweet savor of His sacrifice rose up to God. Has the value of that sacrifice before God changed? Thank God, it has not. The value of that sacrifice is as fresh before God today as on the day upon which it was offered.

We will just look at "the law of the burnt offering" in Leviticus 6 before we close.

"Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: It is the burnt offering, because of the burning upon the altar [mark the following expression] all night unto the morning" (Leviticus 6:9).

I think that is so beautiful! It was burning "all night unto the morning." In the darkness of the night, when Israel was asleep or perhaps murmuring in their tents — in the midst of the darkness there was the sweet savor of the sacrifice going up before God. Is it not the night now? "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Romans 13:12). Is it not night during the absence of the Lord Jesus, till He comes as the bright and morning Star? It is blessed to think that during the long, dark night, when the ruin of the professing church is becoming more and more manifest, and in the midst of all the failure of the Lord's people on every hand, the sweet savor of the sacrifice, when Christ offered up Himself, is as fresh before God as at the moment when it was offered. May we not also apply it individually? Yes. If we get away from the Lord in heart and drift back into this world and the things of the world — right away from the Lord — is our acceptance before God changed? No; for the sweet savor of the sacrifice of Christ before God is as fresh as ever, and in that we are accepted. Does that sweet savor ever alter? Never. Therefore the believer's acceptance never alters. Our appreciation of it may; alas! it does. As we often sing —

"My love is oftentimes low,

My joy still ebbs and flows;

But peace with Him remains the same:

No change Jehovah knows."

There is another blessed point brought out in this chapter 6, and that is the eternal efficacy and value of Christ's work. "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" (Leviticus 6:13). Never go out. What does that imply? When we have been in the glory of God for innumerable ages, we shall be there on the same ground as that upon which we are now accepted — namely, the value of the work of Christ before God. When God brings in the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwells righteousness, the foundation on which all that scene of blessedness will rest will be the sweet savor of the sacrifice of Christ, when He offered Himself without spot to God.

I do not know a more peace-giving truth than this that we are dwelling on. If anyone asks, "What are you building on? What are you resting on for your eternal salvation?" we can answer, "The value God puts upon the work of His beloved Son." What a sure, solid foundation for our souls! I was only lately saying to some Christians, "It is a great thing to see that you and I are as fit for heaven now as we ever shall be through all eternity." At first they could not see it and did not quite believe it. They could not endorse that statement. I then asked the question, "What makes us fit to dwell with Christ in glory?" They said, "Why, of course, the work of Christ." But will the work of Christ be of any more value in God's sight when we are in glory than it is today? Not one atom. Therefore, if we are believers, the blessed truth is this, that on the ground of that work we are as fit for the glory now as we ever shall be when we are actually in it, although then free from the presence of sin and with a glorified body like Christ's. And although we may fail and get away from the Lord and our hearts become as cold as a stone, though the whole professing church has gone wrong, how blessed it is to think of the burnt offering burning all night — the sweet savor of it as fresh before God at this moment as on the day when the sacrifice was offered. And throughout all the countless ages of eternity it will be still the same — what Christ was to God when He offered Himself without spot through the eternal Spirit. May the Lord give us, beloved friends, to know more of that wondrous work of the Lord Jesus on the cross — what it is to God and what it has done for us. It will be our theme of praise in glory, when we shall know as we are known. The same blessed Saviour will occupy us then and will bring out the thanksgiving of our lips and the adoration of our hearts. May God grant that it may be more and more so now.

## 01.2. The Meat Offering

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The Meat Offering Leviticus 2:1-16; Leviticus 6:14-18.

We were saying last week that the burnt offering, which comes first in the Book of Leviticus, is a type of the Lord Jesus offering Himself to accomplish the will of God, at all cost, even to death. We have blood-shedding and atonement in that offering, because, although the Lord Jesus went into death in obedience to God, it was on account of what we are by nature, on account of our condition as lost children of Adam. The case of the meat offering is quite different. There is no blood-shedding here. This offering was composed of fine flour, or it might be of green ears of corn. There was no death connected with it. The fine flour was to be mingled or anointed with oil, and frankincense was to be put upon it. Part of the meat offering — "the memorial of it," as it is called — with all the frankincense was offered on the altar for a sweet savor to God. Thus, it was quite unlike the burnt offering, all of which went up to God, excepting only the skin, which the priest had for himself. The remainder of the meat offering Aaron and his sons ate.

Now, while the burnt offering typifies Christ offering Himself to God for a sweet savor in His death — obedient unto death — the meat offering speaks to us of the perfect, sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus — what He was as a man here on earth, but as offered to God; "an offering," as it states here in Leviticus 2:1-16, "made by fire." This fire, as you know, represents testing judgment, and surely the blessed Lord was tested in all His path through this world, as also on the cross and by death itself. But the more He was tested, the more was brought out His infinite perfection before God. Every thought, every word and every action was a sweet savor to God. The Lord was perfect in every step of His way through this world — perfect in obedience, perfect in dependence, perfect in meekness, perfect in kindness, perfect in sympathy, perfect in humility; in fact, there is not a single grace you can think of that the Lord Jesus did not exhibit in all its perfection during His life upon earth. This the meat offering typifies. All the frankincense was to be burned with the meat offering, and the sweet perfume of that frankincense speaks to us of all the graces of the Lord Jesus, everything being perfectly acceptable to God — a sweet-smelling savor.

Some might wonder why the burnt offering comes first, since the Lord's life, as a matter of time, came before His death. But divine wisdom is shown in giving us the burnt offering before the meat offering, for had the Lord stopped short of death and the bearing of judgment as made sin for us, had He failed when the last test came — when, in the garden of Gethsemane, there was brought before the Lord all the awful suffering He would have to go through in bearing the judgment of God if He took up our case — if then He had said, "It is too much; I cannot go on to that in obedience to God," His obedience would not have been perfect. Therefore, we get in Php 2:1-30, He "became obedient unto death." The perfection of His obedience reached even to death.\* The obedience that characterized Him throughout His life was brought to its severest trial in His death. Then that obedience was perfected in His giving up His life in atonement. Thus we find, first of all, the Lord's death brought out in the burnt offering, as that was the foundation of everything. Then, in the meat offering, we find what He was as a man here on earth — His life here, but as offered to God.

{\*This is also seen in the meat offering, but the difference is that in the burnt offering it is the Lord's death and blood-shedding and atonement, while in the meat offering it is His life here on earth. Hence, in the latter there is no blood-shedding or atonement.}

It is a very blessed subject indeed, but one feels utterly unable to speak at any length of the perfections of the Lord Jesus in His life here below. Would that one could better! There is, however, a very practical side for us to consider, and we always gain by learning God's thoughts concerning the Person of Christ, whether in His life or in His death. When we were looking at His death and the value of it, we saw how infinitely acceptable all was to God. All was a sweet savor. We saw that every believer in Christ is accepted before God in that same sweet savor. That shows how we gain by learning God's thoughts about the Lord's death. So, when the thoughts of God concerning the life of Christ on earth are known by us, we are immense gainers. We see the delight that God finds in Him, and we can, as believers, say that we are accepted in that blessed One. Of course, it is only after His death and resurrection that we could be in Him, but the same One in whom we are now accepted was the Object of God's delight here below. The better we know God's thoughts about Christ, the better we know God's thoughts about us, who are in Christ. According to that verse in 1 John 4:1-21, "As He is, so are we in this world." There is not a single grace, not a single beauty, not a single perfection of the Lord Jesus that we see brought out in the Gospels respecting which we, as believers, may not say, "That is mine." Do you ask how this can be? I reply, Is not Christ your life? "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear" (Colossians 3:4). Do you want to see what your life is in its perfection? You must not look at yourselves or your fellow-Christians; you must look at Christ here on earth. "For the life was manifested" — shown out (1 John 1:2). What life? The eternal life. That is the life you and I possess as believers. How often that blessed yet simple verse, the last verse of John 3, is quoted and preached from! And how many thousands of souls have gotten peace from it!

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

Many, by believing that verse, have known they are saved, but when we come to inquire, "What is that everlasting life that we possess?" we have touched upon a far deeper question than that of the soul's salvation. Well, I say, You must not look at me to find it out, because very often a great deal that is not the life of Christ comes out; very often the sin, the Adam-nature, shows itself. No; if you wish to see the eternal life that I possess perfectly manifested, you must look at the Lord Jesus Christ as a man on earth. The meat offering, then, sets forth the life of Jesus as a man on earth, yet as offered to God. He is our life now as risen from the dead, and was not that life manifested in His Person here on earth? Most of you will remember that verse in 2 Corinthians where we find the very expression, "Life. . . of Jesus." Just turn to it for a moment (2 Corinthians 4:10).

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."

Now, this is the part I meant to call your attention to:

"That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

Scripture furnishes no account of the Lord's life in glory, where He is now. We only know that He is there, and there to make intercession for us. But in the Gospels God has given us an account of the life of the Lord Jesus on earth in four distinct aspects, just as there are four great, typical

offerings in the Book of Leviticus, as we noticed when speaking of the burnt offering. And the life of Jesus, that eternal life, which was with the Father, was manifested, or shown out. The Lord having now died and borne our sins, being made sin for us, there is an end of what we were as children of Adam, and, as risen out of death, the Lord communicates His resurrection life to us. As we read in John 20, He breathed on His disciples and said to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"; that is, He imparted life in resurrection in the power of the Holy Spirit. Does it not make it more interesting when we remember this in looking at the life of the Lord Jesus here on earth? Returning to our chapter, we read:

"And when any will offer a meat offering unto the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour" (Leviticus 2:1).

Fine flour is a type of the spotless, sinless humanity of the Lord Jesus. The Lord speaks of Himself once or twice, at least, in the Gospels, as wheat, and also as bread. One instance is in John 6:1-71.

"For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (John 6:33).

There you see that a humbled Christ — the One who came down — is called "the bread of God." And John 12:1-50 says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone" (John 12:24).

There the Lord speaks of Himself as a corn of wheat. In John 6:1-71, as we saw, He speaks of Himself as the bread of God. Thus, it is not very hard to understand the language of the types when we turn with the light of the New Testament to the Book of Leviticus. We find that one of the offerings, which we know typifies Christ, is composed of fine flour. This represents the One who came down from heaven, the Man Christ Jesus, in His spotless, sinless humanity here. And how beautiful is fine flour! When we pass our hand through it, there is no roughness, no unevenness; all is perfectly smooth. So in the Lord Jesus. There was no unevenness in Him; there was nothing in that blessed One but what was absolutely according to God's mind. In some cases the fine flour was mingled with oil; in other cases it was anointed with oil.

"And if thy oblation be a meat offering baked in a pan, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil" (Leviticus 2:5).

"Mingled with oil." Of what does that speak to us? Well, we know that the blessed Lord Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, as the angel announced to Mary "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

Thus, in His nature as a man, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, and everything that He did was by the power of the Holy Spirit. No doubt the mingling of the oil speaks to us of that.

Some of the meat offerings were anointed with oil, which speaks for itself. Most of us are familiar with the verse, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38). The Lord was anointed with the Holy Spirit when He was about thirty years of age. At the baptism of John the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove and abode upon Him. There was the anointing.

There is another thing to be noticed in this offering, and that is the entire absence of leaven. There was to be no leaven in any of the offerings.

"No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire" (Leviticus 2:11).

Leaven in Scripture is a type or symbol of evil. There is not a single place in Scripture where it typifies any good. I am aware that some people, who cannot deny that it represents evil in many places, say that in one place it means good. The supposed exceptional passage is in Matthew 13:33.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Those people say that this means the gradual spread of good in the world, until at last the whole world becomes converted. We know, however, that it is not so. In every instance where the word leaven is found, it refers to evil. Two passages will be enough to quote here. In 1 Corinthians 5:8 we read, "The leaven of malice and wickedness" and in Luke 12:1 the Lord said, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" In this same Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 16:12) the Lord shows His disciples that when He bade them beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, He referred to their doctrine, and this parable in Matthew 13:1-58 no doubt speaks to us of the spread of the Christian religion, so called, in contrast to other religions, but not of true faith and real conversion so much as of propagating doctrines and dogmas in the world, the result being professing Christendom. Doctrines are held where there is no real conversion, and all mere outward religion must be connected with evil. For instance, Babylon, in the Book of Revelation, representing worldly religion, will be judged by God as utterly corrupt and evil. When we understand by God's Word that the professing church here on earth is going to get more and more corrupt, evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse (2 Timothy 3:13), we need not seek to alter the significance of the word leaven in Matthew 13:1-58. It is all simple and clear. There was to be no leaven in any offering of the Lord. That speaks for itself. In the Person of the blessed Lord Jesus, there was no sin; "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." And the exception in Leviticus 2:12 only brings out more strikingly the wonderful accuracy of the Spirit of God in using these types and shows that the records are inspired of God in a most admirable way.

"As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the Lord: but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savor" (Leviticus 2:12).

Particulars of the oblation of firstfruits are given in Leviticus 23:15-21. The meat offering referred to there is a type of the church, of Christians as a body, sanctified by the Spirit of God and accepted in all the value of the work of Christ. In that instance only was leaven to be present. How beautifully accurate Scripture is! In the one type only, which represents us as believers in Christ, was leaven to be found, because, although we are before God according to all the value of the work of Christ, we still have sin in us. If an uninspired man had written the Book of Leviticus, would he have put in a thing of this kind? Impossible. These are God the Holy Spirit's pictures of the heavenly things and of the One who was coming.

There was also to be no honey in the sacrifice. Honey is understood to typify that which is sweet to us as men here — family affection and such like, right in itself — but when it was a question of being wholly consecrated to God or offered to Him, as in the language of our type, all this had to be set aside. The blessed Lord when on earth fully recognized natural relationships, but (to use the language of another) He who could say, "Woman, behold thy son!" and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother!" even in the terrible moment of the cross, when all was finished, could also say, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" when He was in the simplest accomplishment of His service.

There is very little said of the Lord's life before His public ministry. We have just a mention of Him when He was twelve years of age. He was with the doctors in the temple, hearing them and asking them questions. It was then that He said to His mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" He was consciously the Son of the Father, yet the very next verse says that He went back with His parents and was subject to them. That shows the perfection of what He was, even at twelve years old — a subject Son to His earthly parents. How beautifully the Lord's perfections came out every step of the way! What passed from the time He was twelve years of age till He was thirty, the Holy Spirit does not reveal to us, but all that time the Father's eye rested upon Him, and all His thoughts, acts, words and prayers were going up as a sweet savor to God.

