

ARTICLE IV.

THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF THE RELATION OF CHRIST'S DEATH TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HAYES WARD, D. D., THE INDEPENDENT,
NEW YORK CITY.

THE present paper is not a study in constructive theology. Its sole and simple purpose is to collect and report, with not the least theological design, the evidence which shall give the view of the New Testament writers as to the relation of Jesus Christ to the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. I have tried, so far as I could, in reading the New Testament over and over again while studying the subject, to put aside all prepossession derived from any system of theology, and ask simply, What does the New Testament say on this subject? The question is not as to Christ as a Saviour, or as a suffering Saviour, or as one who saved us by his blood and death, nor is it any question about Christ's sacrifice in any tropical or figurative sense of the word, meaning simply his self-denial or suffering or death. On that there can be no question—it is only the question what the New Testament teaches about the relation of Christ's life or death to the Old Testament sacrificial system, and what was the thought of those writers as to Christ's having or not having, as antitype, fulfilled a type found in the Jewish sacrifices, and provided and ordained to foreshadow the true and sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The New Testament writers believed that Christ suffered and died that men might be saved. Did his death have anything to do with the old sacrifices, and if so, what?

It is necessary, by way of introduction, to recall what are the Old Testament ordinances of sacrifice. We must remember that there were a number of different kinds of sacrifice, having different meanings. The following may be mentioned:—

1. *The covenant sacrifice.* This is not provided for in the Jewish ritual. The illustration of it is the sacrifice at the time of the covenant of God with Abraham, when God passed between the severed parts of the she-goat, the ram, the turtle-dove, and the pigeon. Its purpose was to add solemnity and sanction to the immutable promise made in the covenant between the parties.

2. *The peace offering.* This was a sort of thank offering, an expression of gratitude to God, and thousands of animals were offered on special occasions, such as the dedication of the temple. It was the kind of offering made on festal occasions; and accordingly the household which offered it ate it before the Lord, the Lord being conceived as partaking of it and pleased with its sweet odor, while a portion, the breast and right shoulder, was given to the priest. The sentiment, or purpose, connected with this sacrifice was grateful acknowledgment and joy.

3. Similar to this, and indeed representing the same thought of loving and grateful fellowship with God, were *the meal offerings and the drink offerings.* They consisted the one of wine, the other of flour, salt, oil, and incense, and were offered at the regular times of the burnt offerings.

4. *The regular burnt offerings, offered every morning and every evening.* The animal offered was a lamb, except on Sabbaths and certain high feast-days, when it might be two lambs or two bullocks, a ram and seven lambs. These were wholly consumed, wholly offered to God. The first offering of Abel was of this sort, and the purpose is to express loyalty to Jehovah, obedience and honor, by offering to him the choicest possessions. Occasionally these whole burnt

offerings were presented as a freewill offering, differing from the peace offering in that it was wholly consumed, but having substantially the same meaning of gratitude or loyalty; only God was supposed to take the whole of it, instead of the worshipper eating the most of it in a feast with his household.

5. *The passover* may be mentioned here, though not strictly a sacrifice. It was not offered, at least at first, at an altar, but was killed at the home of the household, but afterwards it was slain at Jerusalem, and the blood sprinkled on the altar and the fat burned. It was roasted and eaten by the household. At first the blood was sprinkled on the doorposts, so that the destroying angel might distinguish the homes of the Jews from those of the Egyptians. The Egyptians were God's enemies, and the Hebrews his friends, recognized as such by the blood, the sprinkling of which was a sort of profession of faith. The passover became the great festal occasion of the year, like our Independence day, and the roasted lamb was like our Christmas or Thanksgiving dinner. It reminded the people of their escape from Egypt and the deliverance of their first-born when the first-born of Egypt were slain.

6. With this may be barely mentioned such sacrifices as those offered under the form of the redemption of the first-born, and the purification of women after childbirth, expressions of gratitude to God.

7. *The sin offering* was offered for an entirely different purpose,—that of confession of sin, and placating the anger of God, and thus atoning for sin. The sacrifice was a goat or a bullock, and it was offered with special solemnity on the day of atonement, and occasionally, if not frequently, at other times.

