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# The Idea Of Sacrifices as Related to the Idea of Cleansing in the Book of Leviticus and the Epistle to the Hebrews

Lawrence Henry Bone

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APPROVED BY:

Major Professor Kenneth P. Wesche

Co-operative Reader Bern M. Warren

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THE IDEA OF SACRIFICE AS RELATED TO THE IDEA OF CLEANSING  
IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS AND THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the

Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Divinity

by

Lawrence Henry Bone

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The problem under consideration was an inquiry into the sacrifices and the nature of cleansing that was provided in the Levitical sacrificial system as compared with the cleansing that was provided by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Epistle to the Hebrews and other related New Testament Scriptures.

The Biblical study of the problem centered in three general areas:

(1) The Hebrew form of worship within the frame of reference of the Mosaic covenant and the benefits that resulted from that worship; (2) The typology of the tabernacle, its furnishings, its sacrifices and offerings, its festivals, and its priesthood; (3) The fulfillment of the Mosaic covenant and the typology of the tabernacle system of worship in Christ Jesus, and the benefits that resulted from such fulfillment.

The study of the problem was an attempt to discover to what extent there was cleansing under the old Mosaic covenant and under the New Covenant. An attempt was made to discover the type of cleansing that each covenant afforded. The investigation was conducted to find out if there was any cleansing that was provided without the offering of a sacrifice and also to determine

whether or not cleansing is required by the Lord.

Justification of the problem. A study of the problem was basic to an understanding of the worship of the Old Testament; it was also basic to an understanding of much of the New Testament including the Gospels, the Pauline letters, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the book of Revelation.

Inasmuch as the idea of cleansing has been objected to by many, this study was an investigation to discover the intention of the Scripture that says, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." A study was made to see if the idea of cleansing was included within the Mosaic Covenant and within the New Covenant as described in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

An investigation was made into the sacrifice and High-priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ to discover if He was the only means by which sin could be atoned and by which men could draw near to God.

The investigation of the problem was necessary to ascertain if the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ was required to fulfill the expanded objectives of the Mosaic Covenant, namely, God's desire to dwell with His people and to fellowship with them in the sense that each individual might enjoy His indwelling and His fellowship.

Limitations of the problem. While cleansing is taught in much of the Bible and while there are many Scriptures that deal with physical cleanness, the study in this thesis was limited to a comparison and contrasting of the

spiritual cleansing described in the Book of Leviticus under the Mosaic Covenant and the cleansing provided under the New Covenant as enunciated in the Epistle to the Hebrews. No attempt has been made to give a detailed study of the other covenants mentioned in the Old Testament although reference has been made to some of them.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Atonement. The word means "to cover." In the Old Testament the idea of covering was resident in the first Passover in Egypt and on every succeeding Day of Atonement. The offering made on that day became a "covering" for sin. But the idea of cleansing was also apparent as the Scriptures testify: "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. 16:30).

Cleansing. To make clean, to remove by, or as by cleaning; to cleanse sin from the soul.

Consecrate. To dedicate a person, animal, or thing to God's service. The Old Testament idea of consecration carried with it the idea of acceptance by the Lord and when this happened, the thing or person "consecrated" became at least ceremonially holy. For example, the consecration of the priesthood (Ex. 29:9; Lev. 8:33).

Covenant. An agreement or compact. There were several covenants that God made with men during Biblical history including, His covenants with Adam, with Noah, with Abraham, with Israel, with the Levites, and with David and Solomon. God spoke to Jeremiah of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). Christ was the Mediator of the New Covenant according to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Holy. The word comes from the root which means "separated." What is set apart for holy purposes. Things that of themselves were common became sacred when set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The same was true of the priesthood, and sacred seasons or days. There were, therefore, sacred things, sacred persons, sacred days and seasons. The Biblical meaning of "holy" carries with it the additional thought of being untainted by evil or sin, sinless, spiritually perfect or pure, and being like God in character (See Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; I Peter 1:16).

Sacrifice. The rites which were included under the Law of the Offerings in the Book of Leviticus, by which men were permitted to draw near to God. The sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant included five main offerings, namely, the burnt-offering, the meal-offering, the peace-offering, the sin-offering, and the trespass-offering.

Sacrifice was distinguished from other ordinances of worship in that it took the form of rendering to God a material oblation.

The offerings were of two general types, bloody and unbloody, the former being animals or birds and the latter being the produce of the earth.

Tabernacle. The portable sanctuary carried by the Israelites in their wanderings in the wilderness and in their conquest of Canaan. Every particular of the tabernacle was shown to Moses in Mt. Sinai and its specifications were recorded by him. It was known as "the tabernacle of witness," "the dwelling," and "the tent of meeting."

### III. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The method of procedure was that of library research in which approximately fifty authorities were consulted and studied in addition to the English Bible. The King James Version of the English Bible was used for Scripture quotations.

A study was made of the significance of the Tabernacle, its construction, its furnishings, its priesthood, its sacrifices and offerings, its feasts and its festivals.

Sacrifice and cleansing under the Mosaic Covenant were analyzed as to their purpose, their weakness, and their strength. The need for a new covenant was investigated. The relationship between sacrifice and cleansing in the Book of Leviticus was studied.

A study was made of sacrifice and cleansing in the Epistle to the

Hebrews and included the High-priesthood of Christ, the sacrificial offering of Christ, and the objectives of Christ's atonement. The New Testament Covenant was studied in terms of its being needed to adequately deal with sin in human nature, its sacrifice, and the cleansing provided.

In this study the sacrifice and cleansing under the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant were compared and contrasted. Finally, a summary was made and conclusions were presented.

In Chapter II sacrifice and cleansing under the Mosaic Covenant were analyzed, dealing with the purpose of the Mosaic Covenant sacrificial system, its weakness, its strength, the need for a new covenant, and the fact that the Old Testament types pointed toward a new covenant.

In Chapter III sacrifice and cleansing in the Book of Leviticus were studied. Investigation was made of the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings. Further, investigation was also made of the priesthood, the offerings, the festivals, and the great Day of Atonement. The spiritual significance of each was noted. Sacrifice and its relation to cleansing were studied.

In Chapter IV sacrifice and cleansing under the New Covenant were analyzed including the need of a new covenant, sacrifice in the light of the New Covenant, and cleansing under the New Covenant.

In Chapter V a study was made of sacrifice and cleansing in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This dealt with the eternal being of Christ, the fact

that Christ was God's highest revelation and as such was a greater revelation than the message of the prophets. The study involved research into Christ's being superior to the angels, the material universe, Moses, and Joshua. The High-priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ was studied as was His office of Mediator. Investigation was made into the objectives of Christ's atonement and into the question of whether Christ's death was required in order for Him to provide cleansing.

In Chapter VI a comparison and contrast were made of the sacrifice and cleansing under the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant.

In Chapter VII a summary was compiled, conclusions were reported and recommendations were made for further study.



## CHAPTER II

### SACRIFICE AND CLEANSING UNDER THE MOSAIC COVENANT ANALYZED

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of a covenant carried with it the idea of solemnity; it was a binding force. According to The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, an early Semitic view of a covenant implied blood brotherhood; this required the drinking of each other's blood. In such a rite the two contracting parties became blood brothers. This meant that, if they were of different tribes, the two men were adopted into each other's tribes or clans.

In the early idea, then, primarily the covenant is not a special engagement to this or that particular effect, but a bond of troth and life-fellowship to all the effects for which kinsmen are permanently bound together.<sup>1</sup>

In entering into covenant relations with each other, two men of different clans were brought into relation with the god of the other clan and were brought into the community life of the clan.

Later instances indicated that instead of the parties to the covenant drinking each other's blood, they drank sacrificial blood, or sprinkled it upon each other, and ate together of the sacrificial meal.

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<sup>1</sup>"Covenant," The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1943), II, 727.

However the covenant rites differed, the idea of involvement in each other's community and religious life persisted.

The Old Testament concept of a covenant was considerably modified from earlier ideas. It did include the following details:

(1) A statement of the terms agreed upon (Gen. 26:29; 31:50-52). This was a modification of the earlier idea, which has been noted, in which a covenant was all inclusive. (2) An oath by each party to observe the terms, God being witness of the oath (Gen. 26:31; 31:48-53) . . . . (3) A curse invoked by each one upon himself in case of disregard of the agreement. In a sense this may be considered a part of the oath, adding emphasis to it. This curse is not explicitly stated in the case of human covenants, but may be inferred from the covenant with God (Dt 27:15-26). (4) The formal ratification of the covenant by some solemn external act.<sup>2</sup>

In Genesis 31:44-55 Laban and Jacob entered into the covenant of Mizpah. In that covenant the four elements of the covenant were included. The sacrificial meal mentioned in verse 54 probably included Laban because the sacrifice that had been offered was a covenant sacrifice. In Exodus 24:4-8 the sacrifice and the sprinkling blood were mentioned and the altar represented God.

In the covenant between God and Abraham there was a peculiar observance, namely, the cutting of the animals into two parts and the passing between the parts (Gen. 15:9-18), a custom that was mentioned again in Jeremiah 34:18.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Here it is to be noted that it is a smoking furnace and a flaming torch, representing God, not Abraham, which passed between the pieces. Such an act, it would seem, should be shared by both parties, but in this case it is doubtless to be explained by the fact that the covenant is principally a promise by Jehovah. He is the one who binds Himself. Concerning the significance of this act there is a difference of opinion. A common view is that it is in effect a formal expression of the curse, imprecating upon oneself the same, i.e. cutting in pieces, if one breaks the terms of the covenant. But . . . this does not explain the passing between the pieces, which is the characteristic feature of the ceremony. It seems rather to be a symbol that the two parties "were taken within the mystical life of the victim."<sup>3</sup>

The raising of a monument of stones probably was simply an ancient custom coming from the ancient Semitic idea of the sacredness either of a single stone or of a heap of them.

When God entered into a covenant with man, He made certain promises and man accepted the responsibility of fulfilling certain obligations.

In . . . national covenants the individual had a place, but only as a member of the nation. The individual might forfeit his rights under the covenant, however, by deliberate rebellion against Jehovah, sinning "with a high hand" (Nu 15:30f), and then he was regarded as no longer a member of the nation,<sup>4</sup> he was "cut off from among his people," i.e. put to death.

Included in the message of the prophets, in addition to the Old Testament concept of a covenant, there is a rather frequent mention made of "a new covenant." Jeremiah (Chapter 31) spoke movingly of the new covenant.

In the past the people had broken the covenant and were exiled. During the exile the covenant was not in force and while it seemed to the

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 727-728.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 728.

people that the New Covenant that was to be made after the return from exile was much like the old, yet there was injected into it the idea of an everlasting covenant.

## II. THE PURPOSE OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

The key verse of Leviticus stated the purpose of the Old Testament Covenant, "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy" (19:2). Added to this was the stated objective of the Great Day of Atonement; "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. 16:30). God had stated the high purpose of the Mosaic Covenant, namely, holiness and purity, which meant that God desired His people to be like Him in character. They, the worshippers

. . . must be clean, personally (11:1-47), in their family life (ch 12), and as a congregation (13-15). Above and beyond all is the great cleansing of the Day of Atonement (ch 16), with which the first part of the book . . . closes.

The second part of the Book of Leviticus, which describes, in symbolical manner, the holiness that becometh the people of God, treats, first, of personal holiness (ch 17), then of holiness in the family (ch 18), of holiness in social relations (19-20), and of holiness in the priesthood (21-22). Thence the sacred text proceeds to holy seasons (23-24).<sup>5</sup>

Following the instructions regarding blasphemy in which God said

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 729.

that His Name should be revered as holy (24:10-23), the 25th Chapter dealt with the holiness of the land.

The book of Leviticus opens with a description of the various kinds of offerings (ch 1-7), one of which was the "sin-offering." "The sin-offerings are expiatory, substantial, efficacious (Lev. 4:12,29,35); and have in view the vindication of the law through substitutional sacrifice."<sup>6</sup> Herein was another purpose of the Mosaic covenant; namely, to vindicate God and His holy law.

God gave another reason for the Mosaic covenant when He talked with Moses in the mount and gave him instructions for building the tabernacle; "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8). God desired to dwell among His people; that is, He desired to fellowship with them.

The Covenant helped maintain righteousness. Following the deaths of Nadab and Abihu, God gave His reason for killing the two sons of Aaron: "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified" (Lev. 10:3). The preservation of God's holiness and the need of adequate preparation by men before they came to Him was emphasized as part of God's purpose in the old covenant.

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<sup>6</sup>The Scofield Reference Bible, The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testament (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), p. 129.

If those who had been consecrated to Him would not sanctify Him in heart and life, He would sanctify Himself in them by judgments (comp. also Ezekiel 38:16), and thus glorify His Name before all, as the Holy One, Who cannot with impunity be provoked to anger.

So deeply was Aaron solemnized, that, in the language of Scripture, he "held his peace."<sup>7</sup>

Had God not insisted upon Israel's exact fulfillment of the terms of the covenant in their compliance to God's demands for sacrifices, offerings, cleansings, observance of Sabbaths, and other things, the nation would have backslidden into gross forms of pagan idolatry. For example, when Moses was on Mt. Sinai receiving the law, Israel was breaking the law at the foot of the mountain in the feasting and revelry that accompanied the worship of the golden calf. Only swift and terrible judgments from God brought order out of chaos and restored a fear of God in the hearts and minds of the people.

God's insistence upon cleanness, purity, and holiness was directed toward the maintenance of a pure and an upright life in Israel, both on the personal and the national level.

Israel was taught to believe in a God Who was the God of the present as well as of the future, and that He was reigning here upon the earth, dispensing good and evil.

And perhaps it was owing to this that the temporal consequences of sin were so much insisted upon in Mosaic law. There was no special need to refer to the consequences

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<sup>7</sup> Alfred Edersheim, The Exodus and the Wanderings in the Wilderness (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1876), p. 141.

in another life. The Egyptians, as well as Israel, acknowledged the latter, but the Egyptians knew not the former. Yet this new truth would teach Israel<sup>8</sup> constantly to realize Jehovah as the living and the true God.

Much of this idea was summed up in God's words when He said:

"that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD"  
(Deut. 28:58).

Past blessings recalled. Not only did the covenant that God made with Israel at Sinai have contemporary value for Israel in maintaining personal and national righteousness and in preserving a reverence for God Himself, but it also reminded the people of their heritage. For example, the Feast of Passover yearly reminded them of the great deliverance that God performed in freeing His people from Egypt.

The covenant spoke of the future. There was also the sense of futurity in the Mosaic covenant. In fact, the covenant could be called a continuing one. The first covenant, or the first phase of God's covenant with men was the Edenic Covenant or the Covenant of Innocence. The second was the Adamic Covenant made by the Lord to the first pair, after they had sinned. The heart of that covenant (Genesis 3:15), was not fulfilled until Christ came. The fact that all other covenants in the Old Testament were only preparatory to our Lord's coming indicated that the thought of progression

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

and continuance was in them. The third covenant that God made was with Noah. He made the fourth covenant with Abraham. In the Abrahamic Covenant God promised, (1) a child; "he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir" (Gen. 15:4); (2) a country, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it" (Gen. 15:7); and (3) a continuing family, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15:5). God also told Abraham, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee" (Gen. 15:7). In addition, God said, "in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18).

In view of the everlasting covenant that God had made, expressing His eternal will to provide earth with "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), the Mosaic Covenant simply became a means to an end; the end being the completion of the plan of redemption through Christ our Lord.

The law. St. Paul said that "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3:24). If the law was a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, then the law spoke of Christ and everything about the law typified Him. The Ten Commandments, the Sabbaths, the many sprinklings and washings, the sacrifices, the offerings, the priesthood and the tabernacle;



all were a part of the law and therefore spoke of Him.

The purpose, then, of the Mosaic covenant was not only to cause Israel to recall past blessings and to provide contemporary righteousness; it was also prophetic.

### III. THE WEAKNESS OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

While the Mosaic covenant accomplished much, yet in it there were some inherent weaknesses. These were considered under the headings of the tabernacle, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the offerings, and the limited privilege extended to the people.

The tabernacle. The tabernacle, while of fine material and of exquisite workmanship, was still a portable building designed to accompany Israel in its journeys. It was never designed to be a permanent building; therefore it passed into oblivion when the temple was built and the tabernacle articles of furniture were transferred to the temple. The temple (or temples, for there were several), while built on the basic design of the tabernacle, was of a far more lovely and beautiful construction. Yet it, too, passed away; its furnishings being taken into captivity along with its acolytes.

The priesthood. The priesthood of the Mosaic covenant was mortal. Being mortal its membership was sinful and in need of atonement. Because of this, the high-priest, on the Great Day of Atonement, had first to "offer a

sin-offering which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself and for his house" (Lev. 16:6); "so also for himself, to offer for sins" (Heb. 5:3). The priests of the Aaronic order were "also compassed with infirmity" (Heb. 5:2).

There was a triple imperfection--in the priests, in the victim, in the effect of the sacrifices. The Levitical priesthood was formed of sinful men, as was testified by the sin-offering which the high-priest had first to offer for himself before he could offer one for the people: here was no perfect mediator. The victims were a bullock and a goat; but "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4): here there was no perfect sacrifice. The atonement had to be repeated annually: here there was no perfect result from the offering made. By its very imperfection the Law points forward to and awakens the desire for a better covenant, with a priest after the order of Melchisedek, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), with a sacrifice which could sanctify (Heb. 10:10), and which is and can be only "once offered," because it is "a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."<sup>9</sup>

Being mortal, the priests of the Mosaic covenant were subject to infirmity, "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity" (Heb. 7:28). They were also subject to death, "And here men that die receive tithes" (Heb. 7:8).

The sacrifices and offerings. The sacrifices, offerings, blood sprinklings, and offerings of incense were weak. There were many of them.

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<sup>9</sup>The Pulpit Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), p. 246.

They were offered on many different occasions for many centuries.

Under the old covenant sin was not really blotted out, only put away from the people, and put aside till Christ came, not only to take upon Himself the burden of transgression, but to blot it out and to purge it away.<sup>10</sup>

The Old Testament sacrifices could only sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh" (Heb. 9:13).

The gifts and sacrifices of the tabernacle were at best, incomplete:

. . . were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service as pertaining to the conscience. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of the reformation (Heb. 9:9-10).