Concerning the commencement of His public ministry, we read in Matthew 3:1-17, "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:16-17). Have you ever seen the force of that expression, "Unto Him"? It does not say the heavens were opened upon Him, but "the heavens were opened unto Him," which means that He Himself was the Object on earth for the heavens to look down upon. "The heavens were opened unto Him" and then the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, in the form of a dove, and rested upon Him. Never, from the moment Adam sinned and dishonored God, never till this time was there a man here on earth in whom God could find perfect delight. Never before was there a man without sin here on the earth, a man in whom God could find His delight. Never. Therefore the heavens, so to speak, must open and the Father's voice declare, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

These words were repeated on the mount of transfiguration, farther on in the Lord's ministry, nearer His death. Again the voice came from the excellent glory, as the Apostle Peter tells us: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased [or, have found My delight]." I have found My delight, the Father says, in Him, Wonderful and blessed to think of the delight that the Father found in Him. The world did not know Him; they rejected Him. They saw Him only as the carpenter's son. They called Him Beelzebub. "He hath a devil," they said; "why hear ye Him?" They did not know who He was, but the Father knew. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I have found My delight" (J.N.D). A great many are not clear about the life of the Lord Jesus on earth. We know that many thousands of Christians think that His perfect, spotless life on earth is reckoned to them for righteousness. Their thought is that He kept the law for them during His life, and on the cross He bore their sins, and that the righteousness of His life is reckoned to those who believe. But there is no scripture to show that Christ kept the law for us, or that His righteous life on earth is imputed to the believer. God has made Him righteousness unto us (1 Corinthians 1:30), and we are made the

righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21), but this is only in resurrection. On the other hand, we are apt to go to the other extreme and attach too little importance to the Lord's life. Nevertheless, it is very clear that His life is not for our justification, and we cannot be too clear upon it, for if He had lived down here ten thousand years and had not died, we could never have gone into the glory of God. Never. Therefore, we can say with all confidence that the Lord's life on earth did not put away sins. His death and blood-shedding alone could do that. If it be asked, "What was the object of His life on earth?" I reply that in all things we are apt to think of our own side and the benefits we get from what Christ has done. Have you ever considered that the world's history for four thousand years, from the time that Adam sinned till the Lord came, is a history of sin, of dishonor done to God, of rebellion against Him, and of independence and self-will in every conceivable form? We have only to read the Old Testament to find that this was the case, both before the flood and after it. It is all the same story — nothing but a history of man's sin, rebellion and independence of God, except when there was true faith wrought by the Spirit of God. And is all this to be allowed to pass without any notice being taken of it? No.

It is most interesting to see that the Lord Jesus, in His life down here, took up and glorified God in every point in which the first Adam and his race failed. It is very blessed to see that. Adam and all his race are characterized by disobedience. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (Romans 5:19). What characterized the Lord Jesus? Obedience, perfect obedience. Independence characterized the first Adam and all his race all the way down. Look at the tower of Babel, for instance. What an expression of independence that was! They said, "Let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name. . . . And the Lord said, . . . now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:4-6). There was the self-exaltation of man on the earth in independence of God. But what characterized the Lord Jesus? Perfect dependence. In the wilderness He was ahungred, and when the devil came to Him and said, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread," He answered, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Perfect dependence, perfect obedience, characterized the Lord Jesus in every possible way. He brought infinite glory to God in the very place where nothing but dishonor had been brought to Him by the first man and his race. It is most blessed to think of — He was doing the Father's will at all cost to Himself. Do you think that you lose by contemplating God's thoughts of Christ? I will give you an instance of the opposite of this. Just turn to John 6:37-38.

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Why?

"For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." The beauty of that well-known passage — "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" — is generally missed by not reading the context, for "him that cometh to Me" is only the last half of the verse. The whole verse is seldom quoted. How beautifully Christ's obedience is brought out here! First, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." Then, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." How blessedly comforting that is! If I ask any soul that has not peace with God, "Have you

come to Christ?" and that soul can answer, "Yes," I can say, "That shows that you are one whom the Father has given to Christ, for He said, 'All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me,' and you have come to Him. The Lord says, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.' The Father sends these sheep to Christ, and in receiving them He is doing the Father's will. How would He be doing the Father's will if He cast out those whom the Father had given Him? In receiving you and me He is doing the Father's will, because the Father sent us, and we came. We did not know it at the time, but we know it now, thank God." This is an example of how we gain by seeing that the Lord was here doing the Father's will perfectly.

Surely the life of the Lord Jesus on earth was of use, although, as I said, of no use to us as sinners. But now that we are saints of God, how blessed to look back on the spotless life of the Lord Jesus here on earth, to read the Gospels in the light of this meat offering, and see the Man Christ Jesus going through this world, altogether a sweet savor to God, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps (1 Peter 2:21).

You may have noticed the different intensity of the trials to which the Lord as man was subject here. This was typified by the different ways in which the meat offering was prepared. In one case it was baked in an oven (Leviticus 2:4). In another case it was baked in a pan — a flat slice or plate (Leviticus 2:5). In a third case it was baked in a frying pan. These different modes of offering the meat offering by fire no doubt set forth the different degrees of intensity in the trials to which the Lord was subject here. The "oven" may refer to the hidden path of His life, that which men could not see, that which was between Himself and God alone. How blessed to be allowed to enter into all this! It will be the joy of our souls in that day of glory that is coming when we are with Him to be going over and retracing the pathway of that blessed Lord who so humbled Himself in this world — the One who, in coming to do the will of God, also, in the love and grace of His heart, gave Himself for our sins, becoming a man in order to do it. In Leviticus 2:13 we find another thing — namely, that salt was never to be lacking from the meat offering, or indeed from any offering.

"And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt."

Salt, as you know, is a preservative, and it may here speak to us of that which is eternal, as we read in Mark 9:49, "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." Eternal judgment is the portion of all men who die in their sins. But in the case of the sacrifice, the efficacy of it and its results will endure forever. It is "the salt of the covenant of thy God," in which God, as it were, binds Himself to bless us according to His own heart on the ground of the everlasting efficacy of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. In connection with this meat offering, the sweet savor of what Christ was to God here as man on earth will be no passing savor, but will abide for all eternity, as will also our joy in feeding upon Him as the humbled Man here on earth.

{\*Another has said, "All shall be judged — the saints, that they may not be condemned with the world, and the rest by final judgment — but salt, separation from evil, belonged to sacrifices thus given to God. And every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Those who were consecrated to God, whose life was an offering to Him, should not lack the power of holy grace which binds the soul to God and inwardly preserves it from evil" (JND).}

We will just refer in conclusion to "the law of the meat offering" (Leviticus 6:14-18). This passage brings out our portion in that offering. The memorial of that meat offering was to be burned upon the altar for a sweet savor unto the Lord.

"And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation shall they eat it. It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of My offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering."

"I have given it unto them." I think that is beautiful. God says, "I have given it unto them." Given what? The meat offering. Unto whom? Unto His priests, unto us — "for their portion of My offerings." It was God's offering, all offered to God, as the life of the Lord Jesus here, but we have our portion in it. We, as God's priests, can feed upon that humbled One; our souls can feed upon and delight in Him in His perfection as a man going through this world. How wonderful that is! And is it not very remarkable that every time these scriptures speak of Aaron and his sons eating of this offering, it is said, "It is most holy"? Read the third verse of chapter 2: "And the remnant of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire." Leviticus 2:10 also: "That which is left of the meat offering shall be Aaron's and his sons': it is a thing most holy of the offerings of the Lord made by fire." And Leviticus 6:17 : "It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of My offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering." "With unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place" (Leviticus 6:16). What is the holy place for us? Surely the presence of God. Without leaven the priests' portion was to be eaten in the holy place: with unleavened bread — the absence of all allowed sin. In the presence of God, with the flesh judged and kept in the place of death, only there and thus can we, as God's priests, feed upon the spotless, holy Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in His life as a man here below. The meat offering and the sin offering are characterized alike by "it is most holy." All the efforts and attacks of Satan against the truth, in almost all false doctrines, are directly or indirectly aimed at the Person or work of the blessed Lord — not so much at what He is now in glory, as what He was as man down here on earth. A humbled Christ seems to be the object of the enemy's attack in all false doctrine. It was so in the beginning. Look at the troubles in the early days of the church — the Arian doctrine, for instance, aiming a blow at the Person of Christ — and the doctrine of the non-eternity of punishment, in our day, indirectly undermining the truth both as to the Person and the work of Christ. But we read, first of all, that the priests shall eat of the meat offering. Only a converted person can understand and feed upon the Lord Jesus in His pathway through this world. Second, "With unleavened bread shall it be eaten." No sin may be allowed in us. If sin were unjudged in us, the Holy Spirit would be grieved and could not unfold to us the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ in His humiliation on earth. And it is the Holy Spirit alone who can do that. On the other hand, nothing is more dreadful than an unconverted man's criticizing and judging the life of the Lord Jesus here on earth, or than the exercise of the thoughts of an unrenewed heart as to the Person of the Son of God. The priests of God feed upon a humbled Christ in the holy place. May the Lord enable us in the power of the Holy Spirit to feed on Himself. Surely that is what the Lord speaks to us of in the message to the church at Pergamos in Revelation 2:1-29 : "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." What is the "hidden manna"? There in glory we shall, in the power of the Holy Spirit, look back and enter fully into God's delight in the perfections of the blessed Lord in His humiliation

upon earth, and it is surely our portion now. Surely His humiliation is far more wonderful to us than His exaltation — the humiliation of that blessed One who, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, humbled Himself, went down in perfect obedience "unto death, even the death of the cross." May the Lord in His grace give us to be feeding upon Himself more and more.

"There on the hidden bread,

On Christ — once humbled here —

God's treasured store, forever fed,

His love my soul shall cheer."

## 01.3. The Peace Offering

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The Peace Offering Leviticus 3:1-5; Leviticus 3:16-17; Leviticus 7:11-18; Leviticus 7:31-34. The term "peace offering" conveys a wrong thought concerning the sacrifice spoken of in the scriptures which we have just read. Many persons take it for granted that this offering typifies Christ making our peace with God. But that is not a correct thought. The peace offering is rather an offering of thanksgiving or praise. "Sacrifice of prosperity," as it is translated in French, better expresses the thought. The peace offering typifies our communion, as saints of God, on the ground of the value of the work and precious blood of Christ before God — our communion with God Himself, our communion with the Lord Jesus, and our communion with one another as priests of God. That is what is set forth in the peace offering. It is really a communion sacrifice, and thanksgiving and praise naturally flow from communion. Consequently, we have that expression, "If he offer it for a thanksgiving" (Leviticus 7:12). Praise and worship necessarily flow from communion. The ground of it all is the value of the work of Christ in the sight of God. That, no doubt, is why we find in Leviticus 3:1-17 that the peace offering is founded, as it were, upon the burnt offering.

"And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire" (Leviticus 3:5).

How beautiful that is! The burnt offering, you are aware, typifies Christ offering Himself to God in death for a sweet savor, and in the very place where He was made sin for us bringing fullest glory to God. There surely we find the foundation for everything — for all our joys, all our communion, all our worship and all our praise. The foundation of all is the burnt sacrifice.

We might, in passing, look at an illustration. See 2 Chronicles 7:1-3 —

"Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices."

There was the burnt offering offered up, and God signified His acceptance of it by sending fire down from heaven. That was a picture of Christ offering Himself as the true burnt offering, and God has shown His acceptance of it and delight in it by putting Christ at His own right hand in glory.

"When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped."

So, when we see that wondrous offering of the Lord Jesus and know the place in which God has put Him in glory, we worship as those who are accepted in all the infinite value of that one offering. Thus, the ground upon which we are worshippers is the offering of Christ to God for a sweet savor.

There is another thought connected with the peace offering which we ought to notice, and that is, although this offering typifies communion and thanksgiving and worship, these things are not individual, but collective. It is very blessed to see that they are connected with the Lord's table and

with our place there as worshippers. These things are brought out very clearly and distinctly in the peace offering.

It typifies communion, because all the persons concerned partook of the same sacrifice. God had His portion, the priest had his, Aaron and his sons had theirs, and the rest of the animal was eaten by the one that brought it and by those with him. We will refer to the verses which speak of this, that it may be impressed upon the mind: "It is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savor: all the fat is the Lord's" (Leviticus 3:16). "The fat that covereth the inwards" especially (Leviticus 3:3), but all the fat was offered to God upon the altar. It was God's part of the sacrifice, or, as it is beautifully expressed, "It is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savor." Whose food? God's food. That upon which He could feed, that was God's portion.

Leviticus 7:31 gives the connection. We saw in Leviticus 3:1-17 that all the fat was the Lord's. Here we find that "the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'." Aaron and his sons always typify believers — all believers in Christ — not looked at as one body, but looked at as individual priests to God. Aaron, when alone, is a type of Christ. Read verses Leviticus 7:32-33 : "And the right shoulder shall ye give unto the priest for a heave offering of the sacrifices of your peace offerings. He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part."

Connecting these verses together, we find out very clearly, first, that the fat was God's and was burned upon the altar for a sweet savor; second, that the breast belonged to Aaron and his sons; and third, that the right shoulder belonged to the offering priest — a type of the Lord Jesus. As I said before, the rest of the animal was eaten by the one who brought it and by his friends. Thus God, the offering priest, Aaron and his sons, and the person who brought the animal in sacrifice all fed upon the same thing — the same animal. It becomes, therefore, a very simple type of communion with God, and with the Lord Jesus Christ — the offering Priest — and with one another as believers. We might add, with the whole church, for when we think of our joys, our blessings, our communion, our praise, our worship — if they be really in the power of the Holy Spirit — all saints necessarily are included, for they have a common salvation, a common portion and common joys.

We will turn now to a passage in 1 Corinthians, in order to get a clearer understanding of the subject (1 Corinthians 10:15-20): "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of [or, in communion with] that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of [or, in communion with] the altar? What say I then? that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." In 1 Corinthians 10:18 we read, "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" I think many of the Lord's people read this verse without thinking of what it refers to. It no doubt has reference to the peace offering; so then unless that offering is understood, we cannot understand 1 Corinthians 10:18. Neither can we understand what the Apostle is speaking about in the other verses. Therefore I read them in connection with this offering in Leviticus. We read, "And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar

upon the burnt sacrifice" (Leviticus 3:5).

We have seen that the burnt offering speaks of that wondrous work in which Christ offered Himself to God without spot. In the very place where He was made sin for us, He put away all our sins, so that they are all gone forever from before God, and we, as believers, may add, "And we ourselves, as children of Adam, are gone too." What remains? Nothing but the sweet savor of what that sacrifice was to God, and in that we find ourselves accepted; in other words, it is not a question of our thoughts, of our appreciation of the work of Christ, of how we value it, but the blessed truth is that if you are the weakest, feeblest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ — one who has just looked once away from self to Christ as Saviour — it is true of you at this moment that you are accepted before God according to His estimate of all the infinite value of the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross. You and I may little enter into or understand it, yet such is the blessed truth. Does Christ's acceptability ever alter? Does the sweet savor ever change? Never. Neither does your acceptance ever change, dear believer in Christ. The sweet savor is as fresh before God now as it was when Christ offered Himself, and in that sweet savor you and I are found before God. This is the ground of our peace.

I need not say that unless a person has peace with God, unless every question about sin is settled, there can be no communion, no worship in spirit and in truth. The ground of it all is the value of the work of the Lord Jesus — all its efficacy in the sight of God. Perhaps the reason why so many Christians do not seem to have much heart or inclination to look into the Word of God and search out the precious things contained therein — do not seem very interested in what concerns the Lord's interests and what the Lord is in His own Person — is, in nine cases out of ten, because they have not really peace with God; the great question of their sins has never been settled. Therefore, when they come into the presence of God or think about the things of eternity, the question is always rising up in their minds, "Am I, after all, really accepted? Am I really and truly a child of God? Or have I been deceiving myself all this time?" Such a soul is not free to be occupied with God's thoughts about Christ, is not at liberty to be occupied with the blessed Lord Himself. Such a soul has necessarily to think about himself, his acceptance, and therefore the first great question with him is, "Am I fit to stand in the unclouded light of God's presence, in that glory where not a single trace of sin can be found? Can I stand there? Can I be at home there?" If we, any of us, look at ourselves, we must all confess that we cannot stand there for a moment, but if we look away from ourselves and see Christ offering Himself up to God, we hear the blessed words, "It shall be accepted for him." We learn that all our sins were dealt with and effaced at the cross, and that now nothing is left but the sweet savor of the sacrifice, and that we are before God according to the infinite value that He sets upon the work of Christ. What peace that gives!