8. *The trespass offering* had much the same regulations as the sin offering, and though it is somewhat confused with the sin offering, one may conjecture that it was offered for in-

advertent offences. Like the sin offering, it was not to be eaten by the worshippers, but was the perquisite of the priest who represented God. Unlike the sin offering, it might be a ram instead of a goat.

9. *Sacrifices with a view to ritual cleansing*; such as, the slaying of a bird whose blood should be sprinkled on a leper, or the burning of a red heifer whose ashes should be kept to mix with water for sprinkling those who were impure by touching a dead body. This was called "the water of separation," and said to be a "purification of sin."

The distinction between these various kinds of sacrifice, as well as their varying ideas or purposes, must be kept in mind by one who studies the application of the term or figure of sacrifice to the death of our Lord. Some sacrifices were to make atonement for sin, while others were intended to express gratitude or fellowship or loyalty or covenant faithfulness. Some were expressions of sorrow and penitence, which should bring forgiveness, while others expressed gladness and festivity.

Before turning now to the New Testament treatment of our Lord's death as a sacrifice, it may be well to recall some one typical statement of the doctrine as it has come into our modern theology. I quote from the Assembly's Shorter Catechism:—

"Q. 25. How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?"

"A. Christ executeth the office of a priest in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us."

The Westminster Larger Catechism says:—

"The covenant of grace was administered under the Old Testament by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the passover, and other types and ordinances, which did all fore-signify Christ then to come, and were for that time sufficient to build up the elect in faith in the coming Messiah, by whom they then had full remission of sin and eternal salvation."—A. 34.

The Confession of Faith says:—

"There are not two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations."—vii. 6.

In the three synoptic Gospels there is no mention anywhere of any connection between Christ and the sacrifices of the law. He is nowhere called a sacrifice, nor is the figure of sacrifice used in connection with him. He is called a Saviour, and it is stated that he should save his people from their sins (Matt. i. 21), but that he should save them by becoming a sacrifice for them is not stated anywhere. The only passage in which we might look for it is in the formula for the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, "Take, eat. This [bread] is my body given [or broken] for you. This do in remembrance of me." "This cup is the new testament [or covenant] in my blood, which is shed for many unto remission of sins."

Here there is no mention of sacrifice, and probably no thought of the Jewish sacrifice is here suggested. If it were a sacrifice, it would be a covenant offering, solemnizing a new covenant, and the participants of the covenant on the human side would be eating and drinking the sacrifice accompanying it. But this is making too much of the word "covenant." The early Christians did not discover in the words of institution any picture of sacrifice. In "The Teaching of the Apostles" the prayers preceding the distribution of the elements are thus prescribed:—

"Now concerning the Eucharist, thus give thanks; first concerning the cup; 'We thank thee, our Father, for the holy Vine of David thy servant, which thou hast made known to us through Jesus thy Servant: to thee be the glory forever.' And concerning the broken bread: 'We thank thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou hast made known to us through Jesus thy Servant; to thee be the glory forever. Just as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and having been gathered together became one, so let thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth unto thy Kingdom; for thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.'"

Here we see that the Gospel story of the institution of the Supper suggested not a sacrifice, but the Vine of David. It is worth while to mention that the ambiguity of the English version in the words "given" (or "broken") "*for* you," "shed *for* many," is not in the Greek. The original does

not allow the thought of substitution here; it is "broken *in behalf* of many," *ὑπέρ*, not *ἀντί*, *instead* of; and the blood is "shed *with reference* to many," *περί*.

The "Apostolic Constitutions" equally fail to suggest, in the ritual of the Eucharist, any thought of a sacrifice, whether covenant offering or sin offering.

The Gospel of John is equally silent as to any reference to Christ as a sacrifice therein fulfilling a type found in the Lord. We are told that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John ii. 14); but this is a simile which has nothing to do with a sacrifice of any sort. Christ also calls himself "the bread of life," and "the water of life"; but these are figures of sustenance, not of sacrifice. He says "I lay down my life for my sheep" (John x. 15); but here, again, it is not the figure of sacrifice under which our Lord illustrates his death, but that of a faithful, protecting shepherd.

There is in the Gospel of John just one passage, a very interesting and important one, which may seem to suggest the sacrifice of the Mosaic law. It is the utterance of John the Baptist to his disciples when he seeth Jesus coming: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world" (John i. 29). Let us inquire how such words would strike a Jewish believer, such as were those to whom John spoke.