Limited privilege extended to the people. The people were not allowed to draw close to God under the old covenant. "And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place" (Lev. 16:17). Even when all of God's requirements were met, He still seemed remote and inaccessible. A close fellowship and an intimacy between God and man were lacking.

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<sup>10</sup> Alfred Edersheim, The Temple, Its Ministry and Services (Boston: Ira Bradley and Company, 1881), pp. 280-281.

#### IV. THE STRENGTH OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

Inasmuch as everything connected with the tabernacle was typical in some way of the Person and work of Jesus Christ, it followed that the offerings, being a part of the tabernacle worship, pointed to His atoning work.

A Hebrew who humbly and obediently brought his offerings in compliance with God's instructions, and offered them, received spiritual blessings. In the case of the burnt-offering, for example, the Scripture says, "It shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (Lev. 1:4). In the matter of the sin-offering, God indicated that benefits came to the offerer for He said, ". . . and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them" (Lev. 4:20); ". . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 4:26); ". . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 4:31); ". . . and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 4:35).

In the case of the trespass-offering, also, the thought of atonement and forgiveness through an offering was present. For example, God said, ". . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 5:16); ". . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance

wherein he erred and wist it not, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 5:18);  
 "And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein" (Lev. 6:7).

The reason that God granted a removal of sin when the correct sacrifice was properly offered was that the sacrifice was typical of Jesus Christ who came later to take away sin. The sacrifice offered by the worshipper under the terms of the Mosaic Covenant was considered somewhat of a bank note or "a credit card as far as God was concerned."<sup>11</sup>

## V. THE NEED FOR A NEW COVENANT

Moses said to the Israelites, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. 18:15). The Lord had said, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18:18).

Jesus, the later and greater Prophet, came--the One Whose coming had been prophesied. He established a new and greater covenant. He

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<sup>11</sup>Quotation from Dr. Kenneth P. Wesche, Dean, Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon, in a personal interview with the author January 9, 1967.

said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17). The New Covenant was needed to fulfill the typology of the old. Everything about the tabernacle system of worship pointed to our Lord and could be fulfilled only in Him.

"The priesthood, the sacrifices, and the altar pointed to the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>12</sup> The same could be said of the tabernacle. The New Covenant was needed to give meaning to the Mosaic Covenant.

The Scriptures show that God frequently made promises regarding a king to sit upon David's throne. "He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (II Sam. 7:13). "There shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel" (I Kings 2:4). "There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel" (II Chr. 6:16).

The kingdom of Israel was dissolved and the throne disappeared. Following that there was no man to sit on David's throne to be king in Israel until Christ overcame the devil at Calvary and the empty tomb. As far as the world was concerned, Christ was not a king; at best He was an uncrowned king. Yet the Scriptures have pictured Jesus Christ as the One Who received all the honor of heaven's host as He sat upon the eternal throne; "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne,

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<sup>12</sup>Edersheim, The Exodus and the Wanderings in the Wilderness, op. cit., p. 123.

and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:13). Thus the Scripture has pictured Him, the crowned King, Who was the Fulfiller of the Davidic Covenant under the terms of the New Covenant.

The prophecy in Psalm 8 was fulfilled in Christ:

What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:4-6).

But the dominion that was predicted did not arrive in Israel and could not arrive except in the fulfillment of the New Covenant in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man (Heb. 2:8-9).

A new covenant was needed to bring in the promises in Jeremiah's writings; "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts . . ." (31:33). In the prophecy a new covenant was promised. It was inevitable that the new one should come into being. God had promised it!

## VI. THE OLD TESTAMENT TYPES POINTED TOWARD A NEW COVENANT

God gave Moses the exact pattern for the tabernacle and for every-

thing pertaining to it: "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Ex. 25:9). These instructions were followed by Moses very carefully.

Nothing here was intended as a mere ornament or ceremony; all was symbol and type. As symbol, it indicated a present truth; as type, it pointed forward (a prophecy by deed) to future spiritual realities.<sup>13</sup>

The great significance in the entire pattern of the tabernacle was that all of it pointed to Christ!

Once understood, many passages will recur which manifest how the Old Testament removal of sin was shown in the law itself to have been complete indeed, so far as the individual was concerned, but not really and in reference to God, till He came to Whom, as the reality, these types pointed.<sup>14</sup>

The tabernacle whispered of Christ. All of the furnishings typified Him. The priesthood referred to Him Who was to come as the great High Priest. The garments worn by the priest portrayed varying aspects of our Lord's High-Priestly office and work. The sacrifices spoke of Him Who was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

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<sup>13</sup> Edersheim, The Exodus and the Wanderings in the Wilderness, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Edersheim, The Temple, Its Ministry and Services, op. cit., p. 282.



It is as if there were a cross unseen, standing on its undiscovered hill, far back in the ages, out of which were sounding always, just the same deep voice of suffering love and patience, that was heard by mortal ears from the sacred hill of Calvary.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Horace Bushnell, The Vicarious Sufferer, quoted in H. Wheeler Robinson, The Cross in the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955), p. 31.

## CHAPTER III

### SACRIFICE AND CLEANSING IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

God said that those who were redeemed were sheltered from judgment that came upon the Egyptians (Exodus 12:12-13). This suggested that God's people were sheltered when certain conditions were met. God gave instructions concerning the passover lamb and directed the manner in which the lamb's blood should save the Hebrews from death.

The nation of Israel was instructed to leave Egypt and go forth to serve and worship God. They were not only to be free from Pharaoh and his despotism but they were to be free from the very place where Pharaoh had held them. It was God's plan for them to move out of Egypt and into the "land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8).

#### II. THE NEED FOR A TABERNACLE

If Israel was to worship God, the nation must have a system of worship. If the nation was to have a system of worship, then it needed a prescribed place and plan of worship. To supply these needs, God gave to Moses a pattern for the tabernacle. The tabernacle was to be God's dwelling place and the place where He would meet with His people. He said to Moses,

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8).

"And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat. . ." (Ex. 25:22).

The plan for the design, furnishings, and conduct of worship was given by the Lord to Moses, "According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it" (Ex. 25:9).

Moses employed the most skilled artisans in the nation to bring the tabernacle into being. Precious metals such as gold, silver, and brass were used in its construction along with acacia wood.

### III. THE TABERNACLE CONSTRUCTION

God gave detailed instructions for building the tabernacle. The first account begins in the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus and extends through Chapter 27; the second account begins at Exodus 36:8 and continues through Chapter 38. The order followed in this thesis is the latter, that is, moving from the outside in toward the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place. This order suggested the direction of man's approach to God.

The curtains of the tabernacle were made of "fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubim" (Ex. 36:8).

The second curtains were made of goat's hair (Exodus, Chapter

36). Exodus 36:19 tells of another covering, that of ram's skins and badger's skins.

The boards of the tabernacle were made of acacia wood and stood vertically. They were ten cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. Each board had two tenons that fitted into silver sockets. Twenty boards were placed on each side of the tabernacle which was thirty cubits long.

The sockets of silver were of considerable weight. Into these sockets the tenons of the boards rested. It appears that the portable tabernacle possessed great strength.

The front of the tabernacle was open except for a hanging curtain and the five pillars that supported it. There were four pillars that supported the veil which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.

The court of the tabernacle was one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide. The gate of the court was at the east end and was twenty cubits wide.

The whole work, in its design and execution was of God. The Tabernacle, and all that pertained to it, even to the pins, cords, and taches were planned and designed by the Spirit of God (Exod. 31:3-6) Who 15 centuries afterwards comments upon His own workmanship (Heb. 9:8). Not only the pattern of the Tabernacle shown to Moses, but the most minute and full instructions were given by God, so that not even the smallest detail, as colour, size, or material, was left to human imagination or wisdom. All was according to Divine command.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Scott, The Tabernacle (London: Alfred Holness, [n.d.] ), p. 10.

#### IV. THE TABERNACLE FURNISHINGS

There was an originality and an independence in the Mosaic economy and the Levitical worship under the Mosaic Covenant. The articles of furniture in the tabernacle revealed this originality. The furnishings consisted of six items of furniture; the brazen altar and the brazen laver in the court, the table of shew bread, the golden candlestick and the golden altar of incense in the Holy Place, and the ark of the covenant with its mercy seat in the Most Holy Place. While these articles of furniture were more or less in a straight line between the entrance on the east and the ark of the covenant, yet there could be seen by the discerning eye the form of a cross as well; the brazen altar, the brazen laver, the golden altar, and the ark of the covenant forming the main stem, and the golden candlestick and the table of shew bread forming the arms of the cross.

As the sacrifices are ever leading to the great altar of brass, and as the continual washings that are mentioned will be ever turning us to the laver of brass, let us here, for a moment, fix our eye upon them. The one shews us pardon of sin by Christ's death, the other shews us purification of heart by Christ's Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

The brazen altar was also called the altar of burnt offering and was the most prominent item in the court. The horns at each of the four corners of the altar obviously pointed in four different directions or to the four

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<sup>2</sup>Andrew A. Bonar, A Commentary on the Book of Leviticus (London: James Nisbet and Company, 1847), p. 140.

quarters of the world as if to declare the atonement message to be world-wide and "all the world guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19).

In addition to the laver, instructions were given for "the foot" (Ex. 38:8). "The laver was made of the polished brazen mirrors of the women of Israel . . . ." <sup>3</sup>

Following Lev. 8:11 no further mention was made of the laver and "Solomon's sea" was the only thing that suggested taking its place.

Here, then is Jesus made unto us of God "sanctification" as well as "righteousness." And even when the "sea of brass" appears in Solomon's temple, it seems to be still Christ, who was in the likeness of sinful flesh, the source of the world's holiness. <sup>4</sup>

Aaron and his sons washed their hands and feet in the water of the laver before going into the tabernacle to perform their priestly functions or before ministering at the altar of continual burnt offering. Any negligence at this point brought death to the offender: "So shall they wash their hands and their feet, that they die not" (Ex. 30:21).

Ablution by clear fresh water is so plain and simple a type of purity as to have been used in almost all religions. The hands and the feet would designate symbolically all of a man's active doings, and even his whole walk of life--his "goings out" and his "comings in", in the phraseology of the Hebrews . . . .

Contempt of the simple and easy regulation to wash at the laver would imply contempt of purity itself; and so an entire hypocrisy of life and character, than which

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<sup>3</sup>Scott, op. cit., p. 49.      <sup>4</sup>Bonar, op. cit., p. 141.

nothing could be a greater offense to God.<sup>5</sup>

The golden candlestick or lampstand was made of pure gold. No mention was made of its size. The gold required for it was one talent and weighed about one hundred and twenty-five pounds.

The candlestick--the most beautiful, the most skillful, the most ornamental, of all the pieces of furniture, was not cast in a mould, neither was it made in sections and assembled together, but it was beaten into its form and beauty out of a solid block of gold . . . .<sup>6</sup>

The table of shew bread stood on the north side of the Holy Place opposite the golden candlestick. Each sabbath twelve new loaves were placed on the table; these were arranged in two rows of six loaves each (Lev. 24:5-9). Pure incense was placed upon each loaf. The table suggested food and was a place for food. Jesus said of Himself, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: yea, and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world" (John 6:51). The bread upon the table was called "shewbread" or "bread of face" and suggested that it was before God's face and was accepted by Him.

The Golden Altar of incense was placed before the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. Upon its horns (Lev. 4:7, 18) was placed the blood of the sin offering for either the priest or the

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<sup>5</sup>Scott, loc. cit.

<sup>6</sup>The Pulpit Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), I, 308.

congregation. Also once a year on the Great Day of Atonement the priest placed blood on the altar's horns (Lev. 16:18). The primary purpose of the altar was for the burning of incense each morning and evening (Ex. 30:7,8) at the time of the trimming and lighting of the lamps on the candlestick. Prayer accompanied the burning of incense; "And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense" (Luke 1:10). Thus the thought of worship and praise was connected with this altar.

The ark was a chest of acacia wood two and one-half cubits long, one and one-half cubits wide and one and one-half cubits high. It was overlaid with gold within and without; thus nothing but gold was visible. A crown of gold graced the top border. A cherubim stood on the top at each end of the ark with wings outstretched, their faces turned toward each other.

Three different articles were placed within the ark; the tables of the law, the golden pot containing manna, and Aaron's rod that budded.

The ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubim were not idols. When God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses He said among other things, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (Ex. 20:4); thus it was unlikely that He would instruct men to build an idol to be worshipped.

The mercy seat was the place where God said He would meet with His people (Ex. 25:22). On the Great Day of Atonement the high-priest entered the Most Holy Place that housed the ark and its mercy seat and sprinkled blood seven times before the mercy seat (Lev. 16:14,15). Thus atonement was made



for the holy place and for the uncleanness of the children of Israel (Lev. 16:16), but it was provided only by sacrifice which implied the death of the animal being offered. Atonement for Aaron and his house was made possible, also, only by means of the death of the sacrifice. "And shall kill the bullock of the sin offering" (Lev. 16:11). "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering" (Lev. 16:15).

## V. THE PRIESTHOOD

The purpose of the tabernacle system of worship was the atonement of sin and cleansing from sin. In order to make this possible the priesthood was needed to carry on the rites and ceremonies of worship. And so the Aaronic priesthood was called forth by the Lord to minister.

And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him. And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation, before the tent of meeting, to do the service of the tabernacle. And they shall keep all the furniture of the tent of meeting, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle (Num. 3:5-7).

Both Leviticus Chapter 8 and Numbers Chapter 8 give accounts of the consecration and cleansing of the Levites but the Leviticus passage gives the details of the consecration and clothing of Aaron.

In speaking of the Leviticus passage one has said:

Chapters 8-10 give an account of the inauguration of the services of the sanctuary . . . . Striking characteristics of them are: (1) The emphasis of strict obedience to directions

given, (2) The fact that the priest offered for himself first of all. "It was a striking acknowledgement of the true character of the Levitical priesthood that the very first official act of the anointed priest should be to offer a sacrifice for his own sinful nature" (Read Heb. 7:26-28); (3) The blessing of the people, possibly in the words of Numb. 6:24-26; (4) The testimony of the acceptance of the sacrifice, 9:24; (5) The solemn lesson of Chap. 10 gathered up in v. 3.<sup>7</sup>

The Scripture said: "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water" (Lev. 8:6). Thus began the ceremony of consecration.

The various articles of clothing were then placed upon Aaron. These consisted of the coat, the girdle, the robe, the ephod, the girdle or robe of the ephod, the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim, and the mitre with its golden crown engraved with the words, HOLINESS TO THE LORD (see Exodus Chapter 28).

On the shoulder stones of the ephod and on the stones on the breastplate the names of the twelve Tribes of Israel were engraved.

Thus twice, on the shoulders, the seat of power, and on the heart, the organ of thought and of love, Aaron, entering into the Presence of the Most High, bore the names of the tribes for a memorial continually.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Wilbert Webster White, Studies in Old Testament Characters (New York: The International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1904), p. 40.

<sup>8</sup>Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1944), I, 145.

Alexander Maclaren was of the opinion that in God's sight, at these times, Aaron was Israel and Israel was Aaron. With the names of the twelve tribes twice engraved upon the garments that he wore he stood gloriously as the concentrated nation, the very Israel of God. Thus the great truth of the representation of the nation by the priest was vividly portrayed.<sup>9</sup>

Following the act of clothing Aaron in the robes of the high-priest, Moses took anointing oil and "annointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them" (Lev. 8:10). In anointing the tabernacle furniture, Moses sprinkled oil upon the altar seven times and the laver "to sanctify them" (Ex. 3:11b).

Aaron was now for a time left alone. Clothed and arrayed as high-priest, with his sons at his side, all eyes gazed upon him. Blessed type of Jesus, with his "many sons" (Heb. 2:10), whom all creation beholds with wonder and delight! . . . .

But meanwhile, Moses has gone in the Tabernacle and is busy there. Already all things there had been sprinkled with blood, according to the remark in Heb. 9: 21, though at what precise time is difficult for us to say. That blood has cleansed them: and now the oil sets them apart for holy purposes.<sup>10</sup>

The anointing oil was then poured on Aaron's head (Lev. 8:12).

The oil ran down to the very lowest extremity of his garments signifying that both the wearer and the things worn were anointed with the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>10</sup>Bonar, op. cit., pp. 154-155.

This is typical of the Spirit fully poured out on Jesus to set him apart for his public office--his office as Saviour of the world. Aaron was not merely sprinkled, but had the oil poured out in full measure on his head . . . .

It was to foreshow that Jesus was to have the fullness of the Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup>

Following the anointing of Aaron for his sacred office, "Moses brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and put bonnets upon them; as the Lord had commanded Moses" (Lev. 8:13).

There were offerings or sacrifices that were necessary in connection with the consecration of the priests (See Ex. 29:1-4; Lev. 8:14-32).

A bullock was brought forth for the sin-offering. After Aaron and his sons had laid their hands upon the animal's head, it was killed, "And he slew it" (Lev. 8:15). Moses took the blood of the slain animal and smeared it upon the horns of the altar, purifying the altar. The blood that was not used was poured out at the base of the altar. Thus Moses "sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it" (Lev. 8:15b). The fat of the inward parts and the caul (membrane) above the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, were burned upon the altar. The hide and carcass of the bullock was burned outside the camp.

Two rams had been brought to the tabernacle. Moses took one of

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

the rams "for the burnt-offering" (Lev. 8:18). Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram and then the animal was killed, "And he killed it" (Lev. 8:19). Moses took the blood of the slain ram and sprinkled it "upon the altar round about" (Lev. 8:19). The ram was then cut in pieces. Moses burned the head and the pieces and the fat. He washed the inward parts and the legs in water and burned "the whole ram upon the altar" (Lev. 8:21), offering it as "a burnt sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the Lord" (Lev. 8:21).

The other ram was called "the ram of consecration" (Lev. 8:22).

Aaron and his sons placed their hands upon the head of the "ram of consecration" (Lev. 8:22). This animal was then slain by Moses who took the blood and applied it to Aaron upon "the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the toe of his right foot" (Lev. 8:23).

By this type, the whole person is visibly dedicated to the Lord. Every power and faculty is consecrated. The Lord touches with blood his right ear, right hand, right foot, as if to say, "I claim from thee the exercise of every faculty and property of body and soul, to be used in my service."<sup>12</sup>

Upon Aaron's sons Moses put, "blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet" (Lev. 8:24). Then Moses sprinkled blood upon the altar and

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

burned the fat, the caul, the kidneys, the right shoulder, and other parts of the ram of consecration.