"And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: it is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savor: all the fat is the Lord's" (Leviticus 3:16). The fat, especially that which covered the inwards, was, as it says in Leviticus 3:3, the Lord's. Fat signifies the energy of the inward will. When the will is in opposition to God, set up against Him, Scripture calls that sin. The very fact of our having an independent will of our own is sin. That is what it means in 1 John 3:4, which is not correctly translated in our version. I am glad, however, to see it is rightly translated in the Revised Version:

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." The proper reading is, "Sin is lawlessness." It is lawlessness to set up our own will in opposition to

God. That is why I said if any one of us had a will independent of God's will, that in itself is sin. So God claims all the fat for Himself, for if the will does not belong to God, it is sin; it is not God's will. The Lord Jesus could say, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." "Lo, I come," He said, "to do Thy will, O God"! He came to accomplish the will of God at all cost to Himself, although it led Him on to death, and that the death of the cross. He did not shrink back even in the garden of Gethsemane, where He prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

All the fat, then, was Jehovah's; all went up to God for a sweet savor. The energy of that will of the Lord Jesus was perfectly in accordance with God's will. That is a lovely expression in verse 16: "It is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savor." How much is involved in these few words — God's food. Where was the offering made? At the cross. How was it made by fire? The testing judgment of God was there, and the more Christ was tested, the more was brought out the perfection of that blessed One who came to do nothing but the will of God. God found His food in Jesus: He could feed upon Him; He could delight in Him. And we can say, "Never was He personally more the object of His Father's delight than when He went into death for our sins, even when forsaken of God on the cross," for Scripture never says, as some persons say, The Father forsook Christ. He said, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" I suppose that the only time He used that expression before His resurrection was when He was on the cross, when He took the sinner's place before a holy God, but personally never was He more a sweet savor than at that moment. The sacrifice of Christ has set us in the glory of God without a fault, and that glory can search us through and through and not find a single spot or stain. Why? Because we are there in all the value of the work of Christ, and if God were to find a spot upon one who was before Him on the ground of the value of the work of Christ, He would have to say that that work was not perfect. He would have to say, "The value of the sacrifice is not sufficient; it has cleansed some sin, but not all." Could God ever say that? Never. The more we are in the light of the glory, the more does it make manifest how clean we are, because washed in the precious blood of Christ. "It is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savor: all the fat is the Lord's." All belonged to Him. Is it not a very blessed thought for us, that that in which God finds His chief delight — that wondrous sacrifice — is the very work that has set us without spot in the presence of His glory?

Refer now to Leviticus 7:1-38 : "And the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar" (Leviticus 7:31). As we have seen, this was the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savor. We will connect this with the Lord's table. There it is that our worship ought to flow out. Our communion ought to be at its height when we are gathered there around the blessed Lord Himself, with the memorials of His death before us — His body given and His poured-out blood showing that redemption is accomplished. Surely if we can worship anywhere, it ought to be there. We read in 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, "The bread that we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Now, I think a great many of the Lord's people read that verse without really thinking what it means. I have heard a brother ask the Lord in prayer that the bread which we break might be the communion of the body of Christ to our souls. The Apostle does not say, "May the bread which we break be the communion of the body of Christ"; it is, he says. "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" And then he refers to the offerings under the law (Leviticus 7:1-38). He says, "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of [or, in

communion with] the altar?" (1 Corinthians 10:18). The words "communion of" and "partakers of" are two different translations of one expression in the original. The word is also used in connection with the heathen sacrifices; that is what the Apostle is speaking of there — "I would not that ye should have fellowship [communion] with devils" (1 Corinthians 10:20). But how blessed to know — do you ever have the thought when you break the bread at the Lord's supper? — that it is the communion of the body of Christ. What does that mean? It means, I believe, this: that by that act of yours you profess before all angels and principalities, intelligences and powers, that you are identified before God with all the value of the work of the Lord Jesus when He offered Himself to God for a sweet savor; that you are identified with the value of the sacrifice upon the altar; that you are in communion with the God to whom it was offered and with the Lord Jesus who offered Himself. The same thing applies to the cup. Whoever drinks of the cup says, by that act, "I am identified for all eternity with the value in the sight of God of the precious blood of Christ, which was shed for me." Therefore, although the bread remains bread and the wine remains wine, it is not like eating a piece of bread or drinking wine at home. If it be not as I say, what is it? Only an empty form, a mere profession, a non-reality, and if you read Leviticus 7:15 you will see that any worship apart from the sacrifice of Christ is only an abomination to God.

"And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning."

If he did so leave it, what happened? Read Leviticus 7:18 : "If any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity."

If any worship or praise to God is not connected with the value of the work of His Son, it is simply an abomination in His sight. In other words, people who have never been washed in the precious blood of Christ are not accepted as worshippers before God. There is nothing God is so jealous about as the way He is worshipped, and that generally is the last thing that Christians think about. "As long as we are saved, and get to heaven," they say, "it is of very little importance how we worship God; it is a secondary thing altogether." But when Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord, they were struck dead because they did not approach in the way God had commanded. And what did Moses say? "This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me" (Leviticus 10:3). For an unconverted person to pretend to worship God is, like Cain, to ignore sin and the fact that he is a fallen creature. When we are gathered around the Lord's table, the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. We are there gathered to the Lord's name, identified as true believers in all the value of that one offering, the sweet savor of which is before God in all its freshness, accepted before Him in the light of His presence without a spot. We know that we are fit to be there, and we give "thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Colossians 1:12). God finds delight in that wondrous sacrifice; we, in our poor, feeble measure, find our delight in it too. And we see the love that gave the Son, and we see the wondrous efficacy of that sacrifice and what a sweet savor it was to God, and then we find that the very thing that God finds delight in has set us, without a spot, in His own holy presence. This, surely, will bring praise and worship out of the heart — not prayer to ask the Lord that there may be worship — that is to confess there is none. When we are occupied with Christ and His beauty, thanksgiving and praise must flow out;

we cannot help it. Do you not think — I submit it to those who have had longer experience than I — that it is a mistake to suppose that we go to the Lord's table to worship, because we get occupied with the worship instead of the Lord? What do we go for? The disciples came together to break bread. They did not come to have a worship meeting or to have a service; they came to break bread, to remember the Lord in death. "This do," says the Lord, "in remembrance of Me." If we remember Him, we think of that work; we think of God's food of the offering, of His delight in it; we think of all its infinite results and the glory that is coming, and we cannot help rejoicing, in consequence of our blessing. So thanksgiving and praise must flow out. That is God's part; our part is mentioned in Leviticus 7:31 : "The priest shall burn the fat upon the altar: but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'."

Aaron and his sons typify all believers. The breast was their portion. What does the breast speak to us of? The place of affection, and the unutterable love of the Lord Jesus to us is our portion forever. We must ever remember that the blessed Lord Jesus loves all His people. Individually we say, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me," but collectively we say, He "loved the church, and gave Himself for it." It was love that brought Him down from heaven, from that glory which He had with His Father before the world was. Even then His delights were with the sons of men. Love brought Him to the manger and led Him through this world till He came to the cross, and there to give Himself for us. And it is well to notice that the Lord's words at the last supper, as to the bread and the wine, were more expressive of what His work was for us than the burnt offering aspect of it, what it was to God. "This is My body," He said, "which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me." At the Lord's supper it is surely not so much doctrine that engages us; it is the exercise of the heart and affections as we remember Him who gave Himself for us. We think of all the love of the Lord Jesus in thus giving Himself, and we shall ever remember it. We shall know it in all its fullness when we see Him as He is, when we behold Him in all His glory and beauty, when we behold Him there, the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily and the glory of God shining out of His face. We shall bow down before Him in worship, and individually we shall be able to say, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me." "The breast shall be Aaron's and his sons'." Ah! we shall never forget it; on the contrary, the remembrance of it will be intensified when we are in glory — that blessed, blessed reality! — He loved us; He gave Himself for us. Even now we say, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever." We say it now; how much more when in the glory and like Him! Thus we have seen that God has His part and that we have our part in the sacrifice of Christ. But there is Another who will have His part too, and that is the One who brought about all this blessing — the Lord Jesus Himself. We find the type of this in Leviticus 7:33 : "He among the sons of Aaron, that offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall have the right shoulder for his part." The offering priest is a type of the Lord Jesus, who offered Himself without spot to God. He must have His part, surely, in all this blessed communion and joy and worship, because it is through Him it has all come about, as we were singing:

"Our every joy on earth, in heaven,

We owe it to Thy blood." The Lord Jesus — wonderful and blessed to think of it — finds His joy and delight, even now, in seeing of the travail of His soul. How little we think, when we are gathered, for instance, around the Lord's table, of the Lord's joy in having us gathered around

Himself. And when we are in eternity, when we shall all be like Himself, and when He will fully see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, what joy He will have then! If we have done some piece of work that has cost us a great deal of pains and trouble, we have satisfaction in seeing the results of our labor. Do you not think that the Lord Jesus has joy in seeing the results of His work? Are not we the results of His work? What joy He must have in seeing us gathered around Himself to remember Him! And when we are thus gathered, and, indeed, at all times, we ought to see ourselves and our fellow-believers as He sees us — that is, in all the value of His work and acceptance in Himself before God.

I cannot leave this subject without referring to an illustrative passage in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter Matthew 26:29. It is connected with the Lord's supper too. The Lord said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

We read of the Father's kingdom in Matthew 13:1-58 also: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). It is the heavenly side of the kingdom. There will be the earthly side of it, but the heavenly side of it will be the excellent glory, as Peter calls it. Wine is a type of joy. What does the Lord mean when He says He will drink it new in His Father's kingdom? He means that it is not the joy of earth; it is the new joy belonging to that place of blessing into which He has brought us. There are two little words in this verse that I think very blessed — "with you." "I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." He will share the joy with us in that day of glory. And the Father will have His joy as He sees us blessed as His beloved children, holy and without blame before Him in love, according to His own heart and according to His own counsel before ever sin came in. The Lord will then be able to say, in the language of the Song of Solomon, "I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved" (Song of Solomon 5:1). In that day we shall not need to have our loins girded; we shall not need to be on the watch; there will be no danger of being defiled, but we shall share in those eternal joys which the Lord will minister to us with His own hands. He will make us sit down to meat and will come forth and serve us.

But, beloved brethren, we are not obliged to wait till we get to heaven in order to enjoy these things. We can begin here, and the Lord's table, surely, is intimately connected with all this. When we are gathered around Himself, we think of the body of Christ given for us, the love that it speaks to us of, the shed blood of which the cup reminds us. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" May the Lord give us, when we gather around Himself, to enter into it all in the full, unhindered power of the Holy Spirit. We need not think of worship. We are sure to worship if our hearts are filled with Christ and with the remembrance of what He has done through that one offering, when He offered Himself without spot for a sweet savor to God.

## 01.4. The Sin and Trespass Offerings

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The Sin and Trespass Offerings Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-7; Leviticus 6:24-30; Leviticus 7:1-7.

It would take too long to read all the passages that speak of the sin offering, so we will just read portions here and there. First, then, Leviticus 4. The sin offering and the trespass offering, though differing in detail, were exactly the same in character and principle. Some persons, I am aware, have thought that the sin offering deals more with the sin in our nature and the trespass offering with acts of sin — sins committed by us. But I can hardly see how that could be, for this reason, that in the case of all the sin offerings, with the exception of the priest's, we find this expression: "And it shall be forgiven him."

Now, most of us know that the sin in our nature is never, in Scripture, said to be forgiven. It is judged, or condemned (Romans 8:3). Sins are forgiven; sin is judged, or condemned. I will just read, in Leviticus 5:1-19, what is said as to one or two of the trespass offerings, in order to get the idea more clearly.

"Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty. Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these. And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: and he shall bring his trespass offering" (Leviticus 5:3-6).

You see that a trespass and a sin are very much the same: "When he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: and he shall bring his trespass offering." The two, sin and trespass, are put together. He has sinned, and he is to bring, not a sin offering, but a trespass offering. Then, again, "For his sin which he hath sinned. . . a lamb, or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering." That shows that a trespass is a sin, just as much as when it is called a sin. And in this Leviticus 5:6 the expressions "sin offering" and "trespass offering" are applied to the same animal. So the two are very much alike.

We will read Leviticus 5:14-19 and the law of the sin offering in Leviticus 6:24-30.

I might have mentioned, before reading these passages, that it is a great help to the understanding of all these offerings and sacrifices to notice that when we have the expression, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying," it is always the introduction of a new subject. Now, the first three chapters — which speak of the burnt offering, the meat offering, and the peace offering — are all, in a manner, one, because they are all "sweet savor" offerings, which the sin offering in itself is not. And you will not find that expression anywhere in those chapters after Leviticus 1:1. But when the subject of the sin offering is spoken of, in Leviticus 4:1-35, there you find the expression again, because it is a different character of offering — an offering for sin, instead of an offering made by fire for a sweet savor. We shall notice the difference by and by. You do not find a third occurrence

of it till you come to Leviticus 5:14. The trespass offering, properly so-called, begins with this verse. Leviticus 5:1-13 seem to connect the sin offering and the trespass offering together, as we have seen. I believe I am right in saying that, throughout this Book of Leviticus, at the beginning of every new subject this expression occurs.

It is important to see that the sacrifices are divided into two great classes — the sweet savor offerings, or offerings "made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord," and the sin offerings. In the sweet savor offerings, when the worshipper laid his hand upon the head of the offering, it signified that all the acceptability of the sacrifice was his; he was identified with all the sweet savor of the sacrifice. But in the sin offering it was just the other way. Instead of the offerer being identified with the sweet savor of the sacrifice, the animal — the offering — was identified with the man's sin; his sin was transferred to the head of the animal. Now, there are these two sides to the work of the Lord Jesus: The first is that the Lord Jesus was charged with our sins — He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world." The Holy Spirit has put into our mouths those words in Revelation 1:1-20 : "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." The Lord Jesus, at the last supper, in the night in which He was betrayed, when He took the cup, said, "This is My blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). That is our side, so to speak, and we shall never forget it throughout all eternity — that He gave Himself for our sins. In one sense it is even more wonderful than the other side, namely, our acceptance in Him. We think it is wonderful to have His place of acceptance before God, but I think it is even more wonderful that that holy, spotless One — the One who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, the One who was in glory with the Father before the world was — that that glorious Person should become a man in order that He might charge Himself with the sins that we had committed against God — that He might bear them in His own body on the tree. That is what the sin offering typifies, and when the offerer laid his hand upon the head of the animal, it implied that the sin of the offerer was transferred to the victim. The other side was represented by the burnt offering. In that case also the offerer laid his hand upon the head of the offering, but that signified that all the acceptability of the sacrifice was transferred to the one who brought it. So there are the two sides of the work of Christ. He gave Himself for our sins, in order to put them all away, never to be remembered anymore before God. But in the same place where He bore our sins, He was a "sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." The fire of God's judgment consumed our sin, and now, instead of there being judgment for us, the judgment is all past, and there is nothing left but the sweet savor of that sacrifice in which we are accepted. Compare Ephesians 5:2 : Christ loved us and gave Himself for us — our side; "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" — what that work was to God. The sin offering, therefore, as the name implies, typifies the Lord Jesus bearing our sins. It is remarkable that the sin offering or trespass offering is inseparable, in almost every instance, from the burnt offering. The sin offering was to be killed in the place of the burnt offering, and in one instance you find the expression "sweet savor" connected with it (Leviticus 4:31). In every case all the fat of the sin offering was to be taken away. As it says, "As the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings" (Leviticus 4:31). When the fat was taken off the sacrifice of peace offerings, it went up to God for a sweet savor and was God's food of the offering made by fire, and we, as God's priests, are called to enter into communion with God and with the Lord Jesus to see all the results of the work that He has accomplished. Then the sin offering was the other side. There we learn how the Lord Jesus identified Himself with our sins, but it was in the same place where He bore our sins

that nothing but a sweet savor rose up to God. It is most blessed to remember that. When the Lord took our sins upon Him, it was in perfect obedience to God.