If there be a sacrifice here alluded to, it must be the sin offering—he "taketh away the sins of the world." But could the expression suggest a sin offering to a Jew? I think not, and especially for this reason, that the lamb was not used for a sin offering, but a bullock or a goat. The author of Hebrews spoke with exactness when he said that the "blood of bulls and goats" cannot take away sin, for these were the animals offered, not lambs. What, then, was the figure, or thought, in the mind of John the Baptist, if it was not a sin offering? I think it comes from the fifty-third chapter of

Isaiah. The word is not the *ἀρνίον* of the Revelation, but the *ἀμνός* of Isaiah. There we have the lamb brought in connection with bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows, but it is not a lamb of sacrifice. What we are told is that he opened not his mouth, but was as patient and speechless as a lamb in the hands of a butcher, or a sheep in the hands of a shearer—certainly not a sin offering. “He was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquity: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed.” These figures of wounding, bruising, or chastising with stripes are certainly not those of a sacrifice, and yet the bearing of our sins and the picture of a slaughtered lamb (or a shorn lamb, as the Septuagint has it) come together as they do not anywhere else in the Old Testament. In verse 10, however, we read, “When his soul shall make a trespass offering [not sin offering] he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days,” etc.

In the book of Acts there is no passage which bears on our subject. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, his address to Cornelius, and equally the story of Paul's own conversion, and his directions to inquiring converts, to the Athenians and to the elders of Ephesus, as also his speech to the priests and elders at Jerusalem, contain no reference to Christ's death as being an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men. We should know as little from the book of Acts as from the four Gospels that Christ's *sacrificial* death was any part of the Christian faith. Of course I do not mean by this that Christ's death is not declared to be an essential part of the Christian faith, nor that he did not die as the Saviour of Jew and Gentile; but that this death was in the nature of the Mosaic sacrifice, or that it was the antitype, of which the sacrifices on the altar were the type, nowhere appears in the Gospels or the Acts.

We now turn to the epistles of Paul, curious to discover whether so important an element in modern theology is made

prominent in Paul's own writings, while it was overlooked by Luke in his account of Paul's missionary tours. We shall find that Luke did not fail to understand and interpret the great apostle. In not one of his epistles is the thought that Christ fulfilled the sacrificial type, or was such an atonement or expiation for sin as were the sin offerings of the Mosaic law, either developed as a doctrine, or assumed or implied with any clear distinctness as a matter of common faith. The importance of Christ's death is again and again declared. "His blood," we are told, taketh away our sins. We are "reconciled through the death of his Son;" we are "baptized with his death;" we are "crucified with him;" "one died for all;" "for whose sakes Christ died;" we are "made nigh in his blood." In these and other passages the efficiency of Christ's death or blood is asserted and assumed, but nowhere are we told that this death was a fulfilling of the sacrifice of the law, or that they were a type of him. I think we must be on our guard against an acquired prepossession which assumes that the mention of blood is any reference to sacrifice. Not much was made of blood in sacrifices. It was not burned or cared for, but thrown away. Blood is the symbol of life, not of sacrifice.

One passage, however, must be considered in this connection, "For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ" (1 Cor. v. 7). This is not a statement made with any doctrinal intent. Paul is bidding the Corinthian believers to excommunicate a member guilty of incest. He tells them that such impurity defiles the whole church. Such a leaven as that may corrupt the whole lump; they must therefore purge out such old leaven, regarding this as passover time, for Christ our paschal lamb has been killed, and the feast must not be kept with the leaven of fornication or malice or wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. The metaphor of the leaven removed at the passover Paul carries out and completes by comparing Christ with the lamb

slain for the paschal feast. It would not be fair to draw from it any doctrinal teaching, especially as the paschal lamb was scarcely a sacrifice, and was killed not in the least as a sin offering, but to make a joyful feast.

There are two other passages in Paul's epistles where we very easily read into the apostle's words a reference to the sacrifices, although they are not mentioned. One of these is Romans viii. 5: "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and *for sin*, condemned sin in the flesh." Here the Revisers insert the words "*as an offering for sin.*" But a note in the margin allows the inserted words to be omitted, as I certainly think they should be. If any word is to be inserted, it is *redemption*, not *offering*, for Paul was not accustomed to think of Christ's death as an offering or sacrifice. The other passage is 2 Cor. v. 21: "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin in our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." This is often interpreted so as to read, "he made to be a *sin offering* on our behalf," but that would be intensive, defining what is not elucidated, and would add a figure not expressed nor really implied. The thought simply is that Christ was treated like a sinner, and so made sin.