Moses placed one loaf of "unleavened bread, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put them on the fat, and upon the right shoulder" (Lev. 8:26). What happened next was very significant:

And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and upon his sons hands, and waved them for a wave offering before the Lord.

And Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt them on the altar upon the burnt offering: they were consecrations for a sweet savour: it is an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And Moses took the breast, and waved it for a wave offering before the Lord: for of the ram of consecration it was Moses' part; as the Lord commanded Moses (Lev. 8:27-29).

In commenting upon this ceremony, Bonar has said:

Moses put them all "on the burnt-sacrifice," which lay on the altar. The whole burnt-offering was, in a manner, the primary sacrifice; it expressed atonement, full atonement. Therefore the putting on it of those pieces which represented the giving up of feelings and desires, and the meat offering, which represented the person's whole substance, was a declaration that all we offer to God must be on the foundation of atonement.<sup>13</sup>

Afterward Moses took of the anointing oil and of the blood upon the altar and sprinkled it upon Aaron and his garments and upon his sons and upon their garments. Thus Aaron and his garments and his sons and their garments were sanctified (see Lev. 8:30).

Then at Moses' command, Aaron and his sons boiled the flesh

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

of the ram at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and ate it with the bread in "the basket of consecrations" (vs. 31). Anything that remained of the flesh and of the bread was burned (vs. 32).

Following the ritual previously described, Aaron and his sons were to stay within the tabernacle of the congregation seven days. This seven-day period seemed to be a part of the full consecration ceremonies (vss. 33-36). Exodus 29:35-37 seemed to indicate that the offerings were to be offered daily during the seven-day period.

The various parts of the consecration ceremony contained some thoughts of special significance. The bullock, the sin-offering, was an offering for Aaron's sins and those of his sons. Atonement had to be made for these sins before any of the priests could perform their priestly duties. The neophyte priests placed their hands upon the bullock's head thus identifying themselves with it and transferring their guilt to the sacrifice. Expiation was provided by smearing blood upon the horns of the altar and then pouring out the remainder.

The burning of the carcass of the sin-offering, the bullock, outside the camp indicated that the curse of sin was upon it and, therefore, it was unworthy for burial within the camp. The fulfillment of this in New Testament light was seen in Hebrews, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

When the first ram was brought forward for a burnt-offering,

hands were again laid upon the head of the animal. "This was the sign of the confession of sin. It was also the sign of the transfer of sin, so constituting the animal (in type) vicariously a sinner or sin-bearer, liable to suffer its penalty."<sup>14</sup> In this manner the sacrifice became the representative of men. The whole ram was burnt upon the altar (Ex. 29:18; Lev. 8:21); none of its carcass was burned outside the camp as was the case of the sin-offering, the bullock.

This became the general law of the burnt-offering (Lev. 1:9,13,17). It indicated that self-sacrifice was wholly acceptable to God; whereas in the sin-offerings there was a taint of evil which rendered all but certain parts of the victim unacceptable.<sup>15</sup>

A great spiritual lesson was embodied in this offering that was offered for the priests:

There is no deviation on the present occasion from the ritual appointed for the burnt-offering. After the sin offering, righteousness is symbolically imputed to Aaron; after the burnt-offering, holiness; then follows the peace offering of the ram, which completes and sacrificially effects the consecration.<sup>16</sup>

When the second ram, called the ram of consecration, was brought, Aaron and his sons laid their hands on his head, thus again confessing their sinfulness, and their need of One to atone for their sinfulness. This animal was slain as were the bullock and the first ram. "The

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<sup>14</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., II, 129.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., I, 296.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., II, 117.



fat and gall were burnt, to show how our evil passions, the old man, must be crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed."<sup>17</sup>

This offering of the ram of consecration

. . . must be viewed as a "peace offering" (Lev. 3:1-17), but one of a peculiar character. The application of the blood to the persons of the priests was altogether unique, and most significant. It was the crowning act of consecration, and implied the complete dedication of their life and of all their powers to the service of the Almighty.<sup>18</sup>

A triple offering had been offered to God; namely, the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the ram of consecration, the peace-offering.

The third animal was a "peace offering" (ver. 28). This is wrongly explained to mean an offering by which peace is made, for then there could be no meaning in what went before. It is the offering of one who is now in a state of peace with God, and who is therefore himself, in many cases, allowed to partake of what he brings.<sup>19</sup>

In each instance the sacrifice had to be killed in order to be effective. Of the sin-offering the Scripture said, "And he slew it" (Lev. 8:15). Of the burnt-offering, it was said, "And he killed it" (Lev. 8:19). In the case of the ram of consecration, the Bible said, "And he slew it" (Lev. 8:23).

The sin-offering was effective for its blood "purified the altar . . . and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it" (Lev. 8:15). The burnt-

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., I, 296.

<sup>19</sup> G. A. Chadwick, The Book of Exodus (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1902), p. 414.

offering was effective inasmuch as "it was a burnt-sacrifice for a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the Lord" (Lev. 8:21). In the case of the ram of consecration, it also was an effective sacrifice. Its blood was used to consecrate the priests. The blood that was upon the altar was mixed with oil (Lev. 8:30), and was sprinkled upon Aaron and his sons and upon the garments, "and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons garments with him" (vs. 30).

There was a vital relationship between sacrifice and cleansing. Had the sacrifices not been made, the priests would have died ("keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not" vs. 35). Inasmuch as the sacrifices were made and the blood was shed and applied, an "atonement" was provided; "As he hath done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you" (vs. 34). How true the Scripture; "and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

To provide a way whereby sin could be atoned for, God directed Moses to build and equip the tabernacle according to His divine plan, and to initiate the Aaronic Priesthood.

## VI. THE TABERNACLE OFFERINGS

The religion of the Old Testament as seen in the period of the Levitical Law, bore, at first sight, a very strange appearance. Not much was said about a future life and not as much as might have been expected

about repentance, faith, and prayer. There was an elaborate system of sacrifices that was offered in some rather interesting combinations upon various occasions, for various reasons, and for various persons.

The institution of the Tabernacle system of worship followed some essential guide lines. First, the Divine Law was universal; "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring of your offerings of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock" (Lev. 1:2). No favoritism was shown; every man was to come in the one prescribed manner regardless of his rank or station. The offerings, to be of worth, had to be voluntary and always acknowledged God's sovereignty and ownership. Furthermore God had been specific enough in His instructions so that the worshipper knew what to bring.

In the Book of Exodus, God's people were redeemed from bondage. In Leviticus they were taught how to worship. In Exodus God spoke to His people "out of the holy mount"; ". . . and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain . . ." (Lev. 19:3). In Leviticus God spoke to His people through the tabernacle. One of the great purposes of the tabernacle was to provide a dwelling place for God among His people and to provide a means whereby He could communicate with them.

There were five main offerings spoken of in Leviticus. They were: The Burnt-Offering (chapter 1), The Meal-Offering (chapter 2), The Peace-Offering (chapter 3), The Sin-Offering (4:1-5:13), and The Trespass-Offering (5:14-6:7). While there were offerings that were called by different names than

the five already mentioned, they were forms of one of the five.

Throughout the history of Israel we are constantly hearing of offerings and sacrifices, but it will greatly simplify matters if we remember that each was always one of the five. Whether the offering was a bullock, a lamb, a turtle dove, or fine flour; whether it was offered for the priest, the people, or a ruler; it was always a burnt, a meal, a peace, a sin, or a trespass offering. Of course these offerings in themselves could not take away sins or satisfy God. See Hebrews 10:4. They simply symbolized the great offering, Christ, and in this semblance lay their importance. Read Hebrews 10:1-5, 10, 12, 14.<sup>20</sup>

The five offerings taken together provide a picture of Christ's atoning work. Each offering represented a different facet of His atonement. According to Grace Saxe, Christ's redemption was so full and complete that all five offerings were needed to give an adequate insight into His mighty sacrifice.<sup>21</sup> This was also true of the New Testament for there He was called Lamb of God, Bread of Life, Bread from heaven, Son of David, Son of Man, Son of God, Christ, Jesus, Joseph's son, Light of the world, The Vine, The Good Shepherd, and many others. As the many New Testament titles gave various glimpses of Jesus, so did the different offerings of Leviticus.

In the consecration of Aaron and his sons (Lev. 8), we find these offered, in what became ever afterwards the appointed order: first came the sin-offering, to prepare access to God; next the burnt-offering, to mark their dedication to his service; and thirdly, the meat offering

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<sup>20</sup>Grace Saxe, Studies in Leviticus (Chicago: Moody Press, 1921), p. 3.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

of thanksgiving. The same sacrifices, in the same order, with the addition of a peace offering (eaten no doubt by all the people), were offered a week after for all the congregation, and accepted visibly by the descent of fire upon the burnt-offering. Henceforth the sacrificial system was fixed in all its parts, until He should come whom it typified.<sup>22</sup>

The offerings were studied in the order that they appeared in the beginning chapters of Leviticus.

The burnt-offering. The burnt-offering was to be a perfect bullock, sheep, goat, turtle-dove, or young pigeon. Verses 9, 13, and 17 of Chapter 1 indicated that any of the above-mentioned offerings that were brought to the altar and burned upon the altar were to be "an offering, made by fire, of a sweet savour, unto the Lord." The offering was wholly consumed by fire; nothing was left for the offerer or the priests, as in other sacrifices.

The offering was to be without blemish; it was to be offered voluntarily at the door of the tabernacle by the offerer who placed his hand upon the head of the sacrifice.

"He shall put his hand." It is yet more forcible in the Hebrew, -- "He shall lean his hand" . . . the very word used in Psalm 88:7, "Thy wrath leaneth hard upon me." We lean our soul on the same person on whom Jehovah leant his wrath.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> William Smith, Dictionary of the Bible (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, The Riverside Press, 1888), IV, 2772.

<sup>23</sup> Bonar, op. cit., p. 6.

The worshipper could leave his sins there at the door of the tabernacle, near the altar, by laying his hands upon the sacrifice. It was then God's responsibility to do whatever He willed to do. Man has done all he could do. God said that "it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (Lev. 1:4).

The bullock was killed, its blood was sprinkled upon the altar, and the sacrifice was flayed and cut in pieces. The pieces were placed upon the fire on the altar and consumed. This became "an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord" (Lev. 1:9,13,17).

According to The Pulpit Commentary, this offering typified Christ's surrender of Himself to God, expressed in His incarnation, His lowly birth, the silence of His youth, the narrow limits within which He lived, moved, and worked during His ministry, His continual acceptance of the Father's will, always, but especially in Gethsemanaee, and His offering Himself to His Father at Calvary.<sup>24</sup>

The first chapter of Leviticus was very clear in its teaching that the death of the sacrifice and the ensuing rites were necessary to provide an atonement (see vs. 4). Once again the teaching is seen that the relationship between sacrifice and cleansing is a vital one.

The meal-offering. This offering is referred to as the Meat-

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<sup>24</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., II, 5.

Offering in the King James version of the Holy Bible. The meal-offering was to be of fine flour. Oil was mixed with the flour which was then anointed with frankincense. The flour with the oil and incense was brought to the priest who took a portion of it and burned it upon the altar. The remainder of the offering belonged to the priests.

The meal-offering was a gift to God of the products of the earth that were essential to life. It was offered to God thankfully for His power that caused the earth to produce and bring forth its harvest. "It was offered to God in token of the recognition of his almighty power which gave the corn, the olive, and the vine, and of the submission of the creature to him, the merciful Creator."<sup>25</sup>

The spiritual meaning of the meal-offering was to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It prefigures Christ as the bread of life, --the sustenance of the soul . . . . He is fine flour, --the staff of life . . . . His life, in its application to the soul is intermingled with the Spirit, who is symbolized by oil.<sup>26</sup>

The meal-offering pictured Christ's life on earth.

The flour . . . speaks of his humanity, the fine flour of the perfect character of this humanity. The oil . . . mingled with and poured upon the flour, indicates the action of the Holy Spirit . . . . The handful first burned on God's table,

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>26</sup>D. Grant Christman, The Tabernacle, Offerings and Feasts (Endicott, New York: Eastern Bible Institute, [n.d.] ), p. 29.

and the remainder given to the priests, showed that He lived this life on earth, first for the glory of God, and afterward for the good of man.<sup>27</sup>

The peace-offering. The peace-offering consisted of a perfect ox, lamb, or goat and was to be offered with unleavened cakes mingled with oil and fried, and leavened bread (see 7:12-13). This offering possessed a special significance.

The offerer placed his hand upon the head of the sacrifice indicating his personal participation in the event. The animal was then killed at the door of the tabernacle. The priest caught the blood and sprinkled it round about the altar (struck the sides of the altar with it). The fat, the tail, the kidneys and the caul or membrane were burned upon the altar of burnt-offering as God's portion. The breast and the right shoulder belonged to the priest, and the rest belonged to the one who had brought the offering. The priest waved the breast of the animal back and forth and heaved the shoulder up and down in token of consecration (7:14, 30-34).

This offering was symbolic of Christ's being enjoyed by the believer in sacred communion with the Father, according to Grace Saxe.<sup>28</sup>

The peace-offering denoted a feast upon a sacrifice in which God and man symbolically joined. "It represented the blessedness and joyousness

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<sup>27</sup>Saxe, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.



of communion between God and man."<sup>29</sup> It taught peace with God in Christ.

Rev. D. Grant Christman was of the opinion that the sprinkling of the blood around the altar suggested that salvation through Christ has resulted in peace on all sides of life; peace with God, peace with men; peace with self; peace with the past, the present, and the future.<sup>30</sup>

"The Peace-Offering, through which man entered in a peculiar sense into fellowship with God, was offered after the Sin-Offering and the Burnt-Offering (Lev. 9:18; Num. 6:16ff)."<sup>31</sup>

The sin-offering. This offering was sometimes called, The Sin of Ignorance Offering. In Leviticus Chapter 4 the word "ignorance" appears four times (vss. 2,13,22,27). Three times the phrase "sin through ignorance" was used (vss. 2,13,27), and the phrase "sinned and done somewhat through ignorance" appears in vs. 22.

The expression "through ignorance" (bishgagah), is intended to cover all sins except those committed "with a high hand," or defiantly, whether the agent was ignorant that they were sins or was led into them by inconsiderateness or infirmity (cf Ps. 19:12-13 "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins"). A better translation of bishgagah would be "by want of

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<sup>29</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>30</sup>Christman, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>31</sup>B. F. Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 290.

consideration," or "by inadvertance."<sup>32</sup>

In connection with deliberate and determined sin, the Bible has some serious things to say:

But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously (with high hand), whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth (revileth, blasphemeth, affronteth) the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandments, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him (Num. 15:30-31).

"He that deliberately broke the commandment of the Lord avowed himself his open enemy; and, as it were, challenged him to single combat."<sup>33</sup>

The Priests, The Congregation, The Rulers, and The Common People were each mentioned as groups or classes who were in need of this offering (vss. 3,13,22,27). The priest and the congregation offered a bullock, a ruler offered a goat, and the common people brought a goat or a lamb.

In each of the four instances, the sacrificial animal was brought before the tabernacle of the congregation and the hands of those making the offering were laid on its head. In so doing, identification was established and symbolically guilt was transferred to the victim and the offerer could go free. The animal was slain at the door of the tabernacle; thus its death took place in the presence of God.

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<sup>32</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

The death of the animal taught the offerer that the sins which he had ignorantly committed were worthy of death, and such would have been his portion had it not been for the death of the offering, in his stead.<sup>34</sup>

Each time the sin offering was sacrificed, the blood of the offering was sprinkled somewhere, but this varied with the persons or class of persons bringing the offering.

Parts of each sacrifice, whether offered by the priest, the congregation, the rulers, or the common people were burned upon the altar of burnt-offering (vss. 8-10; 19-20; 26,31,35), and symbolized Christ's offering Himself for sin.

In the case of either the priest or the congregation bringing a sin offering, the rites and ceremonies were the same.

In this study the questions were asked, "What was the value of the sacrificial system as seen in Leviticus? Was there any spiritual merit that came to the offerer of sacrifices? Did the shedding of blood and the laying on of hands avail spiritually? Was the Jew forgiven when he followed God's commands regarding sacrifice? Was his mind set at rest after he made his offering?"

Help in finding answers to these questions was found in the Scripture itself. It was noted that in four different verses in the fourth Chapter of Leviticus, the combination of the words "atonement" and "forgiven"

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<sup>34</sup>Christman, op. cit., p. 23.

appear (see vss. 20,26,31, and 35). For example: "the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them" (vs. 20); and "the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him" (vs. 31). The same word combination appears in Lev. 5:10.

How did the worshipper--the Jew--know that his sins were forgiven? The answer according to Scripture is: Because God said, "It shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 4:20,26,31,35; 5:10).

If the Jew had sinned and neglected to bring his sin-offering, he should have been "cut off from among his people;" but when he took his place as a sinner--when he laid his hand upon the head of a sin offering, then the offering was "cut off" instead of him, and he was free, so far. The offering was treated as the offerer deserved; and, hence, for him not to know that his sin was forgiven him, would have been to make God a liar, and to treat the blood of the divinely-appointed sin offering as nothing . . . . .

. . . . .  
The victim had died instead of him; he had lived instead of the victim.<sup>35</sup>

The sin-offering was burned "without the camp"; this fact was very significant.

The other offerings were, without exception, burnt on the altar in the Tabernacle. Here "the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, his inwards . . . even the whole bullock shall he carry without the camp . . . and burn him on the wood with fire." The import . . . testified how completely the offering identified with the sin it suffered for; so completely identified

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<sup>35</sup> C. H. Mackintosh, Notes on the Book of Leviticus (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1861), pp. 134-136.

that it was itself looked at as sin, and as such cast out of the camp into the wilderness. A part indeed, "the fat" (verse 8), was burnt on the altar, to shew that the offering, though made a sin-bearer, was in itself perfect. But the body of the victim, "even the whole bullock," was cast forth without the camp.<sup>36</sup>

Heb. 13:12 has shown that the bullock of the sin-offering typified our Lord in His work and Person of the Sin-bearer.

Information of more than passing interest was observed in comparing the burnt-offering and the sin-offering. In each case the offering was "without blemish."