Therefore, never was He personally more the object of the Father's delight. Although God being holy, we know He had to hide His face from that blessed One, which caused Him to cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" You cannot separate the two — the sin offering from the burnt offering. They are, as it were, offered at the same time. In the antitype it was all one blessed act.

There is another thing that we must be clear about in looking at this sin offering. I remember it was rather puzzling to me once. I wondered why it was these people of Israel had to offer sin offerings, seeing that they were a people already in relationship with God. The blood sprinkled on the great day of atonement (Leviticus 16:1-34) had laid a righteous ground upon which God could be in relationship with them and could dwell in their midst. Then, we may ask, What need was there for any further offerings? If the blood within the veil, on the great day of atonement, settled the question of God's righteousness, and all the sins of Israel were put on the head of the scapegoat, what need for any other offerings? Well, I suppose these sin offerings were not really to bring the people into relationship with God, but to restore to communion those who already were in relationship with Him. And therefore, if the high priest sinned or the congregation sinned, the communion of the whole of the people was interrupted, because the high priest represented the people. Accordingly, the blood of the sin offering for the high priest or for the congregation was taken inside the tabernacle and sprinkled before the veil, some of the blood being put upon the altar of incense, where the high priest, who represented the whole people, approached (Exodus 30:8). When an individual of the common people sinned, it did not interrupt the communion of the whole company, but merely that of the particular individual, so the blood of his sin offering was sprinkled only on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, where the people approached God. We must remember this. In Hebrews 10:1-39 it says, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (Hebrews 10:1). Have you ever considered that expression — "not the very image of the things"? It was an image, but not the very image; that is, it was not a perfect image; it was only a shadow. Why was not the law a perfect image of Christianity? For two reasons at least. One reason is that under the law there was no entrance for the people into the holy of holies. None dare go into that most holy place. The veil was there, and, as it has often been said, God was shut in, and nobody dare go in; the sinner was shut out, and God never came out; that is, He never manifested what He was in grace. Therefore, the law was not a perfect image of Christianity. God has now come out; that is, all that God is has been perfectly revealed in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ here on earth. On the other hand, there has been a Man who entered the holy place not made with hands, into heaven itself. What man is that? The Man Christ Jesus. He has gone in. As it has been very beautifully expressed by another, "He came down in grace, and He went up in righteousness." I remember someone asking once, "What is the difference between the gospel of the grace of God and the gospel of the glory of God?" The answer was, "The gospel of the grace of God is God come down in grace, manifested here in the Person of Christ, and the gospel of the glory is man gone up in righteousness to God."

Another thing characterized the Old Testament types and the law, which showed they were not a perfect image, namely, the constant repetition of the sacrifices. Every time a sin was committed,

they ought to have brought a fresh offering. Blood was constantly flowing; therefore, it was not the very image of the heavenly things; it was not a perfect image, and I think that helps us in considering these types. The Jew under the law, in order for his communion to be restored when he had sinned, although he was in outward relationship with God, had to offer a fresh sacrifice. It is not so when Christians sin. Christ has not to die again, neither has the blood of Christ to be applied to us again, as many think and say. For us it is, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:1). But the means by which the Israelites were restored to communion (that is, by the sin offering) is just a type or picture of how we once for all have been perfected forever by the one offering of Christ. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). I think that makes it clear that these sin offerings are types of that one offering of the Lord Jesus by which He perfected us forever when we came first as lost sinners to God. It is in contrast to the many sin offerings under the law, as we find it brought out in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The mass of the Lord's people in the present day think that every time they sin they must be resprinkled with the blood of Christ. If you say it is not so, they actually imagine that you are undervaluing the precious blood. Now, it is just the contrary, as we shall see, I trust. The simplest way will be to take the case of the sin offering for the common people in chapter 4.

"If any one of the common people sin through ignorance" (Leviticus 4:27).

I might say here that it was only for sins of ignorance that a sacrifice could be offered. There was no sacrifice provided under the law for willful, presumptuous sins. The Holy Spirit, in Hebrews 10:26, no doubt refers to this. "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" — no more sin offering. Some here might like to know the meaning of that scripture. To explain it, however, would occupy too much time now, but I may just say that sinning willfully is not spoken of in reference to a true child of God getting away from the Lord and falling into sin. It refers to one who gave up Christianity altogether, to an apostate from the faith, one who denies the value of the precious blood; it does not refer to a backsliding Christian at all.

"If any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord, concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty."

"And be guilty" As in Romans 3:1-31, "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19). Every sinner, whether he knows it or not, whether he has been awakened to a sense of it or not, this is his condition — "guilty before God." That is the first thing.

"Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge" (Leviticus 4:28). The next thing is that he becomes aware of his guilt. So with us. We were all guilty before God. The next thing was that the sin came to our knowledge. God in His grace showed us what we were.

"Then he shall bring his offering."

He is guilty; the sin comes to his knowledge. And then God meets him at once with the offering. The moment he confesses, takes his place before God as a guilty one, there is the offering to meet him. There is a beautiful picture of that in Matthew 3:1-17, where the Lord Jesus takes His place with the remnant of Israel who were confessing their sins, owning their true condition as sinners, taking their first right step before God. Jesus is found with them; not bearing their sins yet

— that was on the cross afterward — but He was found with them. Is not that a beautiful picture? The moment a person owns his guilt before God, the moment he takes his true place as a repentant, hell-deserving sinner, with whom does he find himself in company? The Saviour Himself. The sinner comes to God, owning his guilt, and God sets forth the Saviour at once; the repentant one finds himself in company with the Lord Jesus. So here; the moment the individual acknowledges his guilt, "He shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering" (Leviticus 4:28-29).

We have already seen that when the offerer laid his hand upon the head of the offering, it meant that the sin of the man was transferred to the offering. Wonderful, blessed truth! When we come as lost sinners before God, when we come trusting the Lord Jesus for our souls' salvation, then we know that not merely one sin, as here, but all our sins, all we have ever committed, were laid upon God's beloved Son by God Himself, many centuries ago. And here it is typified. By the man's laying his hand upon the head of the offering, the sin is transferred to it. And then he shall "slay the sin offering." The moment the sin is upon the sacrifice, he shall "slay the sin offering," because "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Death must come in. Where was the sin offering slain? In the place of the burnt offering. You cannot separate the two. In the very place where the blessed Lord took all our sins upon Him, there also the sweet savor of His sacrifice rose up before God in all its perfection. Further, "The priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar" (Leviticus 4:30).

"The blood is the life" — all the life of the animal was poured out, given up to God. What is atonement? It is, as has been expressed by another, life given and accepted in sacrifice for a life that has been forfeited. The man had forfeited his life by his sins; "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Instead of the man dying, his sin was transferred to the kid, and the kid died instead of him. How simple! When we, as guilty sinners, deserved death — "once to die" was our portion; "after this the judgment"; then the lake of fire, the second death — God said, as it were, "I will accept the death of another instead of your death," and that is the death of His own beloved Son, whom He gave in the love and grace of His heart, and who bore the judgment due to our sins, laying down His life in atonement for us. So all the blood was poured out at the bottom of the altar; the life was given up to God. In the Gospel of Matthew, in which Gospel we find the Lord's death more in the aspect of the sin offering, we read (Matthew 26:1-75), "He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament [or covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:27-28). The word "shed" might be rendered "poured out," and if you read it in that way, how it fits in with this sin offering! "This is My blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed [poured out] for many for the remission of sins." His precious blood was poured out, just as all the blood of the sin offering was poured out at the bottom of the altar; the life was given up to God, taken in exchange for the life of the man who had forfeited his life by his sins. Some of the blood was sprinkled upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and the fat (Leviticus 4:31) was taken away, "as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savor unto the Lord." There the sweet savor of the sacrifice is connected with the sin offering, although the sin offering was not a sweet savor sacrifice in itself.

"And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him" (Leviticus 4:31). Is there anybody here who at all doubts whether he has forgiveness of all his sins? It is an immensely important question to get settled. The Holy Spirit Himself says, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (Romans 4:7). It is no light thing to be able to say, "My sins are all forgiven." Have you ever, dear friend, seen that the Lord Jesus in His grace took your place on the cross and there died for you? Have you by faith seen God, the holy God, who knows every sin that you have ever committed in thought, word and deed, taking them and laying them upon the head of that spotless Victim, the Lord Jesus Christ, His beloved Son, on the cross? Have you seen Him there bearing the judgment due to your sins? Now, in the type, the word of the Lord as to the Israelite was, "And it shall be forgiven him."

How, do you think, did that Israelite know that his sin was forgiven? Suppose you had met him coming back with a light heart and glad countenance from offering his sacrifice and had asked him, "What makes you look so happy now? I saw you a little time ago looking sad and downcast."

He might have said, "I now know my sin is forgiven."

"Indeed; how do you know that?"

"I have done what Jehovah required; I have taken a kid of the goats to the priest and have killed it. I saw all the blood poured out and the fat burned for a sweet savor to Jehovah."

"But how do you know your sin is forgiven?"

"Because of the word of Jehovah. I have got His word for it, that, if I bring my sin offering and the blood is shed, my sin shall be forgiven me." He could rely upon the word of Jehovah, and thus he would know he was forgiven. So with us. Have we not to go back to it again and again and again? Ah! indeed we have; everyone will agree to it. Has there not been many an established father in Christ who, till his death, has had to go back to the value of the precious blood of Christ and the written Word of God, over and over again? Ah! yes, and there is nothing else to rest upon for salvation, nothing else certain, nothing else sure, nothing but the value of the precious blood of Christ and the written Word of God — these two things. What word have Christians got? We have many, thank God.

There is that simple one in Acts 10:1-48 :

"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

What a blessed message to proclaim! Dare you doubt that word of God Himself? If you have been waiting to feel forgiven, oh, wait no longer! If you have been waiting for certain experiences to assure yourself that you are forgiven, I say, Wait no longer. Just take God at His word:

"Whosoever believeth in Him [Jesus] shall receive remission of sins." Does not that answer to the words as to the type here, "And it shall be forgiven him"?

There is another important point. I said, just now, that the law was not a true image of Christianity, for there was constant repetition of the sacrifices. A Jew, when he sinned, had to bring his offering; then, if he sinned again, he had to bring another offering; if he sinned a third time, he would have

to bring a third offering. But if it were the same as that in Christianity, Christ would have often to suffer. Every time you and I committed a sin, Christ would have to leave the glory and come down and die for us. That could not be. The contrast is beautifully drawn in Hebrews 10.

"Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Hebrews 10:11). The priest, under the law, stood and offered oftentimes. Now notice the contrast.

"But this man [that is, the Lord Jesus Christ], after He had offered one sacrifice for sins [or, one sin offering, in contrast with many], forever, sat down [in contrast to standing] on the right hand of God. . . . For by one offering [one sin offering] He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 10:14).

It has been often said that if the whole question of our sins was not settled at the cross, it never can be settled throughout the countless ages of eternity, for Christ is not coming to die again. He offered one sin offering on the cross. How many of your sins were there? Were they all there? Thank God, they were, if you are a true believer. Were only the sins you can remember borne there? No; all were laid upon Him. As we read, "Though he wist it not, yet is he guilty" (Leviticus 5:17). That is an important point, for some Christians have thought that every time they sin they have to pray for forgiveness, and that if they do not pray they will not be forgiven. And very often they are troubled as to whether any sins they may have committed have been left unconfessed.

One Christian asked another once, "Suppose, now, that you were killed in a railway accident, and you had not confessed your sins for the day, what would become of you?" The answer was, "Well, I am sure I do not know. I am not at all sure what would become of me." And many think that they do not get forgiveness of their sins unless they ask God to forgive them, and then the asking becomes a formal thing very often. At night or when they say "grace," as it is called, they just make a general confession of sins, saying, "Forgive us all our sins for Christ's sake." That is not confession to God; that is not at all what God means by confession. "Though he wist it not, yet is he guilty," because a sin is a sin in God's sight, whether you are aware of it or not, and sin is judged according to the standard of His holiness and not according to our thoughts about it. "The thought of foolishness is sin," and every independent act of our will is sin.

How many sins have we committed today? God only knows. What, then, is to become of us if we leave any unconfessed? No doubt we have committed some that we are not aware of. The more we grow in grace, the more we see what sin is, but God saw it was sin before you found it out. It is a blessed thing to think of. God Himself, in His holiness, knows every single sin that we have ever committed; He knows them all. He does not leave one out, just as He will not leave one out for the unconverted at the judgment day. Not one will be forgotten in that day, so God did not leave out one of the sins of those who believe when He laid them on the head of His beloved Son, who bore them all. That is why it needed a divine person to do the work, one who could view sin as God views it, and who but a divine person could do that? It was the Lord Jesus who knew what sin is in the sight of God, who knew our sins, who took them all, every one, and bore them in His own body on the tree. I do not say past, present or future sins, because Scripture never speaks in that way. We ought not to think of future sins at all. It is a monstrous thing to say, "I am going to commit sins tomorrow." We can speak only of past sins; future sins are not to be thought of. The simple question is, How many sins had you and I committed when Christ died? They were all future then.

He answered to God for every one, blessed be His name. What did we read in Hebrews 10:1-39?

"This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). In some Bibles this passage is better punctuated than in others. We should read it in this way: "This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins [here should be the comma], forever sat down." That expression "forever" is not the same as that used for "eternity." It means "going on uninterruptedly throughout eternity." That is, the value of that sacrifice abides throughout eternity. If you read Hebrews 10:14 first, it is made simple, I think.

"By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And because He has perfected us forever by one offering, because He has nothing more to do for you and me, dear believer in Christ, as regards putting away our sins for all eternity, He has "forever sat down" in contrast to the priest under the law, who was always standing. How blessed to look up into heaven by faith and there see that blessed One who has "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Why? Because He has perfected us forever by His one offering. He is not going to rise up again to do anything more in regard to putting away our sins. He is going to rise up to take us to Himself. That is quite another thing. May the Lord, in His grace, give us to know the reality and the blessedness of the Lord Jesus bearing our sins and of the grace that brought Him down thoroughly to identify Himself with us in our sins — to die for us. Perhaps some are apt to think too lightly of this, to regard the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the Lord's dying for our sins as an inferior aspect of truth. I think that is a great mistake. I ask one question. What was one of the greatest proofs of God's love toward us? In the First Epistle of John we read, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

There is the proof of His love. He gave His Son to die for our sins, those very sins that we should have thought would turn His love away from us. Our sinning against Him only brought out the love all the stronger, for He gave His beloved Son to put them all away. Shall we ever forget such love? Never. May the Lord give us to know more of His grace, more of the love that led Him to come down in grace to take up our case and perfect us forever by one offering in order that we might share His joy in the Father's house throughout all the ages of eternity, for His name's sake.

## 01.5. The Red Heifer

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### The Red Heifer

Numbers 19:1-22

Perhaps if we had written the Bible, we should have put the passage concerning the sacrifice of the red heifer along with the accounts of the other sacrifices in the Book of Leviticus. It is remarkable that the Spirit of God has not done so, but has put it in the middle of the Book of Numbers, which book presents the people of God journeying through the wilderness. The subject of the Book of Leviticus is how we approach God on the ground of sacrifice. The Book of Numbers might be called a wilderness book. It relates the ways of the children of Israel, what they did during their journey to Canaan, their murmurings, their backslidings, and their lusts.