It will thus be seen that the thought of our Lord's having fulfilled the sacrifice type, and thus done away with sacrifice, was not a part of Paul's thought. He did not think of the sacrifices as a type fulfilled in Christ, but as an outworn ordinance now passing away. It had served its time, was transitory and effete, but it was not fulfilled. The two thoughts do not harmonize. Paul's thought of an outworn ordinance, "that which passeth away" (2 Cor. iii. 11, 13), is incongruous with the thought of its fulfilment and completion in Christ. At any rate, Paul does not give any expression to the latter idea.

What then was Paul's favorite way of illustrating the efficacy of Christ's death? It was by the use of the figure im-

plied in the words *redeem* and *redemption*, not *sacrifice*, or *offering*. Indeed he was more apt to use the term *sacrifice* or *offering*, as applied to himself and other believers than to Christ. He bids them present their bodies, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. xii. 2), and he is himself "ready to be offered upon the sacrifice and service" of their faith (Phil. ii. 17). This use of the figure of sacrifice is easy and familiar to him; not the other which applies it to Christ. It is remarkable that in none of his compact epitomes of Christian faith,—such as 1 Tim. iii. 16, where we are told that Christ "was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up unto glory,"—in none of these is Christ's sacrificial work alluded to. Indeed his death is apt to be omitted entirely, as in the above, or mentioned only as the necessary prelude to his more important resurrection.

I say it was not the figure of sacrifice,—but of a redemption, redeemer, a ransom,—by which Paul preferred to illustrate the efficacy of the death of Christ. We are justified "through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by his blood" (Rom. iii. 24-25). This redemption is from the bondage and slavery of the law, whose penalty is death, but from which we are now discharged and delivered by this redemption, for "God sent forth his Son, born under the law, that he might *redeem* them which were under the law," giving these redeemed slaves "the adoption of sons," instead of their old bondage (Gal. iv. 4, 5). We now have *redemption* through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses" (Eph. i. 7). He is the one "mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a *ransom* for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6). He "gave himself for us that he might *redeem* us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14). The figure of a redeemer and a ransom is a different one from that of a

sacrifice. It does not connect itself with the Mosaic sacrificial system. It is built on a different thought, that of a slave to be purchased, and is, indeed, more clearly and positively substitutionary than is the sacrifice in general, or even the sin offering in particular. The words ἀγοράζω, ἐξαγοράζω, λύτρον, λυτρόω, are words of the market and of price, not of the altar. The familiar doctrine of a substitutionary atonement, whether general or of the elect only, is founded not on passages which have to do with sacrifices or sin offerings, but chiefly and wholly, so far as Paul is concerned, on those that use the figure of the ransom of a slave. Indeed Paul himself gets it probably from the very words of our Lord, who, as reported both by Matthew and Mark (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45), says that the Son of man came "to give his life a ransom for many." We are apt to wonder that the early Christian church could ever have explained Christ's death as having purchased a ransom from the devil; but that theory has its basis in a better understanding of Paul than is that which is concerned only with finding a fulfilment of a sacrificial type.

What is true of Paul is true of the general epistles of Peter, James, Jude, and John, and of the Revelation. There is not a passage in any one of these eight books in which Christ's death is in any way definitely connected with the Jewish sacrifice. The figure of cleansing is used by John—"The blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7)—to denote sanctification, and perhaps refers to ritual sprinklings with the water of separation. Similarly Peter speaks (1 Peter i. 2) of those who are elect "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." In both of these passages there is an illustrative allusion to sprinkling of those who are ceremonially impure, as by touching a dead body, in which case the water of purification, mingled with the ashes of a heifer, was sprinkled; or of the cured lepers, in which case they were sprinkled with the blood of a bird. But these are hardly references to sacrifices. Peter commands the faith-