Both types pointed to one and the same great Antitype, though they present Him in such contrasted aspects of His work. In the burnt-offering, Christ is seen meeting the divine affections; in the sin-offering, He is seen meeting the depth of human need . . . . In the former, we are taught the preciousness of the sacrifice; in the latter, the hatefulness of sin.<sup>37</sup>

The trespass-offering. The passage on the trespass-offering begins at Lev. 5:14. Andrew Bonar placed the first thirteen verses of chapter 5 in the sin-offering section.<sup>38</sup>

C. H. Mackintosh understood there to be two distinct kinds of trespass, namely, trespass against God and trespass against man.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Andrew Jukes, The Law of the Offerings (London: The Lamp Press, 1954), pp. 137-138.

<sup>37</sup>Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 121.

<sup>38</sup>Bonar, op. cit., p. 113. <sup>39</sup>Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 143.

Sins of omission were included in those covered by the trespass-offering.

Where the sin was against another, the offender first had to make his restitution and only then could he make his offering to God. The word "restore" appears in verses 4 and 5 of chapter 6. The "restoring" had to precede the bringing of the "trespass-offering unto the Lord" (Lev. 6:6).

The restitution must cover the wrong. It must also include the injury growing out of the wrong done. Spiritual "interest" must be added. In settling the wrongs against man, there is also the Godward side of the same wrongs, which must be settled. Not all sins are against man. But all sins have a Godward side. Hence even to settle with man, and leave God out, is not sufficient.<sup>40</sup>

The offering of the trespass-offering was far more than ceremony; it was also an act of deep penitence. The bringing of the trespass-offering implied the deep spiritual act of repentance and sorrow for sin. The religious state of the offerer's mind and soul was in keeping with the outward acts of the ceremony.

The trespass-offering was "a ram without blemish out of the flocks" (Lev. 5:15). "And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 5:16).

Note:

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<sup>40</sup> Christman, op. cit., p. 22.

The trespass-offering was always a ram. It was thus fitted to remind Israel of Abraham's offering Isaac, when the ram was substituted. The blood of it was always put "on the sides" of the altar; not on the horns, as in the case of the sin-offering, where the offering was more of a public nature, and needed to be held up to all.<sup>41</sup>

Part of the offering was burned and part of it belonged to the priests. The act of burning part of it indicated that it belonged to God. The offerer was to eat none of the offering.

The "ram without blemish" was brought to the door of the tabernacle and was killed. The blood was sprinkled at the altar. The writer noted that there was no laying on of hands in this offering.

In the trespass-offering section of Scripture, the words "kill" or "slew" did not appear (except in Lev. 7:1). However, another expression appeared three times: "And the priest shall make an atonement for him," thus indicating that the ram was killed, part of its carcass was burned, part of it was eaten by the priests, and the blood was sprinkled round about the altar (Lev. 7:1).

Sacrifice and cleansing were seen to be inseparably related.

The Red Heifer Offering (Numbers 19:1-21). While the Red Heifer Offering was not mentioned in Leviticus, yet, because of its significance it was included in this section. The offering had a significance

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<sup>41</sup>Bonar, op. cit., p. 90.

for the Hebrews in the days of the tabernacle and temple worship but it also had a New Testament relationship, being mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews (9:13).

The animal used for sacrifice in this offering was a red heifer; without spot. This would indicate that it was red all over. It was one that had never been under a yoke (vs. 2). It was killed by the son of the high priest outside the encampment of Israel and there the body was burned (vs. 5). The blood was sprinkled before the tabernacle seven times (vs. 4). Cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet were cast into the fire as the animal was burning (vs. 6). The ashes from the burned body were gathered up and kept "without the camp in a clean place" (vs. 9). When mixed with pure water, they were used as "a water of purification for sin" (vs. 9).

When a Hebrew became defiled, he came to the door of the tabernacle and there he was sprinkled with the mixture of water and ashes. The priest pronounced him clean on the seventh day after the second application and thereafter restored the worshipper to communion and fellowship.

According to The Pulpit Commentary, this offering typified Christ who "suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12). The offering spoke of Christ and His blood cleansing from all sin.<sup>42</sup>

The ashes of the heifer when mixed with "living water" were made a purification for sin unto Israel to deliver them

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<sup>42</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., p. 243.



from the bondage of death. Even so the merits of Christ and the virtue of his atonement are available for all, through the operation of the Holy Spirit (John 4:10; 7:38), to purify<sup>43</sup> from all sin, and to set free from the power of death.

The heifer was entirely consumed by the fire; nothing but ashes was left.

In summary of the offerings, two quotations seem pertinent in view of the fact that the offerings pointed to Christ. They are as follows:

It would seem as if the Lord could not weary in repeating and explaining his will respecting these ancient sacrificial rites. They are typical displays of a work upon which his great heart has been let forth in universal glory. They tell of his love for sinners, and still more of his love and interest in the well-beloved Son whom these figures were meant to set forth, and that it is grateful to him to linger among them, and to dwell among them.<sup>44</sup>

The other quotation comes at the close of Andrew Jukes' writing on the offerings:

It follows hence at once, that if the Types are to represent what our perceptive faculties take cognizance of, they will necessarily be representations, not of realities themselves, but of certain appearances or apprehensions of them.

I am more and more satisfied that what we see of Christ and God, though true as far as it goes, (and surely most true it is,) is yet very far short of the ineffable reality "which passeth all understanding." Certain forms of the truth we have got: the reality, who has

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>44</sup> Joseph A. Seiss, The Gospel in Leviticus (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.] ), p. 103.

yet attained to know it?<sup>45</sup>

## VII. THE TABERNACLE FEASTS

The law of the Feasts was given in Leviticus, Chapter 23; in Numbers, Chapters 28 and 29; and in Deuteronomy, Chapter 16. Some information on the feasts was given in Exodus, Chapter 34.

There were seven great religious festivals observed each year by Israel in addition to the regular Sabbaths. The festivals as they are recorded in Leviticus, chapter 23, were: The Feast of the Passover (vss. 4-5); The Feast of Unleavened Bread (vss. 6-8); The Feast of the First Fruits (vss. 9-14); The Feast of Pentecost (vss. 15-22); The Feast of Trumpets (vss. 23-25); The Day of Atonement (vss. 26-32); and The Feast of Tabernacles (vss. 33-44).

The Great Day of Atonement is discussed in section 8 of this chapter. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of the First Fruits were considered with the Feast of the Passover inasmuch as these three were closely related.

The three main feasts, Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles were days of joyous thanksgiving becoming people who received much from the hands of a gracious heavenly Father, and were generally

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<sup>45</sup>Jukes, op. cit., pp. 210-211.

associated with times of the fruit of the earth.

The Feast of Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits. The word "passover" means "to leap over" and "to spare or have mercy." It expressed to the Israelite the fact that sins were "passed over or forgiven."

The first passover was observed in Egypt (Exodus 12) in connection with the tenth plague when all firstborn males of the Egyptians were slain. Thereafter it became an annual festival and was observed both in the wilderness and later in Canaan. The time of observance was "in the fourteenth day of the first month" (Lev. 23:5), the month Nisan, that generally corresponded with our months of March and April. This was the time of first fruit and green corn and so the Passover was the first feast of the year.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed the next day, "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread" (Lev. 23:6).

On the tenth day of the month a perfect lamb or goat was selected for each household and was kept until the fourteenth day of the month, at which time it was killed. It was roasted in its entirety, no bones being broken, and was eaten by all the members of the family. Unleavened bread and bitter herbs were the accompanying foods in the feast. The blood of the passover lamb was sprinkled on the door posts and lintel in commemoration of the blood's protection from the destroying angel in Egypt. The Hebrews wore

traveling clothes when they partook of this feast, commemorating their deliverance from Egypt, which marked a change in their lives.

There was a general washing of hands after drinking the first cup and then the company ate bitter herbs. There was a second washing of hands following the drinking of the second cup and thanks was again given. Then pieces of bread, the bitter herbs, the other sacrificial dish (if any) and the Paschal lamb were partaken of in turn, according to the account given in The Pulpit Commentary.<sup>46</sup>

A prayer of thanksgiving followed the singing of The Great Hallel.

In the light of the historical background that was so clearly understood by each Israelite, the Passover was filled with significance. What a pity that they did not understand that this feast spoke of Christ.

Each year the Israelites had celebrated their redemption from death and bondage by this Passover Feast. Then came Christ, the spotless lamb of God, and on the very anniversary of the Passover died on the cross thereby redeeming us from spiritual death and bondage and becoming our great Passover (I Cor. 5:7).<sup>47</sup>

The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed immediately the next day after the Passover. It pointed up the necessity of a holy walk in connection with the work of Redemption, according to Grace Saxe (See Lev. 23:6; I Cor. 5:7-8; 11:23-26; II Cor. 7:1).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., p. 341.

<sup>47</sup>Saxe, op. cit., p. 18. <sup>48</sup>Ibid.

The Passover, strictly speaking, lasted only one day, Nisan 14; the Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted seven days (Nisan 15-21). Taken together the two feasts ran for eight days, making a rather lengthy festival. Throughout this period unleavened bread was eaten to remind the Hebrews of the haste in which they left the land of Egypt (Ex. 12:34).

In the Book of Deuteronomy instructions regarding this feast state:

Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life (Deut. 16:3).

Regarding the presentation of first fruits, God said:

When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of your firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it (Lev. 23:10-11).

On the second day, "on the morrow after the Sabbath," the presentation of the first or wave sheaf of barley was made.

The New Testament has made use of the term, "firstfruits" to give a spiritual understanding of the Feast; "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20).

The beautiful ordinance of the presentation of the sheaf of firstfruits typified the resurrection of Christ, who, "at the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week," rose triumphant from

the tomb, having accomplished the glorious work of redemption. His was a "resurrection from among the dead;" and, in it, we have, at once, the earnest and the type of the resurrection of His people. "Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming." When Christ comes, His people will be raised "from among the dead;" . . . that is those of them that sleep in Jesus . . . . The resurrection of the Church will be upon precisely the same principle as the resurrection of Christ. Both the Head and the body are shown to be raised "from among the dead." The first sheaf and all the sheaves that follow after are morally connected.<sup>49</sup>

The Feast of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-22). From the second day of Unleavened Bread, "from the morrow after the Sabbath," seven sabbaths were counted, making forty-nine days, and on the day following the seventh Sabbath, "unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath," the Feast of Pentecost was observed. Because of the fifty days measuring it from the Feast of Unleavened Bread it was also called the Fiftieth Day Feast. This meant that it was observed in our May or June. Traveling was easy at this time of year and the wheat harvest was in season.

The offering used in conjunction with this feast consisted of "two wave loaves . . . of fine flour . . . baked well with leaven" (vs. 17). The loaves were considered the first fruits of the wheat harvest and as such were brought to Jehovah, indicating the consecration of the entire harvest to the Lord. (This was the view expressed by The Pulpit Commentary).<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Mackintosh, op. cit., pp. 331-332.

<sup>50</sup> The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., p. 346.

The offerings brought were thank and peace-offerings. "While the offerings of the morning were being made, the priests led the people in singing the Hallel. It was a joyful time."<sup>51</sup>

If Jewish tradition connected the "feast of first fruits" with the "Mount that might be touched", and the "voice of words which they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them anymore", we have in this respect also "come unto Mount Zion," and to the better things of the New Covenant. To us the Day of Pentecost is, indeed, the "feast of first-fruits," and that of the giving of the better law, "written not in tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart," "with the Spirit of the living God." For, as the worshippers were in the Temple, probably just as they were offering the wave-lambs and the wave bread, the multitude heard that "sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind," which drew them to the house where the apostles were gathered, there to hear "every man in his own language" "the wonderful works of God." And on that Pentecost day, from the harvest of first-fruits, not less than three thousand souls added to the Church were presented as a wave offering to the Lord. The cloven tongues of fire and the apostolic gifts of that day of first-fruits have, indeed, long since disappeared. But the mighty rushing sound of the Presence and Power of the Holy Ghost has gone forth into all the world.<sup>52</sup>

Andrew Bonar stated that the Jews believed that the Feast of Pentecost was observed to commemorate the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai.<sup>53</sup>

However nothing supporting this claim was found in the twenty-third chapter

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<sup>51</sup>Christman, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>52</sup>Alfred Edersheim, The Temple, Its Ministry and Services (Boston: Ira Bradley and Company, 1881), p. 231.

<sup>53</sup>Bonar, op. cit., p. 398.

of Leviticus nor in any other passage of Scripture.

The Feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:23-25; Numbers 29:1-11). The first four feasts were observed in the spring of the year. The Feast of Trumpets and the ensuing festivals were observed in the autumn season. The seventh month, Tisra, comparable to sometime in September or October, was the time of the Feast of Trumpets. This, of course, would have been the time of the grape harvest. This was also the beginning of the civil year. It was observed for only one day. Part of its significance lay in the fact that it was observed on the first day of the seventh month (vs. 24) and within that month came The Great Day of Atonement and The Feast of Tabernacles.

Exodus 19:13 made the first mention of the trumpet in connection with the giving of the Law; "When the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount."

The analogy of faith . . . warrants us in taking the Feast of Trumpets as symbolical of God's message of mercy to men. The gospel is preached in God's trumpet, summoning men to the privileges and duties of the Christian life. This suggests:

The good tidings are of a finished sacrifice . . . .

The gospel trumpet summons us to rest.

The gospel trumpet summons us to personal sacrifice.

The gospel trumpet is to be succeeded by the trumpet of the resurrection.<sup>54</sup>

The sacrifices consisted of a burnt-offering, "a young bullock,

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<sup>54</sup>The Pulpit Commentary, op. cit., pp. 353-354.



one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish" (Num. 29:2), "one kid of the goats" (Num. 29:5). These were in addition to meal-offerings and other offerings.

In this study of the sacrifices, it was seen that the burnt-offering denoted the act of consecration and was entirely consumed.

This feast ushered in a month of feasts and therefore was a call to prepare for the festivals that were to come.

No month opened to Israel such a scene of rejoicing as did this; for no other had in it the Expiation-day and the Feast of Tabernacles. Hence, it is very probable that this month's Feast of Trumpets was "the joyful sound" referred to in Ps. 89:15.<sup>55</sup>

The Great Day of Atonement has been dealt with in section 8 of this chapter; therefore the next feast that was considered was:

The Feast of Tabernacles. In the seventh month of the year, the Feast of Trumpets was celebrated on the first day; the Day of Atonement on the tenth day; and beginning on the fifteenth day and continuing for eight days, the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated.

The Feast of Tabernacles came at the end of the harvest season. Being the culmination of all other feasts, it was marked by thankfulness and joy.

This festival began and ended on a sabbath.

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<sup>55</sup>Bonar, op. cit., p. 401.

"Three principal characteristics marked the feast of Tabernacles: its joyous festivities, the dwelling in booths, and the peculiar sacrifices and rites of the weak."<sup>56</sup>

According to Dr. Edersheim, inasmuch as the feast was a "feast of ingathering," freewill offerings expressed joyous gratitude to God for blessings and prosperity. In relation to the booths, God said, "All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt" (Lev. 23:42-43). Thus their dwelling in booths reminded the Hebrews that their ancestors journeyed in the wilderness, and suggested the transient and unsettled nature of earthly things. In the midst of prosperity in Canaan the people were to recall from whence they came.

The offerings of the feast were numerous and included 70 bullocks, 14 rams, and 98 lambs or altogether 182 sacrifices. Sacrifices were offered in reduced number each succeeding day (see Numbers 29:12-38).

The last day was called the "Great Day of the Feast." On this day Jesus uttered the words recorded in John 7:37-39 at the very time when the water of Siloam was being poured out at the altar.<sup>57</sup> "Every night in the court of the women a great light was kept burning, and it was of this light that Christ said, 'I am the light of the world'" (John 8:12).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., p. 235.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>58</sup>Christman, op. cit., p. 44.

The Jews had said of the Day of Atonement:

"A man had never seen sorrow who never saw the sorrow of that day;" so, on the contrary, it was said of the feast of Tabernacles, and especially of its last day, that "He who never saw the rejoicing of drawing water, never saw rejoicing in all his life."<sup>59</sup>

The problem of the spiritual significance of the Hebrew feasts has been faced. What did they really portray? What did the Feast of Tabernacles teach? Some authorities are quoted in answer to the question:

It was to Israel a memorial to their life in the wilderness, and of God's care of them at that time. It sets forth Israel's time of rejoicing resulting from their restoration. It foreshadows our home-coming to heaven after our work on earth is all done. The church militant here is seen entering its experience as the church triumphant.<sup>60</sup>

In keeping with this thought another has said:

It was a most fitting type of the yet better dwelling among men of the same God, in the latter days, when "his tabernacle shall be with men" (Rev. 21:3), and the Lamb shall lead them to living fountains of water.<sup>61</sup>

## VIII. THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT

In the Book of Leviticus, Chapter 16 and Chapter 23:26-32 give instructions regarding the Day of Atonement.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the

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<sup>59</sup>Bonar, op. cit., p. 409. <sup>60</sup>Christman, loc. cit.

<sup>61</sup>Bonar, loc. cit.

tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. (Lev. 23:26-27)

In considering the central purpose of the day, the following statement was made: "Its leading thought is 'at-one-ment'; that is, agreement, reconciliation, harmony, and peace with God. The Feast of Trumpets was a call to this 'at-one-ment.'"<sup>62</sup>

Dr. Edersheim, in pointing out many details of the day, observed that the Day of Atonement was known in the Talmud simply as "the day" (see Heb. 7:27), and in the Book of Acts (27:9) as "the fast." It was observed annually. The seventh month began with the Feast of Trumpets and included both the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. Thus the seventh month was a Sabbath of months and closed the cycle of feasts. Inasmuch as the Feast of Tabernacles prefigured the ingathering of the nations, the importance of the Day of Atonement preceding that feast was all the more significant. The Year of Jubilee, that came every fiftieth year was always introduced by the Day of Atonement.<sup>63</sup>

Ordinary priests were not allowed to minister on that day; only the high-priest was allowed to officiate. Further regulations were given as to the clothing to be worn by the high-priest. He was to lay aside his regular

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<sup>62</sup>Seiss, op. cit., p. 361.

<sup>63</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., p. 265.

garments and clothe himself in white linen (Lev. 16:4), after having washed his body in water.

. . . he retired, and put off his golden garments, and put on the plain linen ones--pure but unadorned--like Jesus on earth, holy, yet in a servant's form. The priest must put aside both ephod and breastplate; he appeared simply as head of the people. He washed himself in water ere he put them on, that holiness might still be proclaimed by him, though putting on this unattractive dress; even as our Surety, in entering Mary's womb, was declared to be "that Holy One that shall be born of thee."<sup>64</sup>

God commanded the people to fast and "afflict your souls, and do no work at all . . . For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. 16:29-30).