Now, this world should be a wilderness to the Christian while he is on his way to the glory of God. When we see this, we understand the appropriateness of the sacrifice of the red heifer. The people are in the wilderness, going on to their rest, just as we who believe in the Lord now are still in the world, exposed to defilement, with sin in us, the world outside us (and the devil, too), while we are on our way to the glory of God. And it is while we are journeying through this world that we need to be cleansed from all the defilement which we contract by the way.

I cannot now attempt to go into all the details of this scripture. We will take up only the main points. In Numbers 19:2 we read, "This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke." That is the first thing. There must be a spotless sacrifice. So the Lord Jesus presented Himself to do the will of God, according to those words in 1 Peter 1:19 :

"A lamb without blemish and without spot."

"And upon which never came yoke." What does that mean? The Lord Jesus, as regards His own Person, was never under the yoke of sin. We by nature are under that yoke. We read, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant [or, the slave] of sin" (John 8:34).

We were under the yoke of sin. The Lord Jesus, as we know, was born into this world holy: "That holy thing which shall be born of thee," the angel said to Mary, "shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). No yoke of sin ever came upon Him. He did no sin; He knew no sin.

"And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face" (Numbers 19:3).

Now turn to Hebrews 13:1-25 :

"For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:11-12).

"Without the camp," "without the gate." How clearly does the antitype answer to the type! The heifer was brought forth without the camp, just as Jesus was led forth without the gate. "And one shall slay her before his face." The spotless one is led forth without the gate and then slain.

There are three aspects of the value of the death of the heifer:

(1) "Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times" (Numbers 19:4).

(2) "And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn" (Numbers 19:5).

(3) "And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer" (Numbers 19:6). In each of these verses we have a different aspect of the work of the Lord Jesus. (1) Shedding the blood and sprinkling it before the tabernacle of the congregation (Numbers 19:4) was really done as before God. That was the thought. It presented the precious blood of Christ, which has been shed once and by virtue of which we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

(2) The whole animal burned to ashes without the camp shows, I believe, in type, that the fire of God's judgment, so to speak, consumed all our sins on the cross, so that they are entirely put away and can never be imputed to us. They are gone forever for those who believe.

(3) Concerning cedar wood and hyssop, you may remember it says in 1 Kings 4:33, Solomon "spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." That is, I suppose, from the greatest thing in the vegetable kingdom to the smallest, and the rest comprehended between the two. So cedar wood and hyssop would typify all that belongs to us as children of Adam, all that we glory and boast in as natural men. Scarlet is a well-known type of the glory of this world. The woman in the Revelation, spoken of as sitting on the beast, was arrayed in scarlet, and it was a scarlet-colored beast. So these things were all consumed in the midst of the burning of the heifer.

Further down in the chapter we learn how a person got defiled. He became so if he touched anything connected with death. That is the way it is put in this chapter. A bone of a man, a grave, or one slain with a sword in the open field — if he came in contact with any of these, he was defiled — he was unclean. Now, death is the wages of sin; it was the result of sin. And I think there is no chapter in the Bible, at least in the Old Testament, that gives us such a sense of the holiness of God as does this chapter. It is most remarkable. If the man only touched a bone, he was unclean. But not only was the man who touched the bone unclean, but if another person touched him, or anything he had touched, the other person was unclean too. And if a third person touched the second, that third person likewise was unclean. And so it spread from one to another. Thus, after all, it is a question of what God calls clean, and not of what we call clean. And God calls nothing clean but that which is absolutely fit for His glory. Thank God, we are washed in the precious blood of Christ — are clean and fit for His presence.

Now let us briefly consider these aspects one by one.

(1) The first is the foundation of every blessing.

"And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times" (Numbers 19:4). The number "seven" in Scripture is a symbol of divine perfectness. So the blood was sprinkled seven times before the tabernacle — that is, before the eye of God. A beautiful picture this of that precious blood of the Lord Jesus, and, mark, it is God, He who alone knows the value of it, who calls it precious (1 Peter 1:19). God the Holy Spirit speaks in Hebrews 9:1-28 of the precious blood of Christ. Look at Hebrews 9:22 :

"Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission [or, forgiveness of sins]."

Notice that expression, "Without shedding of blood." It does not say without application of blood, but without shedding (or, pouring out) of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins. Now (I speak to all believers in this room), when was the precious blood of Christ shed? Was it shed when you were brought to God? Certainly not. Has it been shed since you were converted? Certainly not. If that were necessary "Then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world" (Hebrews 9:26).

No; that precious blood was shed, or poured out, on the cross, and it is never going to be repeated throughout eternity. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." When you and I were, by the Spirit of God, first awakened to see our need, we believed God's precious Word and came to Christ. In that Word we saw, when we were troubled about our sins, "that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). And we believed it. Now we can say, "Thank God, I know that I have forgiveness of my sins, because God tells me so in His blessed Word." But when was that work done, when was that blood shed, on the ground of which you got forgiveness? On the cross. When was the value of that blood applied to you, a guilty sinner? When you believed. For how long does the application apply to you? How long does the efficacy of that blood which was, so to speak, sprinkled on you when you believed — how long does its efficacy last? To all eternity. Blessed, precious truth! When the efficacy of that precious blood, when the value of the blood of Christ is applied to a sinner, it is for all eternity. It is not for six months; it is not for a year; it is not till we sin again; it is forever. Is there a scripture for that? Read Hebrews 10:14 :

"By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Now, we are always ready to catch up something or other and make a difficulty of it. So some have said, "I am not sure whether I am among those that are sanctified. It says, Perfected them that are sanctified." "Sanctified," in the Epistle to the Hebrews, never means inward sanctification by the Spirit of God. We do not find sanctification of the Spirit in this epistle. It is not sanctification by the Spirit that is spoken of here, but sanctification by the one offering of Christ. "Sanctify" means "to set apart." So, when a person believes, God sets him apart from the rest of the world by putting all the value of the precious blood of Christ upon him. Thus that person is set apart, or sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once (Hebrews 10:10). That is not inward or progressive sanctification by the Holy Spirit, which is a different thing altogether. Therefore, Hebrews 10:10 is true of every believer, for everyone who believes is, in this sense, sanctified and therefore is "perfected forever" by the one offering (Hebrews 10:14). To illustrate it by a case: Suppose you and I have been converted to God, say six months. At the time of our conversion we

were, of course, washed in the precious blood of Christ, and the value of that precious blood was applied to us. But suppose that we have fallen into some grievous sin and dishonored the Lord and that the blood had to be applied to us again, how long would the efficacy of it have lasted after we were converted? Why, only six months, because we were converted six months ago, and now after six months it has to be applied over again. That would show that the efficacy of that blood of Christ was for only six months. But Hebrews 10:1-39 says, "By one offering He hath perfected," not for six months, or six years, but "forever" which means that the efficacy of the offering abides throughout the countless ages of eternity. There is the blessed, simple truth in the Word, but then our own hearts are always ready to find fault with God's Word, and many a one says, "That seems dangerous doctrine. 'When the blood of Christ has been applied once, it is so for all eternity; the value of it lasts forever; thus, a believer can never be lost.' That seems to be almost allowing a license for sin." We shall see, however, that it does not. It is exactly the other way. Instead of being a license for sin, it is a blessed power to keep us from sin. There is nothing that keeps us, and nothing that breaks us down when we have sinned, so much as the sense of the love of Christ, the love of Him who suffered all the agony of that cross, in order to save us from all those sins which, alas! we Christians even commit now, for "in many things we offend all [all offend]" (James 3:2). The first thing is the blood sprinkled before God seven times. Now we see the question of our sins settled forever. I will ask each one here, Have you really known in your own soul that the question of all your sins is settled? Can you say, "The question of my sins was gone into between God and His Son on the cross, and that question has been settled, never to be raised again throughout all eternity"? God will not raise it, if you do; there is the blessed comfort. Many a Christian wants to rake up the question again. God says, as it were, "I will not raise it again. It has been settled forever on the ground of the precious blood of Christ." And God can say (although one does not like to put words into His mouth), "If I were to raise the question of your sins again, I should be calling in question the eternal efficacy of the blood of My Son," which He never could or would do.

(2) "And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn" (Numbers 19:5). This is not merely the blood shed; the whole animal is taken outside the camp and entirely consumed. It is burned to ashes. What does that signify to us? As we said before, it is a figure of how entirely all our sins were borne and put away forever at the cross. There the fire of God's judgment consumed all our sins when the Lord Jesus in His matchless grace took them upon Him and bore the judgment due to us, so that they can never be imputed to us who believe in Him. And it is important to see that not only is it said, He bore our sins, but that He was made sin for us, who knew no sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). In Romans 8:3 we read, "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin [that is, a sacrifice for sin], condemned sin in the flesh." So sin in the flesh, our state by nature as children of Adam, not merely our sins, was condemned or judged by God when His beloved Son was made sin for us on the cross. Hundreds of believers say, "Ah, it is not my sins that trouble me; it is what I am that troubles me! I am not what I should like to be. I find so many foolish and evil thoughts, and just the same dispositions in me now as when I was unconverted. Sometimes that makes me consider whether I have not deceived myself and whether I am a child of God at all." Many a one says to himself, "If you were a child of God, you would not have all those reasonings and all those idle and evil thoughts; you cannot be a child of God."

Ah, beloved friend, that is no proof that you are not a Christian, a child of God, that you were not converted. You would not be troubled about them at all if you were unconverted. You would be a careless, indifferent sinner, in your sins, as we all were once. But here is the blessed thing to see, that the thing which you are troubling yourself about — what you are as a child of Adam — was condemned by God on the cross when His beloved Son, who knew no sin, was made sin for us. Have you ever seen that not only your sins, but what you are by nature was answered for on the cross? That when the Lord was made sin, He bore the judgment due to you and me as sinners? God condemned sin in the flesh — not the sins, but the nature that produced them. I think this is a wonderful comfort to a believer. Perhaps, dear friend, you have been finding out for years past, or perhaps for weeks only, the evil of your nature, and you say, "The more I get on, the older I grow, the worse I get." And then you are very apt to think that God also is finding out by degrees how bad we are. But it is not so. He knew it from the beginning. Hundreds of years ago He knew how bad you and I are by nature, and the blessed truth is that when He knew how bad we were and how badly we should turn out after we are saved — in other words, when He knew the worst about us — He was all love toward us and gave His own beloved Son to meet the question of our sins on the cross and to meet this far deeper question, too, of what we are by nature.

I think it is important to see that the death of the Lord Jesus was the death of One who bore the judgment of God for us. He was forsaken of God during those three hours of darkness, when His soul was made an offering for sin. No doubt it was then that the great question of sin was gone into and forever settled by its condemnation on the cross. But, before He died, He again said, "Father." When He was on the cross, in the hour of darkness, He said, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And then, before He yielded up the ghost, He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." He bore all the judgment of God due to us and died, and therefore nothing can be imputed to us who believe. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:8).

(3) "And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer" (Numbers 19:6).

There is something beyond the question of our sin being settled. We read in Galatians 6:1-18, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Numbers 19:14).

Yes, dear friends, the world put Christ on the cross; the world hated the Lord Jesus when He came into it. It was all over with the world when it cast out and rejected the Son of God. Its condemnation was fixed. The Lord Jesus, looking forward to His death, said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). Moreover, the world crucified the Lord of glory, the One whom Christians think everything of; therefore, the world is put in its true place, as deserving shame and degradation and death. So the Apostle says, "The world is crucified unto me," and, on the other hand, I am crucified to the world — I have died to it. There is an end to the world as far as I am concerned. The cross is the end of it to me. When we see that the Son of God, the Lord of glory, came to die because of what we were, what becomes of our wretched pride and all that the world esteems glorious and seeks after? We look at the cross of Christ and cast it all there, just as the cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet were all burned up in the midst of the burning of the heifer. What is the world to us when we see that it crucified our Lord Jesus? When we learn

that He suffered such agony to save us from the judgment that is going to be poured out upon it, what is the world to us then? Nothing. The world is crucified to us, and we to the world.

Next, we have directions concerning defilement.

"He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days" (Numbers 19:11).

If an Israelite touched anything connected with death, he became defiled, because death is the wages of sin. Dead bodies, dead men's bones, and graves have their existence through sin. It has been very nicely remarked that in the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness, there will be none of these things to run away from. There will be no such thing as a grave or a bone lying about; there will not be such a thing as a dead body there. Why? Because there shall be no more death. Sin will be outside those blessed regions on account of the shedding of the precious blood of Christ. Now we are surrounded by sin and death, and we little know how frequently we get defiled. Very often we become so by being occupied with evil. The man that sprinkled the water became unclean himself. Just think of that. So if we are occupied with evil, we get defiled by it, because we have a nature in us that answers to evil. The Lord Jesus did not get defiled in this world, because He had no sinful nature that answered to evil. We have such a nature, and it is a remarkable thing that when a notice of some notorious crime or anything fearfully wicked is placarded in the streets or in a shop window, hundreds of people will stop and read it, or if some picture that illustrates any fearful crime is to be seen, what crowds stand around and look at it! But if there is anything beautiful, precious or lovely on view, you will not find such crowds standing near. Why? Because the natural man likes evil more than good. We know what our own hearts are. The only thing that gives power to a Christian is occupation with nothing but good. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Php 4:8). Do not have your minds filled with evil, but have them filled with good; then there is no danger of getting defiled. In Numbers 19:16-19 is a beautiful picture of what is done when a child of God commits a sin or gets defiled by coming in contact with evil in his pathway through this world. When an Israelite contracted defilement, was the blood sprinkled on him again? No. What was sprinkled on him? Not blood, but ashes and water. What do they imply? The ashes were simply the memorial of that blood which was shed and that body which was burned outside the camp — the remembrance of Christ's sufferings and death. Running water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. How do we know that? If you look in John 7:1-53 for a moment, you will see very clearly the way in which the Lord Himself used the symbol.

"He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (John 7:38-39).

If you look in the margin of your Bibles at Numbers 19:17, you will see that the term is living water, so, then, living or running water represents the Holy Spirit. The ashes of the heifer set forth the remembrance of Christ's sufferings and death, when He settled forever the question of all our sins and of our sin too. The Holy Spirit, when we have been defiled by evil, takes, so to speak, the sufferings of Christ and brings them to our mind, brings to our remembrance the sufferings of Christ for us, and the value of His death. Is not that wonderful? Do you think that would make us

sin? Never. Now, consider for a moment. Suppose you and I committed a sin today, and we were told from God, "Now you have sinned, and there is nothing but judgment for you. You have forfeited all blessing by having sinned against grace, and there is no hope," what would become of us? We should be driven into the depths of despair. It would not help us at all. But suppose that, when we had committed a sin, the blessed Lord Himself were to appear personally to us and say, "I suffered untold agonies on the cross, even the judgment of God, in order that you might never be condemned for the very sin which you have just committed," what then should we say? We should be so thoroughly ashamed of ourselves that we should not know how to hold up our heads; we should be completely broken down and hate ourselves for having done that which the Lord Jesus suffered on the cross to save us from. That is what the Holy Spirit does, as typified in this chapter. We sin, consciously or unconsciously, and we are defiled; we have gotten into contact with the world and the things of the world. Perhaps we have been with the ungodly and have not confessed the Lord; we may even have joined in their foolish talk and thus have gotten defiled. What does the Holy Spirit do? He brings back to our remembrance what the blessed Lord Jesus suffered in order to deliver us from that very thing which we have done. What is the consequence of that? The consequence is that we are ashamed of ourselves; we grieve over what we have done, and we go and confess it to the Lord. Why do we confess it? The Spirit of God has brought those sufferings of Christ to our remembrance and leads us to the confession of what was done in answer to the blessed service of the Lord Jesus on high, as our advocate with the Father. That is so blessed to think of. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1) — not, "If any man confess his sin."