ful "to be sober, to be holy, not after the former lusts, to pass the time of their rejoicing in fear, knowing that they were *redeemed*," not by the purchase of such contemptible things as silver and gold, with which redemption from slavery is usually purchased, but with precious blood, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ," who was foreordained, manifested in due time, raised from the dead, and received unto glory (1 Peter i. 13-21). Here the figure begins with redemption, but the mention of Christ's blood suggests another simile, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," the sort of lamb used in sacrifice; but this mention of a lamb is subsidiary, and has no doctrinal significance, and certainly does not suggest the sin offering, which was not a lamb, but a goat or a bullock. A similar figure of ransom by purchase is found in Rev. v. 9, "Thou wast slain, and didst *purchase* us unto God with thy blood." Such being the predominating figure used in all these books, it is not strange, I say, that the early church gave pre-eminence to the thought of redemption as explaining the atonement. They only developed the figure a little further, supposing it to be the devil from whom Christ purchased his redeemed, instead of from an abstraction like sin or death or the law. They had, however, a further suggestion of their theory of the atonement in a passage from the only book of the New Testament which remains for us to consider, the Epistle, written by an unknown author, to the Hebrews.

That parallel, or contrast, between Christ's death and the sacrificial system which we miss in all the rest of the New Testament we find in abundance in the book of Hebrews. Nor is it anything accidental or subsidiary, but it is the very purpose of the book, and the essential thing in its thought, to connect Jesus Christ's priesthood and sacrifice with those of the Mosaic ritual. The object of the Epistle is to encourage the Hebrew believers to patient constancy by showing the superiority of the Christian to the Mosaic dispensation;

and this is developed from the text "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The writer has to show that the Melchizedek style of priest is superior to the Aaron style. That is his way of defending and exalting Christianity as addressing the Hebrews. His argument requires him constantly to disparage and belittle the Mosaic ritual by showing that it was temporary and inferior to the priesthood of Melchizedek and Christ. He therefore gathers a great many points of comparison, all of which centre about his Messianic prophetic text, "Thou art a *priest* forever after the order of Melchizedek." Let us look at these points of comparison.

And in a preliminary way we may notice that the author of Hebrews, although he does not make the figure of redemption a prominent one as he does that of sacrifice, yet in a single passage, before reaching his text, develops the thought of it in a peculiar and unusual way which gave the key to the early Christian theology of redemption. He says: "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Here we have specified the bondage or slavery through fear of death, and the deliverance through Christ's death, which brought to naught the devil who had the power of death. That is, Christ died, and his death redeemed from death and the devil those whom the devil had under his power condemned to death. I cannot see but that this thought is clearly expressed in this passage and was properly deduced from it in the early Christian theory of redemption. If they erred, it was only in elevating a figure of speech into a dogma, a common error of literalists. It will be observed that this is an entirely different figure from that of sacrifice, and that the author of Hebrews has developed it farther than Paul ever did, so as to apply to the devil what Paul applied to sin and death.

The text of this Epistle as quoted from the Psalms calls the Messiah "a priest after the order of Melchizedek." The author, however, calls Christ not a "priest," but a "high priest"; indeed he twice quotes this passage from Psalm cx., substituting "high priest" for "priest." This was most natural, as the dignity of Christ required the designation. The high priest of that time was the chief officer of the nation, both religiously and politically. Christ could be no ordinary priest, he was "the apostle and high priest of our confession," both its Moses and its Aaron. But this change of the word "priest" to "high priest" brought into special prominence the peculiar functions of the high priest in the Jewish service, as we shall see as we proceed.

The first thing we observe in the argument of our Epistle is that the contrast is made as clear as possible between the order, or nature, of the two dispensations. We are told that a change of the priesthood involves a change of the law (vii. 12), the one being that of "a carnal commandment," the other of "an endless life" (ver. 16): that there was "a disannulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness" (ver. 18); that this is a new and better covenant (viii. 6), necessary because the first, "which is becoming old and waxeth aged," "is nigh unto vanishing away" (ver. 13). The two covenants are different things,—one fleshly and formal, the other spiritual, written on the heart. The thought is not of the first fulfilled in the second, but replaced by it. And yet if Christ is a priest, and a high priest at that, there must be points of parallelism as well as of contrast. There must be priestly functions in both, but those functions executed in different ways. The writer proceeds to show what Christ, if a priest, must do, and does do, and for this purpose he has to compare him with the Jewish priest, and especially high priest.