Dr. Edersheim said that in all, fifteen different animals were sacrificed. The high priest himself purchased out of his own funds the sacrifices that were for himself and his house; the sacrifices that were for the people were purchased out of the temple treasury.<sup>65</sup>

It is to be remarked that no details are given respecting any of the burnt-offerings of this day. The details are all confined to the sin-offerings. . . . Now, on this day the Lord wished to fix the attention of all upon the sin-offering, as it was a day of expiation for the confessed, defined, specified sins of Israel.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Bonar, op. cit., pp. 290-291.

<sup>65</sup> Edersheim, op. cit., p. 268.

<sup>66</sup> Bonar, op. cit., p. 291.

After changing his garments, Aaron killed a bullock and offered it as a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering, for himself and for his house. He then took "a censer full of burning coals from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small" (vs. 12), and brought these into the most holy place "bring it within the vail." He "put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat" (vs. 13). The reason for this was given: "that he die not" (vs. 13).

Aaron then took the blood of the bullock and sprinkled it seven times; for within the vail the cloud of glory rests, at these appointed times, and Jehovah is there, as it were, in his inaccessible light. He that comes in must be let in by God himself. "For by him we have access, through one Spirit to the Father."<sup>67</sup>

Aaron then took the blood of the bullock and sprinkled it seven times "upon the mercy seat eastward" (vs. 14).

Further remarks by Dr. Edersheim indicated that Aaron, after offering a sin-offering for himself and for his house, took the two identical goats to be used and presented them alive before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle. He cast lots by shaking an urn. Thrusting both of his hands into it, he took a lot in each hand and placed one upon the head of each animal. The goat designated to be offered in sacrifice was killed and offered as a sin-offering while the goat chosen as the "scapegoat" was "presented alive before

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

the Lord" (vs. 10). They had been placed with their backs to the congregation and their faces westward toward the tabernacle.

A tongue-shaped piece of scarlet cloth was tied to one horn of the scapegoat while another scarlet cloth was tied around the throat of the animal to be slain.<sup>68</sup> Then the scapegoat was turned around to face the people and stood facing them

. . . waiting as it were till their sins should be laid on him, and he would carry them forth "to a land not inhabited." Assuredly a more marked type of Christ could not be conceived, as He was brought forth by Pilate and stood before the people, just as He was about to be led forth, bearing the iniquity of the people.<sup>69</sup>

Later Aaron brought the blood of the slain goat within the veil and sprinkled it seven times "before the mercy seat" (vs. 15).

The blood which is sprinkled upon the believer's conscience has been sprinkled "seven times" before the throne of God. The nearer we get to God, the more importance and value we find attached to the blood of Jesus. If we look at the brazen altar, we find the blood there; if we look at the brazen laver, we find the blood there; if we look at the golden altar, we find the blood there; if we look at the vail of the tabernacle, we find the blood there; but in no place do we find so much about the blood, as within the vail, before Jehovah's throne, in the immediate presence of the divine glory.<sup>70</sup>

Leaving the Most Holy Place, Aaron went out unto "the altar

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<sup>68</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>70</sup>Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 290.

that is before the Lord" where he smeared the blood of both the bullock and the goat upon the horns of the altar and then sprinkled "the blood upon it with his finger seven times" to "cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel" (vs. 19).

While much of the offering of sacrifices and the sprinkling of blood was taking place according to God's instructions, the scapegoat (with the scarlet cloth tied to one of its horns) had stood

. . . looking eastwards, confronting the people, and waiting for the terrible load which it was to carry away "unto a land not inhabited." Laying both his hands on the head of this goat, the high-priest now confessed . . . .<sup>71</sup>

the sins of the people to JEHOVAH.

And while the prostrate multitude worshipped at the name of Jehovah, the high-priest turned his face towards them as he uttered the last words, "Ye shall be cleansed!" as if to declare to them the absolution and remission of their sins.<sup>72</sup>

Following the prayer the high-priest handed the scapegoat over to a man who led it out of the camp and into the wilderness. Surely the scapegoat, too, was a sacrifice, though its life was not taken. The Scripture account has indicated that both goats were required to complete the sacrifice.

It would seem that the Day of Atonement was intended as an occasion for expressing more completely than could

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<sup>71</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., pp. 277-278.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.



be done in the ordinary sacrifices the spiritual truth of Atonement with a fuller acknowledgment of the sinfulness and weakness of man and of the corruptible nature of all earthly things, even of those most solemnly consecrated and devoted to the service of God. It belonged to its observance especially to set forth, by the entrance of the high priest into the Holy Place, that Atonement could only be effected before the throne of Jehovah Himself (cf. Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:7-10; Heb. 4:16): and by the goat sent into the wilderness, that the sins atoned for were not only forgiven, but carried wholly away. The rites were not in any proper sense supplemental, but were a solemn gathering up, as it were, of all other rites of atonement, so as to make them point more expressively to the revelation to come of God's gracious purpose to man in sending His Son to be delivered for our offences, and to rise again for our justification; to be our great High Priest forever, and to enter for us within the veil (Rom. 4:25; Heb. 6:20).<sup>73</sup>

#### IX. SACRIFICE AND ITS RELATION TO CLEANSING

The objective of the Day of Atonement, its ceremonies, rites, sprinklings, and offerings was cleansing (Lev. 16:30).

The word "atonement" was used fifteen times in the 16th Chapter of Leviticus, appearing in twelve different verses. The word appears once in each of the following verses: 6, 10, 11, 16, 18, 24, 27, 30, 32, and 34. It appears twice in verse 17. It appears three times in verse 33.

In the face of the drama and sorrow, pageantry and pathos, suffering sacrifices, blood sprinklings, washings, and prayers of confession blended with the mercy and grace of God to forgive, and to cleanse, there

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<sup>73</sup>White, op. cit., p. 41.

was no possible way to separate the ideas of sacrifice and cleansing as they are presented in the Book of Leviticus. The fact of cleansing was God's great objective in His plan of atonement and opened the way for a rich fellowship between Himself and His people.

The New Testament has stated: "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). This principle was seen to exist long before the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, however, and various references to it were recorded in the Book of Leviticus and in other Old Testament books.

God said, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls" (Lev. 17:11).

With the establishment of the tabernacle system of worship came the idea of man being made clean in the sight of God. Thus the relationship between sacrifice and cleansing was established for the tabernacle worship required much by way of sacrifice. God's will was clearly introduced to Israel through the tabernacle, its structure, its furnishings, its priesthood, its sacrifices, and its festivals, teaching Israel that cleansing by means of sacrifice was a necessity.

In Leviticus 1:1-6:7, the section devoted to describing the five main offerings of the Levitical worship, the following was noted:

The word "blood" appears 24 times--four times in the Burnt-Offering section; three times in the Peace-Offering section; and seventeen

times in the account of the Sin-Offering.

The word "atonement" appears twice without the word "forgiven." Once regarding the Burnt-Offering and once regarding the Sin-Offering.

The word "atonement" appears in connection with the word "forgiven" nine times--six times in relation to the Sin-Offering and three times in the Trespass-Offering account.

It was seen that obedience to God's regulations regarding sacrifices, offerings, blood sprinklings was the only way by which forgiveness and cleansing could be granted by the Lord. Neglect of these means of grace brought death.

## X. SUMMARY

The material in this chapter has shown that God's will for His people was that they be holy. Blood atonement for sin was a prerequisite to forgiveness and cleansing.

The tabernacle structure and its furnishings were necessary to provide a place for the offering of sacrifices through which atonement came. The tabernacle was required to provide a sanctuary in which God could dwell.

The Aaronic priesthood was Divinely commissioned to conduct the tabernacle worship. The priesthood was set apart and dedicated to God in a solemn manner. The priests were the representatives of the congregation before God.

The feasts were instituted to regulate the time of various religious observances with their sacrifices and offerings. Forgiveness was granted to those who came to God by means of proper sacrifices with their shed blood. The Day of Atonement was marked by deep sorrow for sin and by great rejoicing over sin being forgiven and cleansed. There was no atonement, no forgiveness, and no cleansing without sacrifice and the shedding of blood.

## CHAPTER IV

### SACRIFICE AND CLEANSING UNDER THE NEW COVENANT ANALYZED

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Mosaic Covenant was a beautiful revelation of God's love for His people. The glory of the tabernacle and its furnishings expressed His holiness, His Divinity, and His desire to communicate with humanity, making them "partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:10). The tabernacle sacrifices depicted the Lord Jesus Christ as the very Essence of suffering love and patience during all of His spotless life on earth, and especially in the last hours of His life and in His death, as shown in the preceding chapter.

However, the Levitical system of worship under the Mosaic Covenant, with its tabernacle, its furnishings, its sacrifices, its priesthood, and its festivals was not the highest revelation that God intended for man.

#### II. THE NEED OF A NEW COVENANT

There were certain limitations that were apparent in the Mosaic Covenant, which called for a New Covenant. Those limitations were described by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He stated that all things were not put under him" (2:9).

The devil was not brought to nought. This was inferred by the following: "that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (2:14).

Mankind was subject to the fear of death and was subject to bondage; "And deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (2:15).

An eternal reconciliation for sin had not been made; "It behooved him . . . to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (2:17).

The great "rest" was not given under the Mosaic Covenant; "For if Joshua had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (4:8-9).

The "hope" of salvation needed a greater sacrifice and a greater priesthood than that of the Mosaic Covenant for its base.

That . . . we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedek (6:18-20).

The Levitical priesthood did not bring perfection; "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood . . . what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedek, and not after the order of Aaron?" (7:11).

The law had not brought perfection; "For the law made nothing perfect" (7:19; see 10:1-2).

The Levitical priesthood was constantly changing: "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death" (7:23).

The Levitical priest had to offer sacrifice for his own sins; ". . . as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins" (7:27).

The Mosaic Covenant was not faultless; "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (8:7).

The Mosaic Covenant was subject to decay, age, and obliteration; "In that he saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (8:13).

The New Covenant is not only better, and founded upon better promises than the Old; but, yet more, it supercedes the Old. The characteristics of the New Covenant, and the very name which it bears, point to the abrogation of that which has now become "the old."<sup>1</sup>

The Mosaic Covenant had a worldly sanctuary; "Then verily the first covenant had . . . a worldly sanctuary" (9:1).

The writer first describes the Tabernacle . . . . As he had spoken at the close of the last chapter of the imminent disappearance of the old system, he now pauses for a moment to dwell upon the glories of that Old Covenant before he con-

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<sup>1</sup>B. F. Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 227.

trasts them with the supreme glory of the Christian order. He seems indeed to linger over the sacred treasures of the past . . . . There was, he says, something majestic and attractive in the Mosaic ordinances of worship.<sup>2</sup>

The way into the holiest of all was not made manifest under the Mosaic Covenant; ". . . the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as yet the first tabernacle was yet standing" (9:8).

There were two great defects in that old covenant, which arose out of the weakness of poor human nature; in the first place, it gave no power, no moral dynamics, to enable the human covenantors to do what they promised; and, secondly, it could not provide for the effectual putting away of those sins which arose from their failure to carry into effect their covenanted vows.<sup>3</sup>

Heavenly things, of which the earthly were but a pattern, required a better sacrifice than those offered under the Mosaic Covenant; "It was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified . . . but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (9:23).

The law had but a shadow of good things to come; "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (10:1).

The sacrifices offered under the Mosaic Covenant could not take away sin; "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (10:4; see 10:11).

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>3</sup>F. B. Meyer, The Way Into the Holiest (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1893), p. 148.



God did not have pleasure in such sacrifices as those that were offered under the Mosaic Covenant. That is not to deny that there were offerings that were a "sweet savour unto the Lord" in Leviticus. Such a statement as appeared in the following verse of Scripture indicated that God had a greater pleasure in the gift of His dear Son; "Sacrifice and offering . . . for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein" (10:8). Closely related were the words; "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me" (10:5).

The sacrifices of Leviticus had served a very necessary purpose in familiarizing men with the thoughts of God as to the true aspect in which our Saviour's death was to be viewed; but it was evident that they could not exhaust his idea, or fill up the measure of his redeeming purpose. His will went far beyond them all, and, therefore, they could not be other than incomplete; and, on account of their very incompleteness, they needed incessant repetition; and even then, though repeated for centuries, they could not accomplish the purposes on which the divine nature was set.<sup>4</sup>

God was seen as the unapproachable God in the Old Testament (see Heb. 12:18-21).

### III. THE NEW COVENANT AND ITS PURPOSE

Jeremiah 31:31-34 gave an early prediction of the New Covenant. (See also Jeremiah 32:37-41). Isaiah 61:8-11 also gave a prediction of the New Covenant.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 187.

Jeremiah at the crisis of national calamity pictures the final result of the discipline of the exile into which Judah was now going. The united people "Israel and Judah" are to return to their land (30:3). Ephraim is again recognized as first-born (31:15ff.). The counsel of divine love finds certain accomplishments (31:37). This issue is summed up in the establishment of a New Covenant, by which the fulfillment of the whole of God's purpose is assured, when trial has done its work. Under this Covenant, grace not law is the foundation of fellowship. God comes to man as giving and not as requiring.<sup>5</sup>

The predicted New Covenant was described as an "everlasting covenant"; "I will make an everlasting covenant with them" (Isa. 61:8; Jer. 32:40); and "a new covenant" (Jer. 31:31).

God indicated that, through the establishment of the New Covenant "their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their off-spring among the people" (Isa. 61:9). He said, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:32). Under the New Covenant, "they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." God also promised; "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34).

The Scripture teaches that back of the everlasting covenant is God's love and kindness: "I will mention the lovingkindness of the Lord . . . according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses" (Isa. 63:7); "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3); "As one whom his mother comforteth,

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<sup>5</sup>Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Isa . 66:13).

It appears that God intended to fulfill in a complete sense under the New Covenant, what He stated was His objective in the Mosaic Covenant .

Due to the imperfections of the Mosaic Covenant and its sacrifices, the New Covenant became the instrument whereby God's objectives of fellowship and holiness were consummated. The fellowship between God and His people was provided in the cleansing that the New Covenant provided.

God in Christ Jesus forgave all the offences that were committed under the Mosaic Covenant. He redeemed "the transgressions that were under the first covenant" (Heb. 9:15). From this verse it appears that the sins that were committed under the Mosaic Covenant, if properly confessed and presented to God according to the covenant terms, were forgiven as far as man was concerned. God laid them up to the account of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary and when Jesus died, He fully atoned for such sins .

#### IV. THE SACRIFICE OF THE NEW COVENANT

The idea of sacrifice was essential to the Mosaic Covenant idea of forgiveness, atonement, and cleansing. Without sacrifices there was no atonement and, therefore, no forgiveness and no cleansing.

If there was to be provision for forgiveness, atonement and cleansing under the New Covenant, then a new sacrifice was needed. The Epistle to the Hebrews showed clearly that the Lord Jesus Christ was that

sacrifice.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh (Heb. 10:19-20).

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (9:14).

"That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (2:9). "He offered up himself" (7:27). "Christ was once offered to bear sins" (9:28).

Christ had to die and have all the tender parts of his nature brought under the fires of wrath, and his body given to be food for our souls, to qualify us to come acceptably before our Maker.<sup>6</sup>

Robert Anderson has indicated that all the benefits of the New Covenant depended, not upon the birth of Christ, but upon his death.<sup>7</sup>

## V. THE CLEANSING OF THE NEW COVENANT

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews stated that the Lord Jesus Christ, through His sacrifice, provided forgiveness and cleansing: "He became the author of eternal salvation" (5:9); "I will be merciful to

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph A. Seiss, The Gospel in Leviticus (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.] ), p. 151.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Anderson, The Hebrews Epistle (London: Pickering and Inglis, [n.d.] ), p. 24.

their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (8:12). "The end of the New Covenant is the same as that of the old. In both cases the purpose of God was to form a people truly His own."<sup>8</sup>

The Epistle to the Hebrews further stated: "he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (9:26); "we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10); "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (10:22); "The blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified" (10:29); "that we might be made partakers of his holiness" (12:10); "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (12:14), and "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (13:12).

The Christian is not only justified but sanctified by the blood of Christ . . . holiness must be attained through the work of the Holy Spirit. Scripture teaches that holiness of life, like righteousness of life, is a practical conformity to what we are in Christ. And this is what the Spirit's work signifies.<sup>9</sup>

It was interesting to note that the idea of cleansing was introduced almost at the very beginning of the Epistle; "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high" (1:3). The

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<sup>8</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 226.

<sup>9</sup>Anderson, op. cit., p. 128.

thought of solitude and loneliness was suggested by the words, "by himself;" also suggested here was the thought of Christ's ability to do alone what none other had ever been able to do.

There is probably here a tacit contrast of Jesus Christ, Himself both priest and sacrifice, and the Aaronical priests. They had for ages been attempting to purge sin, but in vain: He had at once, and completely, gained that great object. They endeavored to gain this end by the blood of slain beasts; He fully gained it by the sacrifice of Himself. The efficacy of our Lord's sacrifice is to be traced to the dignity of His person. It was because He gave Himself, the Son, the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person, that He succeeded in purging our sins.<sup>10</sup>

The Lord Jesus Christ provided purification for sins.

He made purification for the sins of men (1:3). He made καθαρισμόν; that is to say, he made a man καθαρός, which means "pure" in the particular sense of being made fit to enter into the presence of God. It is only in Jesus Christ that the way to God is opened for sinful men.<sup>11</sup>

Thus it was discovered that there was a need for a New Covenant, that the essence and purpose of the New Covenant was to make possible those Divine objectives of the Mosaic Covenant, that the Lord Jesus Christ was the sacrifice of the New Covenant, as well as the High-priest, and that purification of sins was provided through His sacrifice and mediatorship and through this alone.

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<sup>10</sup>John Brown, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Billing and Sons, 1961), p. 34.

<sup>11</sup>William Barclay, The Epistle to the Hebrews (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), pp. 63-64.

In summary, the material in this chapter has shown the grandeur of the Mosaic Covenant, the need for a New Covenant, the essentials and purpose of the New Covenant; it has also shown that the Lord Jesus Christ was the sacrifice that gave the New Covenant power to cleanse away sin.