Before ever we confess our sin, perhaps before we were aware of it, there is that blessed One with the Father, and the result of His advocacy with the Father is that the Holy Spirit brings to our mind what we have done, and at the same time He brings to our remembrance what the blessed Lord has suffered to deliver us from the very sins we have committed. We are thus humbled and go and confess to our God and Father. All the Trinity, so to speak, is engaged with the restoration of our souls when we have sinned. God the Son, the Lord Jesus, is there as our advocate with the Father; God the Holy Spirit, in answer to Christ's advocacy, brings home the sin to our conscience, leading us to confession; and God the Father forgives us. He is faithful and just to forgive us on the ground of that precious blood shed once for all. It is very interesting to mark the difference between forgiveness once for all as sinners and the forgiveness that, as saints, we get from the Father. A few words more and I am done. The man was sprinkled on the third day, but it was not till the second sprinkling, on the seventh day, that he was pronounced clean. This teaches us, I think, that God does not think lightly of sin, and that it is far easier to get out of communion than to get back again. When we are first made aware of our sin, we are unhappy and are humbled in the dust before God for what we have done. It is not joy; it is grief. Then we go and confess it, and we find that the Lord gave Himself for the very sin which we have committed. After we have owned our sin, it only increases our sense of the love of the blessed Lord and of the value of His work, so, through God's grace, we are led, perhaps, into a deeper knowledge of Himself and the value of the work of His Son than we had before.

Well, I have been able to give only the leading thoughts in this beautiful chapter, but I trust you have gained some acquaintance with the truths which it teaches. Study them at your leisure, and look to God for the Holy Spirit's guidance to unfold them to you, and blessing must come. May the

Lord in His grace give us each one to be kept so near to Himself that we may not need His gracious, blessed service as our advocate. It is difficult not to be defiled in this evil world, but, oh, let us always remember the blessed truth that we have been perfected forever by the one offering of Christ, by His precious blood, and that when we commit sin, the Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance that the suffering of Christ on the cross has delivered us forever from it. How we shall praise the Lord when, in His own presence in glory, we look back on our past history and on all our failings here, and at the same time on the history of His ways of grace with us! May we know more of the unceasing love of Him who gave Himself for us, who cleanses the church by the washing of water by the Word, and who will present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Oh, how blessed that will be when, for the first time, we taste what absolute holiness means and we worship unhinderedly, when the flesh and all connected with it is gone and we shall be forever like and with the Lord! May the Lord keep us near to Himself until that day!

## **02.00. The Distinction between the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper briefly considered.**

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The Distinction between the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper briefly considered. By R. F. Kingscote.

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## 02.01. The Lord's Table

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The Lord's Table.

1 Corinthians 10:14-22. The expressions used in these verses are very familiar to most of us here; 1 Corinthians 10:16, for instance. But often they convey very little meaning to our minds. Look at 1 Corinthians 10:21 : how often we speak of the Lord's table, without any clear idea of the nature of the subject. We say, So-and-so has been received at the Lord's table, or put away from the Lord's table; some have even gone so far as to think the Lord's table is applicable only to one particular body of Christians.

It is significant that 1 Corinthians 10:21 is the only place in the New Testament where the expression "the Lord's table" occurs. It is strange, too, that the expression "partakers of the Lord's table" is so seldom used by us. Most of us, if asked whether we were "partakers of the Lord's table," would think partaking of the Lord's supper was meant. But there are two different expressions used: in 1 Corinthians 10:1-33 we have the Lord's table, and in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34 the Lord's supper, and the Spirit never uses two different expressions without some definite purpose. The table is introduced before the supper, and I think we must enter a little into what it is to be a partaker of the Lord's table, before we can be in a fit state to eat the Lord's supper in a scriptural way.

Now I think it can be shown that every child of God is a partaker of the Lord's table, though he may not actually take the supper, but eating the bread and drinking the cup would be the outward expression of it. It is most important that this truth should be grasped. Let us just see, then, the connection in which the Lord's table is brought in here. From 1 Corinthians 7:1-40 we see that the Corinthians had written to Paul about certain difficulties, and he is in the chapter before us still answering those questions. In 1 Corinthians 7:1-40 he deals with the subject of marriage; in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 it is "touching things offered to idols," and while he is dealing with this subject, the Lord's table is introduced; — that is the reason for the reference to idolatry in 1 Corinthians 10:14. The Corinthians had been converted from all the varied forms of idolatry in the Greek and Roman cults; and idolatry involved the worship of demons. When, at the first, man lost the knowledge of the true God, they began to deify their own lusts and imaginations; e.g., Bacchus was the god of wine, and the Bacchanalian festival was a scene of excesses of every kind. The Devil took advantage of all this and acquired immense power over the world. There was the Delphic oracle, for instance, which answered all questions and corresponded to the modern spiritism; so we see their idols were really representatives of demons. The Corinthians ask, "Are we to eat meats sacrificed to idols?" Paul replies that, if they eat knowingly, they identify themselves with idols and have fellowship with demons, and says it is impossible to have fellowship with demons and with the Lord at the same time. The expression "the Lord's table" is, however, found in the Old Testament, and its use there helps to an understanding of its New Testament meaning. In Malachi 1:7, we read "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar . . . in that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible." The altar and the table, as we here see, are identical,

and this is further supported by another reference, Ezekiel 41:22 : "The altar of wood was three cubits . . . This is the table which is before the Lord." When we see this, we understand better the meaning of 1 Corinthians 10:18, "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" This verse is the key to the passage, and Paul uses it as an illustration; we might say "partakers of the table," instead of "partakers of the altar," the altar and table being identical. The reference here is to Israel "after the flesh" and the peace offering in Leviticus 3:1-17 would be a good illustration of it. The name peace offering is apt to mislead somewhat, as it conveys the idea of making peace with God, which is not the thought at all. It is rather the thought of peace and prosperity, as J. N. D. translates it in the French Bible, "sacrifice de prospérité." It is thanksgiving and praise, essentially a communion offering. God had his part, Aaron and his sons theirs, the priest who sprinkled the blood his, and lastly, the offerer had his share. In Leviticus 3:1-17, notice the burnt offering is the foundation of the peace offering. So in Leviticus 3:16, the priest shall burn the fat upon the altar. A very beautiful expression is used here: the fat "is the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour; all the fat is the Lord's. It shall be a statute . . . that ye eat neither fat or blood." Thus the eating of the fat, as of the blood, was forbidden. The fat indicates the energy of the inward will; cf. Deuteronomy 32:15, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" — the will was in opposition to God. Here the fat was not the Lord's. In the Lord Jesus, there was perfect subjection and devotedness: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." There the fat was all the Lord's.

If the energy of our will does not act in accordance with God, it is sin. The definition of sin is a serious matter. In the authorised version of 1 John 3:4, we read, "Sin is the transgression of the law." This is incorrect, because then there would have been no sin before the law, and we read in Romans 5:13, "Until the law, sin was in the world." The New Translation of 1 John 3:4, is, "Sin is lawlessness." That is, when we act independently, we act without law; it is sin. For instance, there is a law of gravitation; if the earth were to break away from that law and go off at a tangent, that would be lawlessness. So, whenever our wills act independently of God, that is lawlessness, and the fat is not the Lord's. What perfection of obedience and devotedness to God there was in Jesus, how much on which the heart of God could feed with infinite delight! In Leviticus 7:31, we find, "The priest shall burn the fat upon the altar, but the breast shall be Aaron's and his sons." The breast is the seat of the affections. Now in Leviticus 7:15 we read that "it must be eaten the same day that it is offered," and in Leviticus 7:18, if any be eaten on the third day, it shall not be accepted, in fact, "it shall be an abomination." Why was this? It was because, if it was kept, it dissociated the eating from the sacrifice on the altar. So in Leviticus 3:5 : "Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice," that is to say, The burnt offering is the foundation of the peace offering. This eating of the sacrifice, then, was not like ordinary eating; in eating, they were associated with all the sweet savour of the sacrifice before God, and in all the value which He set upon that sacrifice. In Leviticus 1:4 there is a wonderfully peace-giving truth. This is seen in regard to the burnt offering. It speaks of atonement, and it is a beautiful way of setting forth the gospel. "He shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him." The placing of the hand upon the head was the identification of the offerer with all the value of the sacrifice before God. It was not a question of what he was; the question was, What value did God put upon the sacrifice? If the offering was accepted, the offerer was accepted; if it was rejected, he was, too. The gospel is often put thus: Have you accepted Christ as your Saviour? This is simple enough, and yet our hearts make a difficulty even of this, and souls are in

doubt as to whether they have accepted the gospel or not. But it becomes more grandly simple if we put it in this way: Has God accepted the sacrifice of Christ for you? There can be only one answer to that, and all doubts are ended; we are accepted in all the sweet savour of the sacrifice of Christ; instead of our natural enmity there is only the devotedness of Christ even to death. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." The Father must love the Son. How far have we grasped the fact that we are in the same sweet savour before God, as Christ is Himself? The whole question is settled once for all, and we are accepted. This is the foundation of the peace offering, where thanksgiving is rendered.

Now all this is connected with the Lord's table by way of illustration, and how wonderful it would be if we entered into it.

Having looked at the Old Testament illustration, we see better the meaning of 1 Corinthians 10:18; the apostle might equally well say here: Are not they which eat of the sacrifices "partakers of the table;" and to be partaker of the Lord's table is to be in all the value of the sacrifice of Christ before God, and the outward expression of this is in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 : "The cup of blessing which we bless," and "The bread which we break." It is evident that blessing and giving of thanks are the same thing. In 1 Corinthians 14:16, "blessing" and "giving of thanks" are the same.

It is important to see here that there are two expressions of fellowship, — fellowship with and fellowship of. We speak usually of fellowship with one another, more in the sense of 1 John 1:7, but here it is not communion with, but communion of. It must be remarked here that the words "communion" (1 Corinthians 10:16), "partakers" (1 Corinthians 10:18) and "fellowship," all represent the same root-word of the original, which gives the idea of sharing in common. Look at Luke 5:10 : "Partners with" is the same word as "partakers" here, i.e., sharers in common of the fish caught. But in Luke 5:7, "partners" is a different word, meaning that they shared not the fish but the privilege of fishing in the lake. This is the word used in Hebrews 6:4, "partakers of the Holy Ghost," where people may share in the privileges of Christianity and be lost. Our use of the word "partner," shows the thought. The fellowship, or communion, of the blood of Christ is the sharing in common with all God's children in all the value of His wonderful death. There are three "fellowships of" in Corinthians:

(1.) 1 Corinthians 1:9 : "The fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." All the true church is called to it. It is "of" and not "with," and means that we share the blessings in common with all saints of being livingly associated with the Son of God, on the other side of death;

(2.) 1 Corinthians 10:16 : "The fellowship of the blood and body of Christ;" and

(3.) 2 Corinthians 13:14 : "The fellowship of the Holy Ghost." To many, as now used, this expression is merely a sign of the end of a service, but what does it mean? It means that we share with all true Christians the results of the dwelling here of the Holy Ghost and of His power to make good the truth in our souls. But, of course, each one of these is a subject in itself. In 1 Corinthians 10:16, the cup precedes the bread, but in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34 the order is reversed. We should think it extraordinary if one gave thanks for the cup before the bread. Why is the cup put first in 1 Corinthians 10:1-33? It is because there the thought of the assembling of the Lord's people is not the prominent thought, but rather our association with Christ's death, and so the cup is put first. When we drink the wine, what thought does it bring to our minds? The wine is appropriated and

ingested into the body, but this is only an outward expression of the blessed truth, that the believer in Jesus is identified with all the value of the death of Christ before God; it is a wonderfully peace-giving thought. It means more even than that. The death of Christ opened the flood-gates of God's love to man; it was the love of His heart that gave rise to all His purposes of grace. But the question of sin had to be settled first. "I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." That baptism was accomplished in His death, and now the fulness of God's heart of love can flow out to us, and our hearts can go out in love to Him. This is what He desires.

It is to be noticed, for there is meaning in it, that, while in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34 it is the Lord Jesus who gave thanks, here it is "we bless" (1 Corinthians 10:16). In this chapter there is something of the responsibility side and we have also "the communion of the body of Christ." The latter expression conveys the thought, in scripture, that an end has been made of man in the flesh, e.g., Romans 7:4 : "Ye are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; when we have the expression "body of Christ" it seems to convey the truth of the end of all that we are by nature in His death; Hebrews 10:10 : "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," and "the sanctifier and the sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" as also in Colossians 1:22, "Reconciled in the body of his flesh through death." We are identified with Him.

We are always, all through the week, "partakers of the Lord's table," and if we were consistent with the truth of this, we should refuse — both as to ourselves and our associations that which the death of Christ has delivered us from. In 1 Corinthians 10:22, jealousy is brought in; it is because it is intimately connected with idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:14). This is shown by the first two commandments (Exodus 20:4-5). Jealousy is cruel as the grave. It is because He loves us so much, that the Lord is jealous; He cannot bear to see our hearts divided. It has been asked whether "flee from idolatry" applies to us now. It certainly does; the last warning in 1 John 5:21, is "Keep yourselves from idols." An idol is anything that usurps the place of God in the heart. We are partakers of the Lord's table all through the week, the "supper" on the Lord's day being the outward expression of it. And it means that we are identified with all the value of the sacrifice of Christ before God, and we should refuse everything that is not according to Him. May God lead us on and help us to enter into it more fully.

## 02.02. The Lord's Supper and the Ground of Gathering.

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The Lord's Supper and the Ground of Gathering.

1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

Last week we were speaking of the Lord's table, and the chief thought in the subject which is set out in 1 Corinthians 10:21 : the partaking of the Lord's table, which is an absolute fact, true of every Christian; it is the participation in all the value of the death of Christ before God, and this is expressed in the breaking of bread, when we actually break the bread and drink the cup. It is we who break the bread in 1 Corinthians 10:1-33; here in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34 it is the Lord Himself who does it: "The Lord Jesus . . . took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake . . . he took the cup, when he had supped." When we actually take the bread, we eat and assimilate it, and it becomes part of ourselves. This is a figure of what we do in the breaking of bread; we are identified before God in all the value of Christ once offered. Whenever we have the expression, "the body of Christ," the complete end of ourselves as men in the flesh is contemplated, as we clearly saw last week. What, then, is the practical result? One is almost afraid to speak of it. We are always partakers of the Lord's table. How happy it would be then, if we allowed nothing on ourselves and associations that the death of Christ delivered us from, and put away from us all that characterises the old man in consistency with the truth of "the bread which we break" — and, the same with that of the cup. Oh, may it be so with us. And it is blessed to know that it is not a question of what we are in ourselves, but of what we are before God in all the infinite value of the sacrifice of Christ, and accepted in all the sweet savour of what Christ is to God.

Chapter 10 shows how the righteous love of God can come out to us, and we respond in praise and worship to Him. If consistent with this, we should allow nothing from which His death has delivered us, whether natural, worldly, or religious. It is a tremendous thing, when you think of it. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, our assembling together, though involved, is not the principal thought; but in the case of the Lord's supper, it is. The frequent occurrence of the words, "come together," proves this; in 1 Corinthians 11:17-18, 1 Corinthians 11:30, 1 Corinthians 11:33-34, we have them. The assembly comes together on three different occasions in this epistle: in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, in order to maintain the holiness of God's house by putting away a wicked person; here, to eat the Lord's supper; and in 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, in a more general way, for edification.