After opening the proposition that Christ is the great high priest, and connecting him with the text, "Thou art a

priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," the author states the duties of the high priest.

"Every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both *gifts* and *sacrifices for sins*" (v. 1). There are, as we have before seen, generally speaking, two kinds of offerings,—one, "gifts," including peace offerings, meal offerings, freewill offerings; and the other, "sacrifices for sins," the sin offering. The latter appears to be the most important, at least it is the most impressive and distinctive in which the high priest officiated, for it was the most solemn offering of the great day of atonement. The other offerings, the "gifts," might be offered by any priest, and they were vastly more numerous and familiar, but this could be offered only by the high priest. And so the author goes on to say (ver. 3) that he "is bound, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for *sins*," the sin offering again. After this explanation of the duty of the human high priest to offer both freewill offerings and sin offerings, he goes on to apply this duty to Christ, and says of him: "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up *prayers*, and *supplications*, with *strong crying* and *tears*, unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of *eternal salvation*; named of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek." It is remarkable here that the author does not have it yet clear in his mind that the offering which Christ made, whether freewill or sin offering, was his own life, his own blood, and that it was this which was parallel to the Jewish sacrifices of goats, bullocks, or lambs. On the other hand, the offering which he presented was "prayers, supplications, with strong crying and tears." This is not what we might have expected if there were developed in his own thought a distinct doctrine of type

and antitype, which must be found in the book of Hebrews, if anywhere in the Bible.

A little clearer the author seems to be in the next passage, which speaks of Christ as offering sacrifice (vii. 26, 27): "For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens: who needeth not daily, like the high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once when he offered up himself." Here Christ himself is the sin offering. We are not told just how he offered himself, whether it was by his incarnation, or by the "prayers," "supplications," and "strong crying and tears," just mentioned, or by his own death; but it is clearly stated that he himself is a sin offering, corresponding to the sin offering of the law. We must not disguise in this passage a certain difficulty connected with the word "daily," which word, if interpreted strictly, would imply that the high priest offered sin offerings every day, which, as is well known, he did not. The true explanation is not that which would make the daily burnt offering a sin offering, which it was not; but is found in the fact that the high priest probably did offer frequent sacrifices of various sorts, of which the writer specifies only the most important for his purpose, that for sins; or we may suppose that *καθ' ἡμέραν* is used here loosely to mean *again and again*, it being the writer's object to show that Christ's sacrifice was not often repeated like those offered by the Jewish high priest.

We now come to the eighth chapter, in which the writer takes a new start. "Now in the things which we are saying the chief point is this: We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle [that is, heaven], which the Lord pitched, not man." Notice that the important thing is the possession of a high priest better than anything Mosaic, the possession of Christ, of this priest in

the heavens, rather than his sacrifices. The writer will proceed to show that he had sacrifices, so as to prove that he is such a priest. And so he goes on to repeat what he said before, that (ver. 3) "every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices." The word *sins* is here omitted, as not being extremely important; for the same reason that he mentioned "gifts," because he has not yet got it clear in his mind that Christ's great purpose was to offer a sin offering. What he has clear in his mind is that he is a priest, and to him one function of a priest is as good as another. It is as essential to mention that he is a minister of the "sanctuary and true tabernacle" as that he offers sin offerings. He proceeds: "Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all"—but was he not a priest on earth, when offering his life? That is not the thought just now, for his priesthood is exercised in the true tabernacle above—"he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law." Notice here that the sin offerings are entirely omitted, and that only the gifts are mentioned as the first sacrifice that comes to mind. And notice that in his thought the Mosaic law and ritual is not yet done away—"there *are* those who offer"—still offer—"the gifts according to the law." It is clearly not his thought that, the antitype having been offered, the type is no longer valid and has ceased to be operative.

The writer continues his thought by showing that a new covenant was promised, which implies that the old covenant was faulty. This new covenant was to be in the heart and the mind. The ninth chapter is devoted to the contrast of these two covenants, the first with its tabernacle, candlestick, veil, showbread: its most Holy place, with its pot of manna, Aaron's rod, the tables of the covenant, cherubim and mercy-seat (altars of sacrifice not mentioned). Into this Holy of holies, he says, the high priest enters once a year, sprinkling the blood of a sin offering. The exclusion of all but the high

priest shows, he says, the imperfection of these "gifts and offerings" and other "carnal ordinances," and that there was need of a "time of reformation"—not of fulfilment, let it be noted, but of change.