There was great majesty and beauty in the Mosaic Covenant and in the ordinances of the tabernacle. Men were constantly reminded of the Holiness and Glory of God and of their own sinfulness and unworthiness. The sacrifices, offerings, and blood sprinklings familiarized men with the thoughts of God regarding the Saviour's death. The value of the old covenant sacrifices was that they pointed toward Christ. It was discovered that God accepted these, when they were offered in a proper spirit, because they did point to Christ.

Yet there were so many weaknesses in the Mosaic Covenant that a New Covenant was required. Only a New Covenant could give meaning to the old. Without the new, the old was pure stupidity.

The purpose of the New Covenant did not differ from the old; in each the purpose was to forgive sin, to cleanse it away, and to atone for it. In each covenant, God's expressed desire of dwelling with His people was clearly seen. While the two covenants did not differ from each other in purpose, they did differ in power. The old covenant consisted of types and shadows, it was temporary and passing, and it was weak. The New Covenant illuminated the old, it brought in the fulfillment of the types and shadows, it

was permanent, eternal, and powerful. Its power lay in the Person at its center; namely, the only begotten Son. The power by which sins could be forgiven was released through the Saviour's death. Jesus Christ was both High-Priest and Sacrifice under its terms; thus it was founded upon "better promises."

It was clearly seen that, with all due respect to the life of our Lord, full atonement (forgiveness and cleansing) for sin came through the death of Christ and through this alone.



## CHAPTER V

### SACRIFICE AND CLEANSING IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Epistle to the Hebrews is the key that unlocks and the light that illuminates the Mosaic Covenant and gives a spiritual understanding of it. The Epistle reveals the hidden meaning of the ordinances of the tabernacle worship and shows that the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the Divine terms of the Covenant as it appears in Leviticus.

The theme of the Epistle is also unique. The subject material is that of the great Eternal Priesthood of Christ who had already transplanted and abolished the Levitical Priesthood of Aaron (8:1-4).<sup>1</sup>

The Epistle, though brief, contains the most extensive account given in the Bible of the plan of salvation. It introduces God immediately; in fact, God is the opening word. It was written to bring men to God and to bring them into close contact with him. It was written to Jewish Christians who were discouraged over persecutions and over delays in the fulfillment of the Scriptural promises that spoke of Christ's kingdom. The present

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<sup>1</sup>Ralph E. Butterfield, "A Concept of the Sacrifices According to the Epistle to the Hebrews" (unpublished Master's thesis, Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma, May, 1948), p. 2.

priestly action of Christ was presented by the author to show that Christ was really the Messiah. Jewish Christians who were being persecuted for their faith received the

. . . letter to the Hebrews, plainly announcing an eternal severance of Christianity from Judaism. . . . Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and David--are overshadowed by a greater Lord, of whom they are but feeble types.<sup>2</sup>

### The Eternal Being of Christ

Inasmuch as Christ was Divine, He was, of necessity, of Divine substance and essence.

It was not the Father or the Spirit who became incarnate but the Son--the Second Person of the Trinity: the pre-existent One, therefore, is not a mere abstraction or idealization; He is not a pre-existent creature, whether human or divine; He is "the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God."<sup>3</sup>

Jesus Christ is called "Son" four times in the first chapter of Hebrews (vss. 2, 5, and 8). In verse 8 He is called "God" and in verse 10 He is called "Lord."

John the Beloved said; "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . ." (John 1:14).

The Scriptures point up the unity of the Father with Jesus Christ

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<sup>2</sup>B. H. Carroll, An Interpretation of the English Bible (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1942), XV, 201.

<sup>3</sup>H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1962), II, 172.

the Son and speak of the Father and the Son as being of the same essence.

(See Hebrews 3:6; 4:14; 5:5; 6:6; Phil. 2:5; II Cor. 4:6).

### God's Highest Revelation in Christ Superior to the Message of the Prophets

It was through the Divine Son that the highest and most complete revelation of God came; "No man hath seen God at anytime; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18); "God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1,2).

The prophets did not speak messages conjured up by their own imaginations; they spoke and wrote "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21).

By the very nature of the case the message of the prophets was fragmentary, limited, and dim. "But the Revelation in Christ, the Son, is perfect both in substance and in form."<sup>4</sup>

### Christ the Mediator of the New Revelation

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews indicated that Jesus Christ purged our sins by Himself; "by himself purged our sins" (1:3). Thus the message is declared that atonement was offered through Jesus Christ and

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<sup>4</sup>B. F. Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 4.

through Him alone and its purpose is a cleansing from sin.

Let us learn, at the very outset, that what God has to speak to us in Christ begins here: sin must be cleansed away. This is the root-thought of redemption. . . . It is the cleansing of sin God insists on; in a desire so intense that He gave His Son to die for it.<sup>5</sup>

"Having made purification of sins" suggests that a complete atonement was accomplished by our Lord. It was not simply provided by His power without any involvement on His part. Rather, it was produced out of His own holy Being.

#### Christ's Superiority to the Angels

In order to show the superiority of the new covenant over the old, it was necessary to show Christ's superiority over the angels. The Scripture says that the old covenant, the law, was given by the "disposition of angels" (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19). It shows that Christ is superior to angels; "And let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6). "But to which of the angels said he at anytime, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" (Heb. 1:13).

The Son was superior to the angels and had "a more excellent name than they" (1:4). "He is not only the head of mankind, whom He has saved by His sufferings, but also of the angels, to whom He gave existence,

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<sup>5</sup> Andrew Murray, The Holiest of All (London: Nisbet & Co., Ltd., [n.d.]), p. 44.

and whom, from the midst of His glory, He leads to perfection."<sup>6</sup> He was declared to be the "begotten Son" (1:5); He made expiation for sin and "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (1:3). "The angels are glad, but they cannot have the joy that Jesus has, because angels did not make us, angels did not die for us, and angels did not make atonement for us."<sup>7</sup>

### Christ's Superiority to the Material Universe

The Scripture teaches that Christ was active in the creation of the world and the universe; "who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:9); "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). The Bible further teaches that He existed before matter was formed and that He maintains an orderly running of the universe; "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:17). Christ is pictured in the Epistle to the Hebrews as enduring beyond the material universe; "They shall perish but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou are the same, and thy years shall not fail" (1:11-12).

### Christ the Fulfillment of Man's Destiny Through Suffering

The writer of Hebrews quoted from Psalm 8 and spoke of the exalted

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<sup>6</sup>F. Godet, Studies in the Old Testament (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1874), p. 27.

<sup>7</sup>Carroll, op. cit., p. 222.

position of man in his innocence. He also showed that sin's entrance into the world marred the image in which God had created man and made him incapable of fulfilling his destiny. Man was shown needing someone to lift him out of his pitiable state; this Christ could do. But in order for Christ to lift man, Christ had to be identified with man. "The fulfillment of man's destiny, owing to the intrusion of sin, could only be brought about through suffering, made possible for Christ and effective for man through the Incarnation."<sup>8</sup>

Hebrews speaks of Christ tasting "death for every man" (2:9), and making "reconciliation for the sins of the people" (2:17). In doing this, Jesus Christ provided for full atonement of sin. His salvation thus became the guarantee of man's final exaltation according to God's plan and caused Jesus to say: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13). Therefore He was anointed "with the oil of gladness" (1:9). "This was a recompense of gladness beyond that any other being in this world will enjoy."<sup>9</sup>

In the atonement provided by the Lord Jesus Christ, man was given hope of living and reigning with Christ forever.

There is a two-fold sight which we have been regarding-- Christ on the cross the measure of man's worth in the eyes of God, and of man's place in the creation; Christ on the throne the prophecy of man's dignity, and of his most sure dominion.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Westcott, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>9</sup> Carroll, op. cit., p. 221.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of the Holy Scriptures (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1944, XV, 228.

### Christ's Superiority to Moses

The Epistle to the Hebrews says: "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (3:3). Christ the Son being superior to Moses the servant is the thought expressed in Hebrews chapter 3.

Though the superiority of Christ to Moses might have seemed to be necessarily implied in the superiority of Christ to angels, yet the position of Moses in regard to the actual Jewish system made it necessary, in view of the difficulties of Hebrew Christians, to develop the truth independently.<sup>11</sup>

The Hebrews writer called Jesus "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession" (3:1). There is a reference here to both Moses and Aaron who together represented God to the people. Moses was the apostle or messenger while Aaron was the high priest. These two titles were combined and united in Jesus Christ. "As High Priest He is merciful as Aaron: as Apostle of our profession He is faithful as Moses."<sup>12</sup>

### Christ's Superiority to Joshua

The Old Testament system had at its very heart a promise of rest. However, something greater than the power of the old economy was needed to actualize the rest. Although Canaan was the promised land, it did not provide the rest that men looked for and that God had predicted. "For if Joshua had

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<sup>11</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>12</sup>Murray, op. cit., p. 103.

given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day" (4:8). The fourth chapter of Hebrews declares that a greater rest than Joshua's was expected; "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).

That the rest greater than Joshua's was meant can be seen from the fact that it was mentioned in the Psalms (95:11) during the time that Israel was living in Canaan; thus more than a possession of the Promised Land was intended, according to Hewett.<sup>13</sup> ". . . the rest cannot mean simply the earthly settlement which was secured under Joshua."<sup>14</sup> The "rest" of God was held by the author of Hebrews to be a rest of faith. He taught that faith and trust bring rest and that the rest was a sabbath rest.

#### The High-Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ

The qualifications of a priest. There were certain basic requirements for a priest. He was to represent his nation in God's presence. In order to do this he had to be familiar with the conditions in which his brethren lived and had to be exposed to the same pressures and trials as they. His task was to "offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins" (5:1). According to F. F. Bruce, the author of Hebrews had in mind a particular class of

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<sup>13</sup> Tyndale New Testament Commentary, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960), p. 86.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 87.



offerings "for sins; namely, those that were presented annually on the day of atonement."<sup>15</sup>

In addition, the high-priest needed to have proper inward feelings toward his sacred work. He must be one "who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way" (5:2). He needed unusual forbearance and tolerance. "A high priest could not make fitting expiation for sins which fill him, at the very time, with feelings of indignation and exasperation against those who are guilty of them."<sup>16</sup>

The priest must be called of God into the priesthood. He was not to set himself up as high-priest nor was he to hold his office as though it were simply based on secular authority; "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (5:4).

Jesus Christ met the qualifications of the priesthood. The Lord Jesus Christ was a "high priest taken from among men" (5:1), and therefore was identified with humanity; "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death . . ." (2:9). "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even

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<sup>15</sup> The New London Commentary, The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1964), p. 89.

<sup>16</sup> A. B. Davidson, Hebrews (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1950), p. 109.

the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). ". . . was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Jesus offered a sacrifice. The high-priest was to offer "gifts and sacrifices for sins" (5:1). The Lord Jesus Christ did this; "for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (7:27). "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (9:14). "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (9:28). ". . . we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10). "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God" (10:12). "For by one offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (10:14).

The Lord Jesus Christ, the great and holy High-Priest, offered what no other person could ever give--Himself.

Another requirement of a priest was that he have a compassionate nature.

It is just such a priest that we have in Jesus Christ, one who can sympathize with our weakness, for He was tempted in all things even as we are tempted, though He was without sin (4:15) He is like His brothers in all things, and because He Himself suffered He is able to help others who are going through it (4:15; 5:7-10).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> William Barclay, The Epistle to the Hebrews (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 67.

Our great High-Priest was so identified with humanity that He was "compassed with infirmity" (5:2); nevertheless, not with any sinfulness; "yet without sin" (4:15).

The high-priest must be called of God and this requirement, also was fulfilled in Jesus. Of the divine, eternal Son, through whom God has spoken to us (1:2), the Father said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (1:5), and "Thou art a priest forever" (5:6). The author of Hebrews said of Jesus Christ; "Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedek" (5:10). "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest" (5:4). "The office of high priest in general is an honour (Heb. 5:4), in the case of Christ it is a glory."<sup>18</sup>

In His high-priestly prayer, Jesus referred to "the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). His prayer included petitions for the sanctification of His people and for their unity with one another and with God to the intent that the world should believe and that they should behold His glory.

Jesus Christ was identified with His people, He offered a sacrifice, He had a compassionate nature, He was sinless, and He was divinely called. He was eternal and therefore, God. He was human and therefore, Man, He was qualified for the office of High-Priest. Not only was He qualified but He

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<sup>18</sup>Davidson, op. cit., p. 110.

was the only One who was so qualified. The universal priesthood "was suitable in one who was a Son, being indeed possible to none other."<sup>19</sup>

Deep down in every man's heart there is a yearning for such an High-Priest as Jesus Christ; someone who can stand between him and God and, by laying hands on both, bring them together. The Lord Jesus Christ became such an High-Priest.

And no religion is destined to meet the deepest yearnings of the race, which does not have glowing at the heart the provision of a priest to stand before the throne of grace; as, of old, the priest stood before the mercy-seat, which was its literal prefigurement under the dispensation of the Levitical law.<sup>20</sup>

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace" (4:16).

Christ's High-Priesthood of the Order of Melchisedek superior to the Aaronic. The King-Priest, Melchisedek, was described as one "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God" (7:3). Nothing is said in Scripture of his ancestry, his lineage, his genealogy, his posterity, his birth nor his death. He was called "King of righteousness . . . King of Salem . . . King of peace" (7:2). In this manner he appeared in Scriptural history (Genesis 14) and in this manner he disappeared. Nothing more was said about

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>20</sup> F. B. Meyer, The Way Into the Holiest (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1893), p. 95.

him. In this manner he typified the Lord Jesus Christ whose Kingly-Priesthood was not dependent on unbroken descent from Aaron nor upon absolutely pure Jewish blood.

The first requirement of the Aaronic priesthood was an established genealogy and this Melchisedek lacked.

The argument therefore is that the priesthood of Melchisedek, and therefore the priesthood of Christ, was unique in that they depend, not on any legal enactment, not on any matter of genealogy and parentage and descent, but entirely on the personal quality of the priest. The priest himself has in him a quality of life which makes him a priest quite independently of any legal enactment and any genealogical register.<sup>21</sup>

The Hebrews Epistle declares that the Melchisedek order of the priesthood was a new kind of priesthood (7:11). The appearance of a priest after the order of Melchisedek implied that there was a need of that kind of priest. That a priest after another order was needed indicated that the Aaronic priesthood was inadequate, for if the old priesthood was adequate, there was no need of a change.

The Psalmist stated, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek" (Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:21). Thus the new priesthood was confirmed by an oath by God Himself; "with an oath by him" (7:21).

No other priesthood was ever thus established and

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<sup>21</sup>Barclay, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

therefore once again the priesthood after the order of Melchisedek is proved to be unique. . . . in Him the old law and the old cult and the old priesthood are once for all superceded and overpassed and ended.<sup>22</sup>

The ministry of the Melchisedek Priest. Jesus Christ proclaimed a New Covenant and established it; "he is the mediator of a better covenant" (8:6). He made full atonement for the sins of all mankind when He "offered up himself" (7:27). "Thus a new thought is introduced of Christ as Priest and Victim which is found neither in the Melchisedek nor in the Aaronic priesthoods."<sup>23</sup>

In speaking of the New Covenant the following is quoted:

The word that the Bible uses for covenant is "διαθήκη" and for this reason--"διαθήκη" in ordinary Greek is the regular word for a "will", which is the one kind of human agreement in which one party gives and in which one party can do no more than take, and take on the terms laid down. So then the Biblical word for covenant is "διαθήκη" in order to stress the fact that in a covenant the whole initiative lies with God, and man cannot argue and bargain; he can only accept--or refuse--the offer and its terms.<sup>24</sup>

The ordinances of the tabernacle worship with their diversity and multiplicity of sacrifices and offerings were designed to keep in good repair the relationship intended in the Mosaic Covenant. The continuance of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>23</sup> Tyndale New Testament Commentary, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>24</sup> Barclay, op. cit., p. 76.

the Mosaic Covenant relationship was based upon Israel's obedience to its terms, namely, the law. Biblical history has shown that the nation did not keep the terms of the Mosaic Covenant. The law was continually broken and "when the law is broken the relationship is broken."<sup>25</sup>

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews indicated that the ritual of the sacrifices and the labor of the priesthood "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience" (9:9), but served "until the time of reformation" (9:10). The old economy with its many offerings and sacrifices was weak and therefore a New Covenant was needed. The transition from old to new covenants was spoken of by the author of the Epistle: "In saying, 'New', he has antiquated the first (covenant). But that which is antiquated and decadent (fading-with age) is close to vanishing" (Heb. 8:13--Meuller).

The Lord Jesus Christ performed a ministry in bringing in the New Covenant. His ministry is "better" and his "covenant" "better" because it "was established upon better promises" (8:6). Jesus was "made a surety of a better covenant" (7:22).

The word means the sponsor or the guarantor. To have a relationship with God in which there is no need of any sacrifice, in which the way to God is wide open, in which any many can draw near, is so great and so glorious that we might think that it is too good to be true. But Jesus is the guarantor of the blessed reality of this new relation-

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

ship with God.<sup>26</sup>

That the death of Christ was necessary to make the New Covenant effective, the author of Hebrews contended:

For where a covenant is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a covenant is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth (Heb. 9:16-17).

The death of Christ was required to bring the New Covenant into force. Therefore, Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven to make the New Covenant effective and to establish a new and greater relationship between God and mankind. ". . . we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9).

One of the great emphases of the Epistle is the combination of the two opposite ideas of kingship and "a minister of the sanctuary" (Heb. 8:1,2).

The writer would have us think of the royal repose of Jesus as full of activity for us; and of His heavenly activity as consistent with deepest repose. Resting He works; working He rests. Reigning He serves; serving He reigns.<sup>27</sup>

#### The Objectives of Christ's Atonement

The objectives of Christ's atonement were four-fold, of which the first one was:

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>27</sup>Maclaren, op. cit., p. 20.



The destruction of the devil. The author of Hebrews said that the Lord Jesus Christ took part in our humanity "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (2:14). At the time it happened, the death of Christ appeared to be a victory for the devil but Christ's resurrection changed all that. Christ in His resurrection overcame death, thus proving that His power was superior to Satan's. By virtue of Christ's victory over death He has "brought" Satan "to nought" (Heb. 2:14-- American Standard Version).

From humanity's standpoint, the devil's greatest weapon against the human race has been the power of death. "The devil's sway is exercised in the realm of death."<sup>28</sup> To destroy the devil meant to strip him of his power; to render him weak and impotent.