It will not be amiss to consider the assembling together, because it is a great thing for us all to see its importance, seeing it is the divinely appointed way that all Christians should thus come together.

First of all, "come together in assembly" (1 Corinthians 11:18, N.T.) gives the character of the assembling; "in one place" (1 Corinthians 11:20) indicates the locality. I ask those who are wont so to meet, Have you ever thought what coming together in assembly involves? It is of the very highest importance to see what scripture says on the subject, and I will now just state what I think it embraces and then turn you to scripture to prove it.

First, what it is not: it is not a gathering to hear an address, or a gospel preaching, where one exercises his gift in dependence on the Lord in fellowship with one's brethren, neither would a reading meeting be coming together in assembly, where we usually know before what we are going to read, and where we read the scriptures and talk about them together, counting on God for His blessing. Here it is — "in assembly."

First, we come together as members of the body of Christ, "For we, being many, are one bread, one body: for we are all partakers of that one loaf" (1 Corinthians 10:17). It would be impossible to apply this literally and think of every Christian in every part of the world gathered into one place, and partaking of one actual loaf. But we come together as members of the body of Christ, taking account of all the members. In this verse "we are all partakers" means all Christians. We come together, then, thus; and surely, it is desirable that all should have a right sense of being members of Christ's body.

Further, we recognise, when thus gathered, that wonderful truth that the Holy Ghost has come down to dwell on earth after the glorification of Jesus, that the church is the dwelling place of God by the Spirit. Another thing, when we are gathered together, God, by the Spirit is acting there to order and direct all that is to be done. This is a most important truth, although many have little sense of it; but how important it is that all should be able to see from scripture the ground on which God would have His saints come together. Suppose someone said to you: "I came to your room the other morning and it was quite different to anything I had been to before; there were long pauses, and no one seemed to take the lead, but all was very solemn and impressive; I have never seen anything like it before. Could you explain why you meet in this way? was it the invention of some man?" What answer would you give? Could you produce scriptural warrant for this? Some take it for granted that it is right, and, indeed, have a distinct sense that it is according to God, but we want to get it from scripture and know the power of it. For instance, do you really believe God Himself is actually there, when we come together in the assembly of the saints? Would not the sense of this produce fitting behaviour and proper reverence with us? When we, as children, went to church, we had to behave properly, show due reverence, take off our hats and so on, because we were told it was the house of God. How much more reverence becomes those who are in the presence of God in the assembly of His saints! In 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 an unconverted man owns God's presence there. What a wonderful reality it must be!

Such, then, is what I believe "coming together in assembly" means, but let us turn to a few scriptures. First, it is of importance to see the fact of the Holy Ghost being a Divine Person and of His presence here; it is a very real thing to know the presence on this earth of a Divine Person since the day of Pentecost. For example, in the case of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-42, what does Peter say? "Why has Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? . . . Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." The Holy Ghost is God, but we are apt to think of Him as a mere influence. Again, in Acts 10:1-48, when Peter was musing on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, "Get thee down, doubting nothing, for I have sent them." Does not this show the Personality, if I may so put it, of the Spirit? So the church on earth is the dwelling-place of God by the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). Solomon was quite astounded at the idea: "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?" he asked at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chronicles 6:18). Yet this is true, it is a fact since Pentecost.

Next, what authority have we for saying, that when we are thus gathered, the Holy Ghost actually guides and directs? Look at 1 Corinthians 14:23, where we have a similar expression to 1 Corinthians 11:20 : "When ye come together into one place"; and here we have "The whole assembly came together into one place." What does this assembly consist of? (See 1 Corinthians 14:33.) God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all assemblies of the saints. It is not a mixed company of saved and unsaved, but an assembly of the saints, although an unbeliever might come into the place where the assembly was gathered; and if all prophesied, he would fall down on his face and worship God, and report that "God is in you of a truth" (1 Corinthians 14:24-25).

It is very beautiful, this company composed of saints only. God (by the Spirit) in all assemblies of the saints. God is there guiding and directing as to what is to be done in the assembly of the saints. And this chapter shows the liberty when we come together for every brother to take part, as led by the Spirit of God. Many skip over this chapter and read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 and go straight on to 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 and yet, so far as I know, this is the only chapter in the Bible that gives the internal working of the assembly, when assembled together. Hence its importance.

Let us look at one or two points. In 1 Corinthians 14:15, we read: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." They prayed and sang in the assembly as led by the Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 14:19, we have teaching in the assembly; and in 1 Corinthians 14:23, prophesying. Prophets in the New Testament are those who communicate the mind of God for the moment to His saints, so as to reach the conscience. Hence the exhortation: "Despise not prophesyings" — not teaching; and we must be careful not to push aside as inapplicable to ourselves, or as meriting little attention, these God-given prophecies. In 1 Corinthians 14:24, the conscience is reached and the person brought into the presence of God through the prophesyings of all, and he admits that God is in them of a truth. There have been meetings at which there was such a sense of the presence of God, that it would have been an intrusion for anyone to get up to minister or teach. It is important that all should get a sense of the actual presence of God when the saints are assembled, and the children taught to behave properly in consequence.

1 Corinthians 14:26. The apostle does not find fault with their having a revelation or a doctrine; what he does say, is: Mind, if you take part in the assembly, let it be for edification: For it does not follow that what I may be enjoying personally is for general edification; it is a question of the Spirit's leading. The tongues were gifts then, but they have ceased now: "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all assemblies of the saints." That, then, is the scripture authority that God, by the Spirit, is in the assembly of the saints to order and direct.

We may notice, by the way, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. Women have their place in the Lord's service as well as men, and often can serve in a way that men cannot. How beautifully the service of women is brought in, in the Gospels! "They ministered unto Him of their substance." What higher service could Mary and Joanna and the rest have performed than ministering to Jesus the things He needed? Look how prominent, too, women are at the cross and at the sepulchre. Then we have Phebe (Romans 16:1) and in Acts, Priscilla, who worked with her husband Aquila. They got Apollos right; told him all the truth of Christianity on the lines of Hebrews 6:1 : Christ risen and glorified, and the Holy Ghost come down; for before he knew only the baptism of John.

"If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37). This verse is very strongly put. The coming together in the way described in this chapter is the commandment of the Lord. It is not left to us to come together as we think fit, but we have Divine directions in this chapter as to the assembling of the saints.

Supposing an assembly composed of unconverted people came together in this way, what confusion there would be without a leader and without any pre-arranged organisation; but here we come together, not knowing at all what is going to be done or who will take part, but all is harmony, for the Holy Ghost guides and directs all, and the result is peace and edification. And not only those who actually take part, but everyone present, sisters as well as brothers wait on the Lord. For why do we have pauses in our assembly? Is it not that we are sitting in the presence of God and looking for the Holy Ghost to lead and direct? Now the apostle tells the Corinthians, "If any one takes the place of declaring God's mind, or of being spiritual, let him acknowledge, etc." If any be ignorant let him take the place of being so, that he may learn. Acting upon the truth of what was set up in the beginning and carrying out these commandments of the Lord, is what should distinguish us, but we need to be reminded of it and to have it brought home to us in power and reality.

What led us to this diversion from 1 Corinthians 11:1-34, was the expressions "come together in assembly," and "into one place." The apostle had to tell the Corinthians that when they came together, it was not to eat the Lord's supper. There is a very beautiful expression in Acts 20:7 : "The disciples came together to break bread." Very simple, but involving a vast deal. We come together on the first day of the week to break bread. What does the breaking of bread set forth? It brings before us the Lord Himself in all His love, and then, as directed by the Spirit, we pour out our worship and praise to Him. But it is not that we come together to hear a lecture, to hold a meeting, or even to worship; we come together to break bread. This the Corinthians did not. The expression, "come together to eat the Lord's supper" involves more than the breaking of bread itself, I think; it implies entrance into the truth of what the Lord's supper really means. The Corinthians, though eating the bread and drinking the cup, did not realise the meaning of the supper.

## 02.03. The Lord's Supper.

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The Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

You will remember that on previous occasions we spoke of the Lord's table in 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, and that which marks the truth of the Lord's table we saw to be our association with the death of Christ in all it has effected and in all that to which it has put an end, with regard to our history as of Adam's race. The actual assembling together, though implied here (1 Corinthians 11:16-17), is not spoken of till 1 Corinthians 11:1-34. Four or five times over the coming together is mentioned and in this instance the Corinthians came — or should have come — together to eat the Lord's supper. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, Paul says, "We being many are one body, for we are all partakers of that one loaf"; so that this, as we saw before, takes in every believer. I suppose it has never been true that all Christians have actually partaken of one loaf; the thought is a moral one, but it takes in the whole church. Coming together in assembly is, as we noticed in 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, seeing the wonderful truth of the Holy Ghost's presence and realising that He is there to order and direct all. So, when we come together, there should be a sense that we are in the immediate presence of God Himself.

Here, in 1 Corinthians 11:20, he says, "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper." Though professing to do so, the Corinthians did not eat the Lord's supper. So we infer that taking the Lord's supper does not mean merely eating the bread and drinking the wine, but entering into the truth of all its deep significance. It is not a question of doctrine, but of the affections. The simplicity of the description is most striking. The youngest convert can easily understand it, yet at the same time the oldest saint cannot reach the bottom of it. Some of us have known it for years, and, if it were a human invention, how tired we should have been of it before now, instead of which it comes home with such power and freshness that we begin to think we have hardly entered into it at all.

Before we touch on the actual description of the Lord's supper, let us see in what character we thus come together. The Lord's supper has not in view the forgiveness of sins or fitting us for God's presence. In Matthew, I know, we have the expression "for the remission of sins" brought in, but that is one of the terms of the new covenant about which the cup speaks to us, and Matthew gives us the atonement-side, for it is only those who know forgiveness and have peace with God who can eat the Lord's supper. I ask the question of each one: How do you think the Lord sees us when gathered? The very truth of His body given and His blood shed, would be the scriptural answer, and shows that He does not regard us as sinners or fallen children of Adam. We come together — it is important to see this — as His brethren. A wonderful expression! Have we individually entered into the truth of being His brethren? We think of Hebrews 2:11 : "For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." What cause? It is because they are "all of one," like Himself, clear of Adam and livingly associated with the risen Son of God on the other side of death. Have we individually entered into the truth of being His brethren?

He sees us also as His friends; what leads me to this is John 14:13. The thirteenth chapter begins a fresh section of the gospel, in view of His passing out of the world to the Father. Read John 13:1. Jesus knew He was going to depart out of the world to the Father, and not only that, but He knew the Father had given all into His hand (John 13:1). Do you know what that means? He was conscious that all the eternal purposes of the Father before the world began were committed to Him. Then think of all the truth of those John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26 inclusive. Has it ever struck you that he, the beloved disciple, the one who was ever nearest to Jesus, who lay on His breast, never says a word about the supper? You would think he would have been the very one to do so. No, but it is very beautiful and instructive that instead of giving an account of the actual supper (in John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26, where we have what passed in the upper chamber), John brings before us all the truth that the Spirit of God brings before us at the supper.

How does he begin? Jesus is departing out of the world, and His own are still left down here, but His love is still the same, — and that is the very thing that comes before us in the supper. And first, He begins to remove all questions as to their fitness for it; that is settled, for He says to Peter: "He that is bathed (all over — a different word is used for 'bathe' and 'wash') is clean every whit." What do you understand by that? When a priest was consecrated, he was bathed all over, and that once only; he was not washed in blood. The body bathed means that you are "clean every whit," not merely with regard to sins; all that we are as fallen sons of Adam is ended, in the death of Christ, and we are fitted for a scene where sin can never enter. Water, as well as blood, flowed from the side of the dead Christ; the blood meets my guilt, the water my state by nature.

Then in John 15:1-27 we read, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." I think the verse of the hymn we sing: No man of greater love can boast Than for his friend to die;

Thou for Thine enemies wast slain, What love with Thine can vie? hinders people from appreciating the meaning of this scripture. The thought expressed in the hymn is quite different from the Lord's thought in John 15:1-27. In the hymn we think of ourselves as His enemies, which is the exact opposite to "Ye are my friends." Why are we His friends? It is because all He has heard of the Father He has made known to us. Have we the sense of being clean every whit, bathed once for all; ended as to our life as Adam's children; dead to all that order of things, and living in Him in resurrection life beyond death; His friends, His brethren? It makes all the difference if we have, for it sets us free to think of Him. The perfection of His love brought Him down to death for His friends. If we entered into this, we should not be occupied with our fitness and so on, but should be overflowing with praise and worship, as we see all His glory and beauty, and think of His love, in which we lose ourselves. It is a very simple but none the less a real truth, that we shall not be more loved in the glory than now, nor shall we be more fit. It is quite true we are hampered, since we are still, as to our bodies, linked with Adam, but "as he is, so are we in this world."

Let us now look at what this scripture tells us of the Lord's supper. The first sentence of 1 Corinthians 11:23 is very important: "I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." Paul had received the truth of the Lord's supper, not from Peter or John, but as a special revelation from the Lord after He had ascended into glory. Now does not this show what the Lord thinks of the supper, and how He appreciates our remembrance of Himself and our responding to

His love? His own heart of love, which brought Him down into death, gives this revelation to Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. Jews might otherwise have said that, connected with the passover as it was, the supper was only for Jews — but the Lord gives it to him as a distinct and direct message to the Gentiles.

I cannot conceive how any Christian can be happy if he does not partake of the Lord's supper. Some think it is not essential to do so, but that is a very poor thing. Others think it is very blessed, but fear they are not up to it and would only prove inconsistent with it in their daily walk. Many Christians, moreover, think they are not worthy, through mistaking the meaning of 1 Corinthians 11:29. What is it to eat and drink unworthily? I knew someone who considered herself unworthy to take the Lord's supper. We happened to have had a reading on Luke 20:34-36, by which she had been greatly helped. She had seen that those who were "counted worthy to obtain that world" were those who had no worthiness of their own, but trusted in the worthiness of Another, so as to obtain that world and be with Christ in glory. So I said to her: "Surely, if you are counted worthy to obtain that world, you are worthy to eat the Lord's supper." But still she was not satisfied. I did not know what to say; she still came to the meeting but could not see her way to take the Lord's supper. At last I said to her "Have you ever thought that your remembering the Lord Jesus in the breaking of bread would give Him joy?" "Oh, no; I had only thought of my fitness." "Well, it would, believe me, give His heart positive joy to see from you a response to His loving request." After that it was all clear. Do you remember the home at Bethany, where Jesus spent most of the last six days of His life here? Why did He go there, to Martha, Mary and Lazarus? Ah, there were hearts there that appreciated His company and valued His love in contrast to the coldness, hardness of heart, and hatred of the world around. The Lord went up to heaven from Bethany, and that Bethany has continued even till now, since the Lord Jesus has, in the midst of a world that hates Him and that crucified Him, positive joy in the response of His own to His love. It is very beautiful to see that side, and that is why I cannot imagine how one of the Lord's people can refrain from taking the Lord's supper. As I may not have an opportunity to speak of it again, I would just like to say a word on 1 Corinthians 11:29. Here it is not a question of being worthy to eat, but of eating unworthily — "not discerning the Lord's body." What is meant by that? What does the bread set forth? It sets forth the Lord's body given for us, and this signifies that there is the removal in His death of all that we are, as involved in the fall of Adam. This truth is implied in the breaking of bread. Perhaps when we are assembled together, in spite of all contrary efforts, our minds are filled with other thoughts, thoughts of ourselves, our failures and shortcomings, thoughts of every-day business, and so on. What a relief then it is, to know that all this has been removed in the death of Christ, brought so vividly before us in the bread, which is His body given for us, and to know that God now regards us in Another beyond and apart from that altogether. He who eats unworthily forgets this, and indulges the flesh, allowing what is not of God; he eats the supper, but allows that from which the Lord's death has delivered him. The Lord in His love cannot leave such a person alone, but He comes in, by way of discipline. Do you think it would be right or kind of Him to leave you alone, if you were going on in a way displeasing to Him? No, He would bring you to your senses, as it were, and let us praise Him for it. In the New Testament we find four truths revealed especially to Paul:

(1) the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3);

(2) the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18);

(3) the Lord's supper, in this passage; and (4) the mystery, Christ and the church (Ephesians 3:3).