Now, under a new covenant, we have a better high priest, whose tabernacle is heaven, into which he has entered, and with blood. The parallel would require him to sprinkle heaven, the true tabernacle, with his blood, but that would seem inept, and so he changes the illustration entirely, and in a way not logically legitimate, to the ceremony for sprinkling people ceremonially unclean, and says: "If the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Here purification comes from sprinkling with the blood of Christ, compared with sprinkling those who are unclean from touching a dead body with the water of separation. And notice that the efficacy of this sprinkling is not justification with God by the forgiveness of sins secured by the sacrifice of a substitute, but is to "cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." It secures sanctification rather than justification. But this is a fact that will be observed again and again in Hebrews. It is holiness rather than forgiveness which is secured by the blood of Christ.

Now comes one of the most tortuous bits of argument in the whole Epistle, one that cannot be translated into English, because its force depends on two senses of the same Greek word, which require in English two different words, *covenant* and *testament*. It is incredible that the writer could have had it clear in mind, that as the sin offering was killed, so Christ must be killed as a better substitutionary sacrifice, and could then, when he had spoken of Christ's blood, have branched off from the thought of the *διαθήκη*, *covenant*, to

the *διαθήκη*, *will*, or *testament*, and made Christ's death necessary so that this new *διαθήκη*, *testament*, might become operative. This great flaw in his argument, or rather, this extraordinary side-tracking of his illustration on another sense of the Greek word for *covenant*, is absolute proof that he had no clear theory as to what was the ground of necessity for Christ's death. Had he understood it to be because Christ was a sin offering corresponding to the ritual sacrifice, he would not have here made it to be because "there must of necessity be the death of the *testator*."

After this diversion the writer reverts to the meaning *covenant*, and repeats that the things in the tabernacle were cleansed with blood, and that without shedding of blood there was, under the Jewish ritual, one might almost say, no remission. But this tabernacle was only a copy of heavenly things, and the heavenly things themselves must be cleansed with better sacrifices. This time it is the heavens, inept as it may be, not the people, that are cleansed, by Christ's offering of himself only once made. Here the language is emphatic and important. "Now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation." Here the illustration is unmistakable, that as the high priest once a year, on the day of atonement, sprinkled the blood of a bullock and a goat, in the sanctuary, so Jesus once put away sin, the sin of the people, by sprinkling the heavens with his own blood; and that as men die once and afterwards meet their judgment, so Christ died once and once only, a death wherein he was a sacrifice to bear the sins of many; and that when he appears a second time in judgment, he will not have to repeat his offering for sin, but will simply give salvation to them that wait for him. Here, at last, the writer, after con-

siderable wavering and uncertainty, comes out clear and settles down on the illustration of the sin offering, as that which parallels the death of Christ. This illustration he maintains, where needed, in the tenth chapter, in which, as throughout the book, the argument is that the ritual of sacrifice is annulled by the new covenant, wherein "we have been sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (ver. 10, 12, 14, 29). In the thirteenth chapter a further development is made of the comparison between Christ and the sin offering, in that this offering on the day of atonement was burned without the camp, and so Christ suffered without the gate. Similarly we who have no abiding city should follow him to his place of shame, and there offer our sacrifices, those of praise, confession, and alms (ver. 15, 16).

The book ends with a beautiful ascription of praise to God, which shows how little *doctrinal* value the writer puts on the illustration of Christ as a sacrifice. He says: "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep with the blood of the eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus, make you perfect," etc. Here the death is that of a shepherd, not a sacrifice, nor a priest. It is true that the "blood of the covenant" is not a covenant offering, as might at first seem to be the case, but if the writer had developed his thought, rather the sin offering with its sprinkled blood. He has, however, not held it clear enough in mind to prevent him from confusing the death of a sacrifice with the death of a shepherd.