The object of the Son's participating in flesh and blood was, that through (His) death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and free all those in bondage to the fear of death.<sup>29</sup>

The Lord, in overcoming death, took a great weapon out of Satan's hand, and relieved humanity of a great bondage.

He hell in hell laid low,  
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew  
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so  
And death, by dying slew.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Davidson, op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>30</sup>The New London Commentary, op. cit., p. 50.

The opening of the way into the holiest of all. Under the Mosaic Covenant the high-priest brought the blood of the slain sacrifice into the holy of holies and sprinkled it on the mercy seat; this was done on the Day of Atonement. But under the New Covenant there was no such division of our Lord's sacrificial and High-Priestly work. When Jesus gave His life on the cross as a sacrifice for sin, "He accomplished in reality what Aaron and his successors performed in type by the two-fold act of slaying the victim and presenting its blood in the holy of holies."<sup>31</sup>

The author of the Epistle said, ". . . he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (9:12). "He made not a two-fold offering but one only. He entered into the Holy place through His own blood, and that once for all."<sup>32</sup> The intent of the author of Hebrews was to show that by one single act of offering Himself, Christ Jesus obtained redemption for mankind. "The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest" (Heb. 9:8) under the Mosaic Covenant. Jesus opened the way when "he entered in once into the holy place" (Heb. 9:12).

Jesus Christ has come with the perfect sacrifice . . . and the way to the inmost presence of God is open, not only to the High priest but to every man. Atonement is forever made for sin, and the shut door is open for every man.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>32</sup>Westcott, op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>33</sup>Barclay, op. cit., p. 68.

The cleansing of the conscience. The barrier to man's access and approach to God is not so much a material and an exterior but an inward one. Before his conscience is purged (cleansed), man cannot approach God nor come into His presence. After his conscience is purified he has access to God openly and freely. Being purged in conscience, he can offer God acceptable worship and service.

The conscience is not a separate part of our heart or inner nature, and which can be in a different state from what the whole is. By no means. Just as a sensibility to bodily evil pervades the whole body, so the conscience is the sense which pervades our whole spiritual nature, and at once notices and reports what is wrong or right in our state. Hence it is when the conscience is cleansed or perfected, the heart is cleansed and perfected too.<sup>34</sup>

Hebrews 9:14 teaches that Christ's blood purges the conscience.

It is Christ's blood which purges the conscience of moral guilt and provides the forgiveness which gives the guilty sinner peace. It also cleanses continually from all defilement, thus enabling the sanctified believer to have fellowship with the living God.<sup>35</sup>

The author of Hebrews said that "almost all things are by the law purged with blood" (9:22). The earlier ordinances under the Mosaic Covenant resulted in a purification, but the offering up of the blood of Christ did something they could never do; "as pertaining to the conscience" make the worshipper "perfect" (Heb. 9:9). In other words the shedding of Christ's

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<sup>34</sup>Murray, op. cit., p. 301.

<sup>35</sup>Tyndale New Testament Commentary, op. cit., p. 148.

blood was essential to provide cleansing.

Not all the blood of beasts  
On Jewish altars slain  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,  
Takes all our sins away,  
A sacrifice of nobler name  
And richer blood than they.  
Isaac Watts<sup>36</sup>

In Christ there is provided a greater cleansing from all sin.

It was something beyond which nothing could be, or could be conceived to be, as a response to God's mind and requirements in relation to sin. It was the final response, a spiritual response, to the divine necessities of the situation. In the light of these stupendous facts the writer exclaims, "how much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge (or cleanse) your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14).<sup>37</sup>

The meaning of full redemption as taught by the author of Hebrews was full atonement from all sin. Such atonement was provided by Jesus Christ. To redeem His people, to provide forgiveness for committed sins, to provide cleansing (purging) from sin in the heart, Jesus "suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12). The only way the guilty conscience could be set

. . . free from the nightmare which fetters it is to touch it with "the blood," and then it will spring up to a waking life of glad service. "The blood" is shed to take away guilt; "the blood" is the life, and, being shed in the death, it

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<sup>36</sup>The New London Commentary, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

<sup>37</sup>Tyndale New Testament Commentary, loc. cit.

can be transfused into our veins, and so will cleanse us from all sin.<sup>38</sup>

The Son of God, the "Mediator of the new covenant" (Heb. 9:15) provided freedom from all sin whether it was sin under the Mosaic Covenant or sin under the New Covenant.

Thus it is seen that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was necessary in order to remove sin from the human conscience, under the terms of the New Covenant. God's mercy and love revealed in the sacrifice and intercession of His dear Son have become the means of man's forgiveness and cleansing. That the conscience is cleansed from sin when God's law is put within it the Scripture teaches: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). Under the full benefits of the New Covenant the Church became God's own possession for it was purchased by Jesus' precious shed blood. To this fact another New Testament writer gives consent: "Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible things . . . But with the precious blood of Christ" (I Peter 1:18-19). "He purged our sins"; i.e. He made purification for our sins (Heb. 1:3).

The return and restoration of man for the purposes of worship, fellowship, service and reward. Sinful man's tendency has always been to go away from God the Center and Source of life and to move in a wayward and

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<sup>38</sup>Maclaren, op. cit., p. 74.

downward direction toward destruction and death. In the face of this tendency, the timeless call of God has been, "Return unto me and I will return unto you" (Mal. 3:7), and "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" (Ez. 33:11). Mankind was given a way of return to God through our great High-Priest, "Jesus, the Son of God" (Heb. 4:14). Man is invited to "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16), the mercy seat of the New Covenant. With his conscience sprinkled with the blood of Christ, man can "come near with a true heart in full-persuasion of faith" (Heb. 10:22, Meuller), and worship God with a "godly fear" (Heb. 12:28).

The redeemed and Spirit-filled person can enjoy a holy worship which implies that he and God have entered into a blessed fellowship (Heb. 8:10). The entrance of God's Spirit brings man into the rest of God (Heb. 4) with its rich fellowship, "it being the purpose of God, an unchanging purpose, that some should enter into His Rest, and enjoy it along with Him."<sup>39</sup>

The Epistle teaches, also, the idea of the Christian's sharing in Christ's sufferings; "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (13:13). St. Paul referred to this idea when he spoke of "the fellowship of his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10).

The Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that the redemptive work of Christ should not result in one's inactivity; "For God is not unrighteous to

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<sup>39</sup> Davidson, op. cit., p. 91.

forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name" (6:10); "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (10:24); ". . . let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (12:28); "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will" (13:21).

It was the grace and blessing of God which produced the good deeds, and not the good deeds the grace and blessing. Yet the manifestation of the good deeds is the evidence of the grace and blessing.<sup>40</sup>

The Christian's reward is involved intrinsically in Christ's atonement; ". . . and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (9:28); "Ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (10:34); "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (10:36); "But we are not of them who draw back into perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (10:39); "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (13:14).

The following comment was made on Hebrews 9:28:

This appearance unto salvation shall be to them that look for Him, those whose sins He has borne here and who continue looking for Him, holding fast their confession unto the end; and this appearance shall be "apart from sin", in no connection on His part with sin. The last words contain a new implication that sin was put away finally by His . . . first manifestation and death . . . . He shall appear unto

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<sup>40</sup> Tyndale New Testament Commentary, op. cit., p. 111.

salvation, to introduce the heavenly inheritance, which His once putting away sin enables men to receive.<sup>41</sup>

What great provisions the Lord made for His people when He offered up to God the body that was prepared for Him! The Church, the body of redeemed humanity, is destined to live with him forever; ". . . by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11).

Our author thinks of Jesus as going into the heavenly holy of holies, to reappear one day in order to confirm finally to His people the salvation which His perfect offering has procured for them. Meanwhile they wait expectantly for His *parousia* [italics in the original] . This presentation of the return of Christ in terms of the high priest's emergence from the sanctuary was in Frances Ridley Havergal's mind when she wrote:

Coming! In the opening east  
Herald brightness slowly swells;  
Coming! O my glorious Priest,  
Hear we not Thy golden bells?<sup>42</sup>

## II. SUMMARY

In this chapter Christ, the begotten Son is seen to be eternal and of the same essence with the Father and the Spirit. He is a superior revelation to the prophet's messages, and is the Mediator of the New Revelation. He is superior to the angels, to the material universe, and He is the fulfill-

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<sup>41</sup>Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>42</sup>The New London Commentary, *op. cit.*, p. 224.



ment of man's destiny through suffering. Christ is seen to be superior to Moses and to Joshua. As High-Priest, Jesus Christ met every qualification of His office. His High-Priesthood was of the Order of Melchisedek which order was superior to the Aaronic. As a High-Priest of the Order of Melchisedek, the Lord Jesus Christ established a New Covenant that was superior to the Mosaic Covenant in that a greater sacrifice was offered. This covenant was based on better promises. His death opened the way whereby the New Covenant could come into being. This New Covenant offers greater benefits than the old.

It has been shown in this chapter that the objectives of Christ's atonement were: the destruction of the devil, the opening of the way into the Holiest of All, the cleansing of the conscience, and the return and restoration of man for the purposes of worship, fellowship, service and reward. The idea of reward implies the second coming of Christ.

It was declared that the great High-Priest, Jesus Christ, became both victim and sacrifice and that the purging of the conscience is necessary to entering into his "rest."

It was found that only through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Victim, and His labor as High-Priest, is atonement for sin possible. "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

It was seen that Christ's blood can do more than the blood of the Old Testament sacrifices.

Thus it was observed that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the doctrine of salvation from all sin through the death of Christ is an absolute essential. Through His "once for all" sacrifice Christ has procured an eternal salvation that can cleanse the human heart from all moral impurity, thus making man like God in character, and fitting him to dwell with God forever.

## CHAPTER VI

### SACRIFICE AND CLEANSING UNDER THE MOSAIC COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT COMPARED AND CONTRASTED

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Between the Mosaic and the New Covenant there were many points of similarity, and more points of difference. Yet, underlying each, a central purpose is seen. Behind both covenants, God's love and mercy are seen working out salvation and redemption for mankind.

#### II. SIMILARITY

Similarity of purpose. There was a similarity of purpose between the Mosaic and the New Covenant. In each, God's purpose was to cleanse His people from sin and dwell among them (Lev. 16:30; 19:2; Exodus 25:8,22; Heb. 12:10,14; 13:12,13).

Similarity of plan. Each covenant was of force by means of death (Heb. 9:16,17,22). In each there was a mountain (12:18-22), a tabernacle (9:8-11), an altar (13:10), a veil (10:20), a sanctuary (8:2), a mercy seat (4:15-16), a priesthood, and a slain sacrifice. There were offerings, prayers (Lev. 16:21; Heb. 5:7), blood sprinklings (Lev. 16; Heb. 12:24) and

a scapegoat.

Christ is the scape-goat, in so far as he bears away our sins where they are seen and heard of no more. Nor can I conceive of a more beautiful and impressive figure. There stood the gentle creature, meekly receiving upon its head "all the iniquities of the children of Israel." In that picture I see a picture of the patient Savior as "the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." The victim is led forth, and passes out of sight. In that I behold the bearing away of the load of sin from all them that believe. The animal is set loose in the wilderness and is seen no more. It is the significant symbol of the penitent sinner's forgiveness. His guilt is borne quite away out of view. It is remembered against him no more. . . . Christ his scapegoat has borne it to the unknown land from which it shall return no more.<sup>1</sup>

Under each covenant atonement was made (Lev. 16; Heb. 9:12), with forgiveness and cleansing (Lev. 16; Heb. 9:14,26,28; 13:12,13); all of which was accomplished by the labor of the high-priest and the suffering of the sacrifices (Lev. chs. 1-6:7; ch. 16; Heb. 9:26).

Similarity of priesthood. The Lord Jesus Christ became like the Aaronic priests, lower than the angels, to redeem mankind. Under the terms of each covenant the priests were divinely called (1:2; 5:4,5,10; 7:17), and were chosen from among their brethren (5:1; 7:5). The priests under both covenants needed to possess feelings of compassion (5:2). They were required to be obedient to God (3:2; 5:1,8).

Under both covenants, the priest came into the presence of God

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph A. Seiss, The Gospel in Leviticus (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, [n.d.] ), p. 301.

within the veil on the designated days of atonement (Lev. 16; Heb. 6:19-20).

Labor and hard work were required of the high-priests on their days of atonement (Lev. 16; Heb. 5:7; 8:24-28; 10:12-14). The high priest

. . . on that day had to do all the work in the Tabernacle, even to the lighting of the lamps and of the fires, as well as making the offerings. He had to serve alone. It imposed numerous inconveniences upon him. It was a day of crushing duties.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus Christ the Lord also labored mightily to complete His work on another Day of Atonement.

The priest was a "minister of the sanctuary" under both covenants (Lev. 16; Heb. 8:2), and offered sacrifices for the people (Lev. 16; Heb. 5:3). The priest of both covenants made intercession for the people (Lev. 16; Heb. 5:7).

Similarity of the offerings presented. One place of offering was peculiar to each covenant. Under both covenants the death of a sacrifice was necessary (Heb. 9:22); this involved suffering on the part of the sacrifice (Lev. 16; Heb. 9:26; 13:12). Under each covenant the sacrifice was without blemish; its blood was sprinkled upon a mercy-seat (Lev. 16; Heb. 6:19,20; 8:2; 9:11,12,14); in a tabernacle (Heb. 9:11), that contained a holy place (Heb. 9:12,24; 10:19). There was an altar in each case (Lev. 16; Heb. 13:10);

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<sup>2</sup>D. Grant Christman, The Tabernacle, Offerings and Feasts (Endicott, New York: Eastern Bible Institute, [n.d.] ), p. 15.

and under each covenant the sacrifice and shed blood procured cleansing (Lev. 16:30; 19:2; Heb. 13:12). Under both covenants the sacrifice was deposited outside the camp and consumed (Lev. 16; Heb. 13:12); there was no remission without blood shedding (Heb. 9:22); the sacrifice was in reach of all the people; and, if the offering was rejected, there was "no more offering for sin" (Heb. 10:18,28,29).

Similarity of the people's response. Under both covenants men heard God's Word, and true to human nature, some accepted His covenant terms and some refused them. For example, the words "cut off" are used four times in Leviticus 17. Men were "cut off" because they refused God's covenant terms (see Heb. 10:28). The same type of punishment awaits those who, under the New Covenant, refuse God's covenant terms (Heb. 10:29-31). The reason for refusing God's covenant terms under either covenant is seen to be a hardness of heart caused by unbelief (Heb. 3:8,10,12,15,18,19; 4:7; 10:39) which resulted in rejection (Heb. 6:6,8).

Other similarities. God took the initiative in bringing both covenants into being and men could do nothing but accept--or reject--the Offerer, the offer, and its terms.

Each covenant provided a rest.

Moses, the head of Israel, and Christ, the head of the spiritual Israel, were both faithful (Heb. 3:5,6).

Faith was essential to salvation under both covenants (Heb. 11; 3:12,14; 4:2,6,11; 6:12; 10:39), though under the Mosaic Covenant, tangible and material things performed an illustrative function. "Faith must do the work, and the external is only a representation on which faith may more easily lean, and receive aid in laying hold upon Christ crucified."<sup>3</sup>

A shaking is spoken of in relation to each covenant (Heb. 12:26).

Under either covenant there was no escaping the wrath of God if His covenant terms were rejected (Heb. 12:25).

### III. DIFFERENCES

While the same essential purpose underlay each covenant, namely, the cleansing from sin that God might dwell with His people, and while each covenant involved sacrifice, blood shedding, blood sprinkling, and confession of sin, resulting in atonement, and while there was a priesthood under each covenant, yet there were great differences between the two.

The priesthood. Under the Mosaic Covenant the priesthood was human and was of the Aaronic Order (Heb. 5:4). There were many priests (Heb. 7:23); the priests offered sacrifices for their own sins (Heb. 7:27), and no mention was made of an Aaronic priest making a second appearance after

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<sup>3</sup>Seiss, op. cit., p. 152.

his life was ended. The Aaronic priesthood was changing (7:23) inasmuch as the priests were subject to death (7:23).

The priests of the Aaronic order were not king-priests. The Levitical priesthood was established after the law of a carnal commandment (7:16); the priests were consecrated for a few years; and men of infirmity were made priests.

The Aaronic priests were not, of themselves, able to save; they were lower than the angels (2:7); they were of the Tribe of Levi; and they were made priests without an oath (7:21). The high priest entered the holy of holies annually (9:7); the priests stood daily offering sacrifices (10:11); and they were unable to "take away sins" (10:11).

Under the New Covenant, the High-Priest was priest by divine appointment (1:2,3), in the same manner as was the Order of Melchisedek (5:10). Instead of many priests there was only one (4:15; 7:21,24,28; 8:1). As the great High Priest, Christ did not need to offer sacrifices for Himself because He was sinless (4:15; 7:26,27).

A second appearance of Christ is predicted; "without sin unto salvation" (9:28), which indicates that those who are "partakers of his holiness" (12:10), and who have followed "peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (12:14), are made fit to "see the Lord" and to dwell with him forever.

It was discovered that those who "go forth unto him without the



camp" (13:13) are fitted morally and spiritually to be a "habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:22), and thus are, in that sense, the personal fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, "they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33).

Therefore such as have submitted to God's purpose in His Son; "Wherefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people" (Heb. 13:12); and are so sanctified and made the people of God, are prepared to enjoy the bliss described in Revelation 21:3 when the tabernacle of God is with men eternally. John pictured God dwelling with His people forever. God's people are with Him forever and He is forever with them, thus fulfilling the promise of the New Covenant. In this manner God's people abide in the "continuing city" spoken of in Hebrews 13:14.

Christ's salvation is unchangeable because his priesthood is unchangeable (7:24). He "ever liveth" (7:25), and He is a King-Priest upon a throne (the throne of mercy or the mercy seat of the New Covenant--4:16;8:1).

The Lord Jesus Christ is a priest after "the power of an endless life" (7:16); He is consecrated forevermore (7:28), and is the Son of God (7:23). Jesus Christ, unlike the Aaronic priests, is able to save (6:19; 7:25); He is superior to the angels (1:4-8), His human ancestry is traced to the Tribe of Judah (7:14), and He is a priest, so made with an oath (7:21).

Perfection is found in Christ (10:14), and Christ's ministry is more excellent than that of the Levitical priesthood (8:6). Christ entered "once into

the holy place" (9:12); He sat down after making His offering (10:11,12); and He put an end to the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Covenant (9:25,26,28).