Here it was revealed to him, how the Lord Jesus — not Jesus, but the One Who is the exalted Lord in the highest place in glory — "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks" — what a thanksgiving that must have been and how He looked on to the full result of the death He was about to accomplish! — "He brake it, and said: Take, eat, this is my body, which is for you. This do in remembrance of me." When was it? On "the same night in which he was delivered up" (as it should read); this is a much wider thought than that of the Authorised Version rendering, which confines it to Judas' treachery. What does it involve? That was the hour, when all that was in man's heart came out, when all the wickedness of man rose to its height — the treachery of Judas, the weakness of Peter and of His disciples, the hatred of the scribes and priests, the cruel mockery of the soldiers, the unrighteousness of Pilate who thrice protested His innocence and finally gave Him up to be slain, and, behind all, the power and energy of Satan, leading Jew and Gentile to crucify the Lord of glory, Who could say, "This is your hour and the power of darkness." In that hour did the Lord Jesus declare all the fulness of the love of God. And we have to own that all that came out there was what is in the heart of each one of us by nature, and we must each apply it to himself. But the Lord in His love has freed us from the man of sin and shame: "This is my body, which is for you." And now He looks upon us as His brethren, as sanctified and clear of the old, fallen state altogether. So it is no question of doctrine, but one of the affections being in exercise, and if it is regarded as a duty, it loses all its significance. What would you think of a family professing to love their father, if, when he was away from home for a long time and sent them his photograph with a request that they would place it on the mantelpiece in order to have a constant remembrance of him, they simply said: "We suppose we must do it, as he asks us to"? There would not be much love there, would there? No, it is not a duty, it is not doctrine, but the response of the affections, and the older one gets and the longer one goes on with the Lord's supper, the more real, the more beautiful it becomes. And it is "till he come." We are placed between His death — to which we look back to see all the ground-work and foundation of everything for God and for us — and His coming again, when first, as a preliminary, He will catch us up to be with Himself, and will then return to set up the kingdom.

How beautiful it is in Matthew, when He says: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father." The wine speaks of the joy which He will share with us, the intense joy that will be His, and in that new state of things — that vast system of glory, of which He will be the Head and Centre. The expression, "the kingdom of my Father" occurs only in Matthew, in (1) the Lord's prayer;

(2) Matthew 13:1-58 : "Then shall the righteous shine . . . in the kingdom of their Father;" and

(3) here.

It is the heavenly side of the world to come, and we too shall shine as the sun in that day for the millennium earth. How wonderful is this glimpse of the Lord Jesus giving thanks in view of that day.

"After the same manner also he took the cup." This is different from 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, "the cup of blessing which we bless," for here it is the Lord who puts it into our hands. And is it not remarkable that the Lord here introduces the new covenant? Surely He must have thought a good

deal of it to link it with His supper. I think many of us have too little understood the new covenant — a great thing to grasp. What is expressed in the new covenant? The new covenant is the expression of the love of the heart of God. I have not time now to prove it to you from scripture, so it must be taken on trust until another time. So in the bread, the Lord's love comes before us in a very special way, and when He gives us the cup, He directs our hearts into the love of God; it is the Lord Himself that does it. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us," we have in Romans 5:1-21, but here it is the Lord Himself doing it. Does not He know the love of God? Yes, both as God and as Man, He knows it fully, and He delights to lead our hearts into it now. By nature we are on quite different lines, for we are afraid of God, and many Christians imagine that the Son came here to reconcile the Father to us. The Lord would undo all that dread which the enemy has instilled into us, and would lead our hearts into all the love of God, that we might respond to it.

What marvellous times we ought to have, privileged as we are to know the Father; conscious, too, of the Spirit's presence and power, and of the Lord's delight to have an answer to His love. What a privilege it is! May the Lord lead us on to a greater sense of all its meaning, simple enough for the youngest to see, but so profound that none can ever fathom all its depth.

## 02.04. The New Covenant.

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The New Covenant.

1 Corinthians 11:25-26.

Wishing to bring before you the truth of the new covenant a little, I have just read these verses to connect this subject with what we have had on previous occasions. It is most remarkable that the Lord should have introduced the new covenant in connection with the cup, and this but shows the importance which He Himself attached to the knowledge of the truth of the new covenant. So it is very important that all God's children should get a scriptural idea of the new covenant and of the reason, too, why the Lord Jesus connected it with the cup. As we have already seen, when we take the bread, we are set free from ourselves before God, in order that, as His brethren, we may be able to think of the love that brought Him down into death for us. "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Then in the cup we have more what Paul so beautifully prayed for in 2 Thessalonians 3:5 : the Lord directs our hearts into the love of God. In Romans 5:1-21 we have the love of God shed abroad by the Spirit — and the Spirit is the only power by which divine things can be made good in our souls — but the apostle here puts it: "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God." Does not He know the love of God? As God, He Himself is love: and as Man, He lives in the full, uninterrupted enjoyment of the love of God. "He lives unto God"; He knows what life is, the full knowledge of God and of all His love.

Now we will look first at what I may call the terms of the new covenant and its blessings, and then at what scripture calls the Spirit of the new covenant. And first read the passage in the Old Testament that is quoted in the New (Jeremiah 31:31).

Now, with whom is the new covenant primarily made? With the house of Israel and the house of Judah. We, as Gentiles, are neither one nor the other, and so may well ask what application it has to us. Why did the Lord speak of the new covenant when revealing the truth of His supper to Paul? What has it to do with us Gentiles? The answer is found in 2 Corinthians 3:6 : "God, who also has made us able ministers of the new covenant" — not exactly of the doctrine of it, but of its practical reality and present application; look at what comes next: "not of the letter, but of the spirit." The letter is what we have literally, in Jeremiah. The spirit of what underlay God's mind and the principles on which He will deal with Israel when they are restored in the new covenant, He applies to us now. And it is an interesting point — I do not know if all have got hold of it — that all the blessings that Israel will have in the future are to be known now in a spiritual way by us. The new covenant is one example. It will be actually accomplished in the millenium (a human name this, showing merely its duration of 1,000 years), or, as scripture calls it "the world to come," a name which shows its contrast with this present age. The expression occurs four or five times in the Bible, e.g., Hebrews 2:5; Mark 10:30, etc. We get all the blessings of the new covenant now, in the spirit, but not in the letter. The scriptural thought of the new covenant is given us in 2 Corinthians 3:1-18. Read on from 2 Corinthians 3:6 : "For the letter kills, but the spirit gives life," to 2 Corinthians 3:17 : "Now the Lord is the Spirit" (New Translation). Of what? Why, the Spirit of the

new covenant. Nobody can possibly understand the chapter, if he does not see that 2 Corinthians 3:7-16 are a parenthesis; read 2 Corinthians 3:16-17 straight on together and what connection do you see between them? None at all; but you do, of course, by leaving out the parenthesis and reading on from 2 Corinthians 3:6-17. The Lord, then, is the Spirit of the new covenant; it is not Christ or Jesus, but the Lord, the One who has been down into death, but who now is risen and exalted to the highest place in glory and, as Lord, administers all the blessings of the new covenant. He, as Lord, is the Spirit of the new covenant, which might be summed up in one word — Love. "For hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16).

Now let us look at the terms of the new covenant and see how they apply to us, since what Israel will have in the future, we have and enjoy now. First of all, it is "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers." It is of great importance to see the negative side, for God would impress us with the fact that the new covenant is quite unlike the old, and does not depend at all on what we are or do. It has been well said, that the old covenant was comprised in the words: "Thou shalt"; but the new covenant is: "I will," all from God's side. That is the difference, but, important as it is to be clear about it, many Christians are still on old covenant lines. Titus 3:4-5, was written not to the unconverted but to Christians: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

"This shall be the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord";— and then follow all the "I will's." After what days? Why, all the days of the failure in responsibility, of their murmurings and resisting of the Holy Ghost, of their rejecting and killing the prophets and messengers of God, and, finally, of their murder of the just One, when you would have thought that nothing but judgment could fall on them. Then it is that God comes out to act on His own account and for His own glory, not according to what we are at all.

There are three distinct parts of this new covenant:

(1) "I will put my law in their inward parts and write it on their hearts" — that implies a new nature, new birth;

(2) "They shall no more teach every man his neighbour, . . . but they shall all know me." In Hebrews 8:1-13 (New Translation) it is "know me in themselves" — that is conscious knowledge: we cannot get beyond that; and

(3) "For I will forgive their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more" — that is the knowledge of God revealed in grace. The law in our hearts, the knowledge of God who is love, and "no more conscience of sins," — such are the terms of the new covenant. Are not all these blessings ours to-day by the Spirit? If you believe, however little you may enter into them, they are yours. None can say he knows them perfectly; how can you know God perfectly? But many can say they know enough to see how little they really do know, or they know enough to want to know more. The first of these terms will, of course, be fulfilled in Israel in the world to come; the law will be written in their hearts, as in Psalms 119:1-176. How does this apply to us to-day? Have we the law written in our hearts? Yes, and we, too, have Christ written on our hearts. How is this? Well, the heart is the seat of the affections. But what is the law? Not the ten commandments merely, but, as the lawyer answered rightly, in Luke 10:26-27 : "Thou shalt love . . ." Is that in the ten

commandments? No. The first is quoted from Deuteronomy 6:1-25 and the second from Leviticus 19:18, and yet the two sum up the whole law: "Thou shalt love." Add to this the support of Romans 13:9-10, "Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" and turn to Romans 8:4, where, after sin in the flesh has been condemned, the apostle says: "That the righteous requirement of the law . . . might be (New Translation) fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Righteous requirement" is a remarkable expression. Is it not perfectly right that God should require love from His creatures in return for the great love wherewith He has loved us? And the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us, for we love Him because He first loved us, and we love the brethren, and love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10)

Secondly, "They shall all know me." Of course, love is the way to know God. "Every one that loves is born of God and knows God" (1 John 4:7). Cannot each one of us say: "We love Him, because He first loved us?" Such are His wonderful purposes and ways of love towards us, that we cannot help loving Him. "Everyone that loves . . . knows God." Why? It is because, as verse 8 tells us, "God is love"; love is His nature. As fallen children of Adam, we were in darkness and utter ignorance of God; every thought of God the unconverted man has is all wrong, and we knew and cared nothing about God. Added to this is what we get in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, the blinding of men by the god of this world. How beautiful it is that God wants us to know Him! And how can we? Only as revealed in the Son, who is "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person," and came to earth to make Him known. Look at the leper in Matthew 8:1-4 : Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand and touched him, and said, "I will; be thou clean." That leper might have said, "I have known what it is for God to come so near to me as to touch me, and then my leprosy was healed in an instant." That is only a picture of how the Lord has touched us, when He came in contact with sin on the cross, and put it all away.

"They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest," — not "the greatest to the least" — that is, Israel will know God not nationally but individually. Is there not an immense deal of truth in the new covenant? In the knowledge of God we have the love of God, and that is why Paul prays: "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God."

Thirdly, we get what in Hebrews is called "no more conscience of sins." Have you ever noticed that this is quoted just before the passage about "having boldness to enter the holiest"? Before we can enter the holiest, we must be set free of ourselves to enter into the wonderful counsels of God. "The worshippers once purged . . . have no more conscience of sins," is in contrast to the day of atonement, when God raised the question of sins every year (Leviticus 16:34), but now He says, "Their sin and iniquities will I remember" (not once a year but) "no more." Can you say, "The question of my sins has been gone into and settled between God and Christ on the cross; and God says, I will never raise the question of your sins again"?

Now the love of God is the essence of the new covenant, and though no verse actually says as much, yet we can get pretty near it in Jeremiah 32:39-41. "I will rejoice over them to do them good . . . with my whole heart and with my whole soul." This is all in connection with the everlasting covenant spoken of in Jeremiah 32:40. So it actually gives God positive joy to bless us, as if He said, "You don't know what joy it gives Me to bless you." Does it not show the heart of God? This is what comes out in Luke 15:1-32. I do hope all have got hold of this, not merely doctrinally, but in all its intense practical reality. To return now to 2 Corinthians 3:1-18 : In 2 Corinthians 3:3, Christ

was written not in tables of stone, but in fleshy (not "fleshly" but "fleshy" — i.e. made soft or sensitive) tables of the heart." It is very clear that Paul had in mind the old covenant when he spoke of the tables of stone. The latter, which Moses brought down from the mount, were a picture of man's heart by nature, dead, unimpressionable and irresponsive. Such were our hearts once, but they have by the Spirit's power, in spite of their natural hardness, been made sensitive to the love of God in our Lord Jesus Christ. And He is the Spirit of the new covenant, the perfect expression of the love of God, which was perfectly set forth in His death. In that way love is the spirit of the new covenant.

Now turn to Exodus 20:1-26 for a moment. After the giving of the law in the earlier part of the chapter, God evidently has the new covenant in view in verse 24, where unconditional blessing is promised. It was as good as saying that they were certain to fail under the old covenant and God would have to fall back on His sovereign right to bless on the ground of the sacrifice of Christ. The altar of earth is there, speaking of nothing of man, but of what was entirely of God. If the altar was of stones, it was to be of unhewn ones: "If thou lift up thy tool upon it thou hast polluted it." This blessing was to be entirely on the ground of the sweet savour of the sacrifice on the altar, and all from God's side. That is Exodus 20:1-26; what do we get in Exodus 21:1-36? The Spirit of the new covenant. Who was the servant? Why, the Lord Jesus Himself, the Spirit of the new covenant. So the Lord Jesus, the One who assumed a servant's form, might have gone out free, gone straight back to heaven from the mount of transfiguration, but He would have gone alone. But now He has plainly said — and how plainly, too! — "I love my master, my wife and my children," or in New Testament language: "I love the Father" (John 14:31); "Christ loved the Church" (Ephesians 5:25); and He loved His earthly people Israel. That is what is seen in the new covenant, the love of God manifested in all its fullness in Christ. For in 2 Corinthians 4:4. we see that Christ is "the image of God," the One who perfectly represents all that God is, and He is the Spirit of the new covenant. Have you ever noticed that last verse, so often quoted, and seen that it is connected with the new covenant? It is the Lord, as the Spirit of the new covenant, whom we behold with unveiled face, the One who, as we have seen, has displayed all the fullness of God's love. The One who could say so plainly, "I love," and that love perfectly displayed in going into death for us. And as we contemplate Him, and get to know more of His love, we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Lord, the Spirit," and we become more and more morally like Him, and we love, and by love serve one another (Galatians 5:13), even as He took the form of a servant that He might serve us in love for ever.

We have only touched on a few points of this wonderful and marvellous subject, but we have seen what value the Lord Jesus must have attached to it to speak of it in connection with the cup at the supper, and as we come together and He gives us this cup of the new covenant in "His blood," we are reminded afresh of all the love of God, and delight to pour out our praise and worship to Him who has so delighted to bless us. May the Lord direct "our hearts into the love of God," for His Name's sake!

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