One other point, already hinted at, needs notice. What is the effect of Christ's death regarded as a sacrifice? I answer, that while there is no single, clear, consistent statement of the nature of his offering, the prevailing thought is not that it secures forgiveness or justification, but purification, or sanctification. The idea of substitution or purchase is much less clear than in Paul's figure of redemption, a word which the author of Hebrews uses twice, but in a general sense of de-

liverance. That sanctification, purity, holiness, the escape from the control of sin, is the chief advantage secured to us by Christ's death appears from numerous passages. We are told that Christ himself was "made *perfect* through suffering" (ii. 9), that by "learning obedience" and being thus "made perfect" he became the author of eternal salvation (v. 9); that "the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God" will "*cleanse your conscience from dead works* to serve the living God" (ix. 14); that "we have been *sanctified* through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ" (x. 10); that "by one offering he hath *perfected* forever them that are sanctified" (x. 14); that one must not profane "the blood of the covenant wherewith he was *sanctified*" (x. 29); and once more that "Jesus also that he might *sanctify* the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate" (xiii. 12). The most definite statements about the purpose of Christ's death given in Hebrews are those that make it sanctification rather than justification.

In concluding, we need to consider for a moment those passages in Hebrews where we may possibly look for the current doctrine that the Jewish sacrifices were designed to be a type or "pattern" which should be fulfilled and done away in Christ. We are told that heaven is the "true tabernacle," where Christ is, that if he were on earth "he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are"—are yet, after Christ's resurrection—"those who offer the gifts according to the law," and whose priesthood therefore is conceived as continuing after Christ, which could hardly be the fact if he had already fulfilled this type; "who serve that which is a *copy* and *shadow* of the heavenly things, even as Moses is warned of God when he is about to make the tabernacle, for, See, saith he, that thou make it according to the *pattern* that was showed thee in the mount" (viii. 5). It is on this passage that the idea of pattern or type is chiefly founded. The tabernacle was drafted after the pattern of the heavens. The heavens are

the true tabernacle. It is not Christ on earth, suffering here, that is the antitype, but Christ in the heavens and sprinkling his blood there, not here. Accordingly we are told that "it was necessary that the *copies* of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these" sprinklings of blood, water, scarlet wool and hyssop, "but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these": and accordingly "Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself" (ix. 23, 24). In one single passage we come nearer to the thought of type and antitype, where we read that the law has "a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things" (x. 1). But these "good things to come" are not Christ's death, but Christ in heaven, victorious, risen, securing our salvation. The thought is nowhere made clear that the sacrifices were the type of Christ's death. What we really have is a comparison between Christ's death and the sacrifices, and a strong statement of the fact that the new dispensation is something really new, different from the first and better, that inasmuch as the old dispensation had sacrifices the new priesthood must also, and that Christ is both priest and sin offering. It is not that because Christ was going to come and die, therefore sacrifices valueless in themselves must prefigure him; but that because the old had sacrifices the new must also. The order of thought is quite the reverse of that which is often given.

To quote the writer of Hebrews, "in the things which we are saying, the chief point is this," that while the doctrine of Christ as a bleeding, dying Saviour is found everywhere, the doctrine that he died as a sin offering to God, fulfilling the type of the Mosaic sacrifices, is not found in one of the four Gospels, nor in the Acts, nor in any of the Epistles of Paul, Peter, James, John or Jude, nor in the Revelation. The prevalent doctrinal figure used by Paul is that of the redemption of a slave, not the sacrifice of a sin offering. In the

Epistle to the Hebrews the argument against apostasy is devoted to the superiority of the new dispensation over the old, and is founded on the text, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," and this text requires the author to develop the duties of priests and make illustrative comparisons of the earthly high priest and our High Priest who is passed into the heavens, and to enumerate as many points of comparison as possible, making Christ's death sometimes a freewill offering, sometimes the death of a testator, sometimes, and more frequently, a sin offering, with whose blood the things in heaven are sprinkled. As to theories of the Atonement we have none, only assertions of Christ's death and its necessity, but no reason why it was necessary. Illustrations abound, especially parallels with the redemption of a slave and the sacrifice of bulls and goats in sin offerings, and various other illustrations, such as the passover sacrifice and the death of a testator. The doctrine of substitution is deduced not from the figure of sacrifice, but from that of redemption. Any definite and exclusive theology of Christ's redemptive, or vicarious, or substitutionary death, with its relation to the Father's wrath, as connected with Mosaic sacrifices, may or may not be true, but it is extra-biblical. About all the doctrine that Paul himself, or the author of Hebrews has to give us, was uttered by John the Baptist when he had his first view of Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."