It is important to observe that the only book of the New Testament in which the priesthood is discussed dwells quite as largely upon the difference as upon the likeness between the Aaronic and the Messianic priest. The latter offered but one sacrifice for sins, the former offered for himself before doing so for the people (Heb. 10:12). The latter was a royal Priest, and of the order of a Canaanite (Heb. 7: 1-4), thus breaking down all the old system at one long-predicted blow--for if He were on earth He could not so much as be a priest at all (Heb. 8:4)--and with it all the old racial monopolies, all class distinctions, being Himself of a tribe as to which Moses spake nothing concerning priests (7:14). Every priest standeth, but this priest hath forever sat down, and even at the right hand of God (Heb. 10:11,12).

The offerings. There was a great dissimilarity in the offerings of the two covenants. Those of the Mosaic Covenant were material and diffuse (9:25; 10:11); they were called "gifts and sacrifices" (9:19) that could not "cleansed the conscience" (9:9; 10:2); and they were unable to make perfect (9:9; 10:1).

At this point a careful proceeding is necessary, lest one suppose that there was no forgiveness and no cleansing that was granted by the Lord to those who, living under the Mosaic Covenant, accepted its terms and obeyed them. There are numerous places in the Book of Leviticus that

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<sup>4</sup>G. A. Chadwick, The Book of Exodus (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1902), p. 408.

indicate that forgiveness and cleansing were granted to men who offered sacrifices in the prescribed manner and attitude. For example, the word "atonement" appears thirteen times in the first fourteen chapters of Leviticus (1:4; 4:20,21,35; 5:10,13,16,18; 6:7; 8:34; 9:7; 12:8; and 14:53). The word "atonement" appears twice in Leviticus 15 and fifteen times in Leviticus 16.

The word "forgiven" appears five times between Lev. 1:1-6:7 (4:20,26,31,35; 6:7). The word "holy" appears eleven times between Lev. 1:1-10:10 (2:3,10; 6:17,25,26,27,29,30; 7:1,6; 10:10). In Leviticus 16 the word "holy" appears twelve times.

The word "cleanse" is used in Lev. 16:19 in relation to the cleansing of the golden altar of incense. The words "clean" and "cleanse" are each used once along with the word "atonement" in Lev. 16:30 to indicate that the atonement that was provided for the people "cleansed" them and made them "clean from all your sins before the Lord."

In the face of the preponderance of this evidence it is seen that atonement--forgiveness and cleansing--was granted under the Levitical system of worship. But at the same time it is seen that the effectiveness of the Levitical offerings lay, not in themselves, but in Christ to whom they pointed. They can be likened to a bank note that a man presented to heaven's bank for cleansing. The bank note--the offering--was accepted by God and cleansing was granted. The bank note was laid up against the account that Christ fully paid at Calvary. (See Heb. 9:15).

Under the old covenant, sacrifices were offered upon many occasions but never on any more important one than the Day of Atonement which came annually (9:25; 10:3). A remembrance of sins was made every year (10:3). Bodies of animals were offered (9:12,13,19) and redemption was by the "blood of others" (9:25).

Under the New Covenant, Christ's offering was a spiritual as well as a physical offering.

The apostles held it to be a sacrifice in the most literal sense of the word. . . .

. . . . .

In brief, the sacrifice of Christ is represented as the ground of all filial communion with God, as the condition of pardon, as the source of all noble endeavor and true comfort in the life that now is, and as our warrant for confidence as to the world to come.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike the offerings of the priests of Aaron's order, Christ's offering was sufficient for all time; it was "one offering" that was offered "once for all" (9:26,28; 10:10,14). Through His offering, Christ takes away sins (1:3; 9:14,26,28) by means of "better sacrifices" (9:23).

Christ's blood cleanses the conscience (9:14) and His offering brings perfection (10:14).

The atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ was "once for all" (9:26, 28; 10:12), and through His atonement sins are remembered no more (10:17).

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<sup>5</sup>James Hastings, A Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), p. 344.

He offered His own body (10:5,10), and His blood, "the blood of Jesus" (10:19).

Had John, looking into the face of Jesus had to say, "Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah," no thought of sacrifice could have been connected therewith, but the very submissive beauty, so evident in the personality of Christ, merged the thought of the forerunner from the majesty of the work soon to be accomplished, into the mercy of the method.<sup>6</sup>

The tabernacle. The tabernacle of the Mosaic Covenant was pitched by men and was earthly (8:2); it was only temporary, being called "the first" (9:2,18); and it was a type or shadow of something greater (8:5). The holy places of the first tabernacle were made with hands (9:24), and the veil was made of curtains (Ex. 26:31-33; 36:35; Heb. 9:7,8). The way into the holiest was not opened under the Mosaic Covenant (9:8), and only the high priest could enter it, and that only on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:17; Heb. 9:7).

Under the provisions of the New Covenant, the Lord Himself pitched "the true tabernacle" (8:2) which is described as being "a greater and more perfect tabernacle" (9:11).

The Tabernacle, as we have seen, presented three main ideas of the dwelling of God among men, of His holiness, of His "conversableness." It was that through which He was pleased to make His presence and His Nature known under the conditions of earth to His people Israel. The antitype of the Tabernacle, whether on earth or in heaven, must fulfill the

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<sup>6</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, The Crises of the Christ (New York: The Fleming H. Revell Company, 1936), p. 144.

same office, and fulfill it perfectly. Such an antitype we find in the humanity of Christ, realised in different modes and degrees during His life on earth, in His Body, the Church, and in the consummation in heaven.

The Holy Place of the greater Tabernacle is heaven "in the presence of God" (9:24); its veil is Christ's flesh (10:20); the way into the holiest is open for Christ has opened it, and men may come to the throne of grace, the new and greater mercy-seat (4:15-16). All who will may enter the Most Holy Place provided for in the terms of the New Covenant.

The covenants. The Mosaic Covenant was faulty (Note 8:6-8); the law was written upon tables of stone, and the first covenant became old; it decayed and vanished (8:13). The old covenant prefigured the new as it revealed God's glory in types (12:18-21). "The Levitical system corresponded with a Covenant which was recognized by the prophets as imperfect and transitory, for they spoke of the divine purpose to establish a new covenant."<sup>8</sup>

The New Covenant was "a better covenant" (8:6); it was based "upon better promises" (8:6).

" . . . upon better promises," such as are contained in the divine description which follows of the spirituality and efficacy of the new relation of man to God, based upon complete forgiveness.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> B. F. Westcott, The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), p. 242.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

In the light of the above statement, the idea of completeness carries with it the thought that the sacrifice of Christ, once made, never needs to be repeated. The Mosaic Covenant sacrifices were repeated often and were, in that sense, incomplete even though forgiveness and cleansing were granted through them. They were incomplete, also, in that their worth rested upon the sacrifice of Christ. His sacrifice was complete for it did not need to be repeated and it avails for all sin.

Under the New Covenant's provisions, God's law is written in the heart of man (8:10; 10:16). The New Covenant revealed and illuminated the old and Jesus Christ, the King-Priest, revealed the glory of God (II Cor. 4:6; John 1:14) in ways that the Levitical priesthood could not.

Other observations. Moses was a servant while Christ was a Son (3:5,6); Moses was faithful in his house, whereas Christ is the owner of the house (3:5,6). The "rest" of the New Covenant is greater than that offered by the old. Under the Old Covenant, Mt. Sinai was prominent; under the New Covenant, Mt. Zion is seen (12:18-22).

Under the Mosaic Covenant, God's voice shook the earth, whereas, under the New Covenant, His voice will shake the Heavens (12:26).

Moses spoke on earth but God speaks from heaven (12:25).

Under the New Covenant Christ is seen as "better than the angels" (1:4) and He has a "more excellent name than they" (1:4).

#### IV. SACRIFICE AND CLEANSING UNDER THE TWO COVENANTS

It is seen that the Divine purpose behind both covenants was cleansing: "Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev. 19:2); "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. 16:30); "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14); "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people . . ." (Heb. 13:12).

The purpose of the cleansing was to make men "partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10); in other words, to make men like God in character. The reason for God's insistence upon cleansing, it has been shown, was to qualify man to enjoy God's presence so that fellowship between God and man could exist. Fellowship was God's ultimate purpose; cleansing was necessary to fellowship; and in order to provide cleansing, a sufficient sacrifice was required.

The Scriptures teach that God's desire in both the Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant was to dwell with His people: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell with them" (Ex. 25:8); "And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy seat" (Ex. 25:22); "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God" (Heb. 7:19); "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they



shall be to me a people" (Heb. 8:10); "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2:11); "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13); "that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:10); "Let us go forth therefore unto him . . ." (Heb. 13:13).

Under both covenants it is seen that cleansing was made possible only by sacrifice. When the proper sacrifices were offered, God accepted them and his people were cleansed by Him.

According to the Epistle to the Hebrews, the sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant could not of themselves cleanse the conscience nor make the worshippers perfect (9:9; 10:2). Yet it has been seen that God instructed the institution and continuance of the Levitical sacrificial system until the death of Jesus Christ. It was seen that the value of the sacrifices in the Tabernacle and in the Temple lay in the fact that they pointed forward to Jesus Christ; ". . . which was a figure for the time then present" (Heb. 9:9); "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Gal. 3:24).

It was stated that until Christ came, "the way into the holiest" was not open (Heb. 9:8); that Christ opened "the way into the holiest" "through the veil" of "his flesh" (Heb. 10:10); that "he entered in once into the holy place" (Heb. 9:12); and therefore He invites mankind to "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16).

It has been found, also, that each covenant required the services of

a mediator. Under the old covenant, the priest--the mediator--was a man, a son of Aaron. Under the New Covenant, the Priest--Mediator--is the God-Man, the Son of God.

It has been observed that the Aaronic priests were sinful and needed to offer sacrifices for their own sins; that they offered "the same sacrifices" repeatedly (Heb. 10:11); that their sacrifices could not take away sins; that their value lay in the fact that they typified Christ; and that the priests served briefly and died.

Further, the idea has been presented that the Lord Jesus Christ, the King-Priest of the order of Melchisedek, was without blemish and did not need to offer sacrifice for Himself; that He offered one offering; that it was sufficient to take away sin (Heb. 9:26, 28); that His priesthood is eternal and unchanging (Heb. 13:8); and, therefore, that He obtained eternal salvation for His people, which means that He, and He alone, offers an eternal cleansing that opens the way for an eternal fellowship between God and man.

It was observed that sin--all sin that is renounced--is cleansed by the blood of Christ, whether it be sin under the Mosaic Covenant, or sin under the New Covenant. The author of Hebrews believed that salvation was provided for those who lived under the Mosaic Covenant, for he wrote:

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (9:15).

The transgressions are spoken of as "the transgressions that were under the first covenant." The phrase is general in its application. It includes all transgressions committed on the basis of Law, all transgressions against the revealed will of God made known as Law . . . .<sup>10</sup>

The author of Hebrews believed that salvation was provided for those living under the New Covenant, for he wrote: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all" (10:10).

The death of Christ fulfilled two distinct purposes. It provided an atonement for past sins; and, besides that, it provided an absolute ratification of the Covenant with which it was connected.<sup>11</sup>

Eternal salvation (9:15) was granted to those under the first covenant, according to the Scripture. This eternal salvation, which is as everlasting as Christ Himself, will be enjoyed by God's people forever. To this truth John the Beloved spoke: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God" (21:3).

The sacrifice and High-Priesthood of Christ, prefigured by the sacrifices and priests of the Mosaic Covenant, provides cleansing, it makes possible the entering into "rest" and fellowship with God here, and this fellowship will continue throughout eternity.

The reiterated principle, therefore, is: Christ's sacrifice

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

provides cleansing for men under both the Mosaic and the New Covenants, and this cleansing makes possible an eternal fellowship with Him.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The method of this investigation was a library research of authorities that were available in the libraries of The Western Evangelical Seminary, The Western Baptist Seminary, Pasadena College, and also the personal library of Dr. Frank Carver of Pasadena.

The study was an inquiry into the cleansing that was provided under the Mosaic Covenant as it is set forth in the Book of Leviticus, and the cleansing that was provided under the New Covenant as it is articulated in the Epistle to the Hebrews and other related New Testament Scriptures. In order to understand the cleansing that God granted under each covenant, a study was made of the sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant and the Sacrifice of the New Covenant.

Chapter two presented an analysis of sacrifice and cleansing under the Mosaic Covenant in which the purpose of the Levitical sacrificial system was studied with a view to determining both the strength and the weakness of the system. As to the strength of the system, it was observed that: The sacrifices that were offered had merit because they pointed to Christ; therefore they became the means whereby God was able to provide atonement --for--

givenness and cleansing--to the worshippers. The Mosaic Covenant helped to maintain righteousness in the nation of Israel, and reminded the people of their past blessings. In regard to the weakness of the Levitical sacrificial system, the following was noted: The tabernacle system of worship provided for only limited fellowship between men and God, the Mosaic Covenant was only temporary, the Levitical priests were human, temporary, and themselves in need of an atonement. The sacrifices were offered repeatedly. The need for a New Covenant was seen. It was shown that the Mosaic Covenant pointed toward the New Covenant.

The third chapter presented the ideas of sacrifice and cleansing as they are recorded in the Book of Leviticus. The tabernacle itself, its furnishings, its sacrifices, its priesthood, its festivals, and especially the Day of Atonement, were found to be vital to atonement under the terms of the Mosaic Covenant. The relationship of sacrifice to cleansing was discovered to be vital. The cleansing of man was seen to be a requirement of God that was fully provided for in His plan of atonement.

In the fourth chapter, sacrifice and cleansing under the terms of the New Covenant were analyzed. The need of a New Covenant was observed. The New Covenant was studied as to its purpose, its Sacrifice, and the cleansing that its Sacrifice provided.

Chapter five dealt with sacrifice and cleansing under the New Covenant according to the teachings of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Christ was

seen to be the eternally begotten Son of God, the revelation that was higher than that which came through the prophet's messages, and the Mediator of the New Revelation. He was found to be superior to the angels, superior to the material universe, and the fulfillment of man's hopes. He was pictured as superior to Moses and Joshua, and to have met every qualification of the priesthood. He was depicted as the Priest of the Order of Melchisedek, thus performing a greater ministry than that performed by the Aaronic priests. The objectives of Christ's atonement were listed. His death was found to be essential to cleansing. Cleansing was seen to be a Divine requirement.

The Mosaic Covenant and the New Covenant were compared and contrasted in chapter six. Points of similarity and points of difference between the two covenants were noted. It was seen that the two covenants were similar in that cleansing was the objective of each. Both covenants had a tabernacle, an altar, a priesthood, a sacrifice, a Day of Atonement, a rest, and an atonement by means of blood shedding that procured cleansing. Under both covenants obedience and faith were found to be necessary on the part of the worshippers. God was the initiator of both covenants. The differences between the two covenants were presented. Under the New Covenant, there was a greater Tabernacle, a greater Sacrifice, and a greater Priest. God's law is written in men's hearts under New Covenant terms. It was discovered that Christ needed to offer Himself but once; that by means of His sacrifice the way into the Most Holy Place is forever opened. It was also observed that cleansing

was made possible by a sacrifice under each covenant. It was noted that God granted forgiveness and cleansing under the Mosaic Covenant and this premise was supported by many Scriptures from the Book of Leviticus. It was found that men's sins are atoned for and they are cleansed under the terms of the New Covenant. This contention was supported by Scripture from the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Mosaic Covenant sacrifices were shown to bear a likeness to a bank note that could be deposited in heaven's bank as the worshipper sought for cleansing; such sacrifices--bank notes--were laid up against the account that Christ fully paid at Calvary. Hebrews 9:15 was seen to be especially clear in teaching that sins committed under the Mosaic Covenant, as well as sins committed under the New Covenant, were fully expiated by the Lord Jesus Christ.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

1. Cleansing was essentially the same under both covenants even though there was a variation in the sacrifices.

2. An appreciation of the majestic might of the Lord Jesus Christ is greatly increased by the realization that He, and He alone, cleanses the soul. To realize that Christ provided atonement at the cross for sin under both the Mosaic and New Covenants adds immeasurably to an understanding of the work that He did there. In humility it is said that He is indeed the Mighty Conqueror.



3. There is a great emphasis upon works in the Book of Leviticus but this emphasis does not preclude the idea of faith.

4. A careful searching of the Book of Leviticus and the Epistle to the Hebrews resulted in the belief that God did not provide for any spiritual cleansing under either the Mosaic Covenant or the New Covenant without first requiring a sacrifice. The death of a sacrifice and the shedding of its blood were necessary to provide an atonement that would permit cleansing.

5. The three elements of sacrifice, cleansing, and fellowship existed in both the Mosaic and the New Covenants. In regard to these elements being involved in the terms of the New Covenant, it becomes apparent that one of the classic New Testament Scripture passages on Holiness contains the three elements: ". . . Jesus that he might sanctify . . . suffered . . . . Let us go forth therefore unto him . . . ." (Hebrews 13:12-13).

6. God's love, mercy, and patience with mankind sound through all the sacrifices of Leviticus and center upon Christ Jesus in a crescendo of benevolence that directs itself toward humanity. God has invested Himself in the welfare of mankind in order to redeem men from all sin so that they may fellowship with Him and enjoy Him forever.

### III. RECOMMENDED FURTHER STUDY

The ideas of confession and repentance have not been adequately dealt with in this study and should be pursued at great length. The fact that

the word "repentance" does not appear in the Book of Leviticus is reason for investigating further the religious experience of the Hebrew under the Mosaic Covenant to ascertain to what degree a spirit of contriteness for sin and a turning away from sin was required of him.

The idea of faith should be investigated further inasmuch as the word does not appear in the Book of Leviticus. An attempt should be made to determine to what extent faith was a condition of salvation under the Mosaic Covenant.

The words "pray" and "prayer" do not appear in the Book of Leviticus. A study into the problem of prayer in Leviticus could prove beneficial.

No mention is made of a future life in Leviticus. The word "heaven" appears once (Lev. 24:19) and is used in connection with the idea of contemporary judgment. The thought of eschatology seems to be completely omitted. An investigation into this realm might answer the question, "Why was this important doctrine not included in Leviticus?"

A study into the problem of praise in worship in the Book of Leviticus could be rewarding. The word "praise" appears only once (Lev. 19:24). Does this indicate that there was no joy in the Hebrew religion?

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