

G. E. Marsh,
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SIN

A TREATISE

Dealing with the Meaning and Source of Sin,
and its Relation to Law, Guilt, Conscience,
Death, Animal Sacrifice, the Sacrifice
of Christ, Forgiveness, and
Ultimate Salvation

*Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a
reproach to any people. Prov. 14:34.*

By A. H. ZILMER
Editor and Publisher of The Faith
and Author of various works

Published by the Author
Morrilton, Arkansas
508 W. Church Street

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PREFACE

This booklet is the result of years of earnest and prayerful study of the subject with which it deals. It is constructive in character. It was not originally written for the public eye, but to preserve for personal use the results of study. The object in view in its publication is to present briefly, and yet as clearly as possible, what the Bible teaches concerning the question of sin. This does not mean that the subject is by any means exhausted, but only that the outstanding teaching of the Scriptures is presented. The prolonged study of this subject was not without vast personal benefit; and if the reader receives a tithe as much good from its perusal as came to the writer in its composition, the labor involved will be amply repaid. It is offered to the Father in heaven as a tribute of gratitude for His great love in giving His Son for the salvation of men, and dedicated to His children as a contribution toward an understanding of the subject herein presented. May it please God to accept the offering, and grant His blessing so that great good may come from it!

What place does the subject of this treatise hold in the divine plan of redemption? The points of contact are not a few. Sin and its remedy entered very largely and essentially into the preaching of the apostles to those without. Sin is dealt with, not as a theory, but as a fact; not as a physical condition, but as an act that leaves its blot upon the conscience, and is the cause of estrangement from God; and the divine wisdom made provision for its removal by remission, forgiveness, blotting out, washing away. Seven times does it appear in the apostolic message to those without, both Jews and Gentiles: At Jerusalem (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31); at the house of Cornelius, a Gentile (Acts 10:43); to the Jews at Antioch in Asia Minor (Acts 13:38); to Saul of Tarsus (Acts 22:16), and to "the people and the Gentiles" everywhere (Acts 26:18). Besides this it is found many times in the apostolic writings to the churches as a matter of teaching by the apostles, and of experience on the part of those addressed (Rom. 3:23-26; 4:1-10, 25; II. Cor. 5:19; Eph. 1:7; 4:32; Col. 1:14; 2:12, 13; 3:13; Titus 3:5; Heb. 1:3; 8:12; 10:17, 18; I. Peter 3:18; II. Peter 1:9; I. John 2:2, 12; 3:5; 4:10; Rev. 1:5). Thus it was preached in Jesus' name in accordance with that which "behooved" or was necessary to be done. Since this was to be done "among all nations," its necessity is quite as urgent to-day as it was at the "beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). It will be worth the reader's while to carefully look up the foregoing references.

Author.

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CHAPTER I.

Sin Defined

IN dealing with any question of importance touching the subject of religion, that of sin among others, it is necessary, in fact, it is indispensable, that there be a clear understanding of the terms employed, in order to obviate misunderstanding and confusion. Therefore in discussing the present subject we shall define as clearly and as fully as possible the terms used, and in doing so shall avail ourselves of every legitimate means at hand, both lexical and scriptural, to obtain such definitions.

Lexical Definitions

Since certain meanings attach to the English words found in the Bible, and having to do with the subject in hand, it is necessary, first of all, to define these, and thereafter those of other languages.

The word "sin" as it is in use in the English language is lexically defined as "any want of conformity to or transgression of a rule of rectitude or duty; disagreement in thought, word, deed, or desire, whether by omission or commission, with that rule." Compare the Latin *sons*, guilty.

The Greek word translated "sin" is *hamartia*, whose primary meaning is missing, failure, or fault. The verb *hamartano*, from which it was derived, means to miss the mark, as a spear thrown; also to miss the road, the idea being to fail of doing, miss one's point, go wrong; to fail of having; to lose, to do wrong, err; also to speak wrong, to sin in word.

As regards the "missing," we cite as most appropriate the words of the apostle Paul, "For all have sinned and *come short* of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Either they aimed too low, and so missed the mark, or else were unable from other causes to reach it. They sinned (*hamartano*), and so missed the mark.

It is clear that *hamartia* means either doing that which is forbidden, or leaving undone that which should be done, i. e., in its primary signification sin consists of acts either of commission or omission.

In the Hebrew we have the words rendered "sin," viz., *chet*, *chattah*, and *asham*. The two former of these mean sin, error, failure, and the last one, guilt. The word *chata* is translated "miss" in Judges 20:16: "Among all this people there are seven hundred men; everyone could sling stones at an hair's breadth, and not miss" (*chata*). This throws a flood of light upon the meaning which attaches to these words. Here, too, we note that the word relates to action of a kind involving failure to reach a mark.

Objectively the "mark" which is missed when sin is committed is the divine rule of right by which human action is to be governed. What this rule is will be considered later.

Subjectively we may say that every appetite, faculty, power or propensity possessed by the human being is still "very good" for the purpose in view in the creation, that is, when properly used. But to indulge these powers contrary to the law of well-

being is wrong use, missing the mark set by the Creator: sin.

Sin Scripturally Defined

There are several scriptural definitions of sin which are clear and to the point, and we shall consider these:

1. "All unrighteousness is sin" (I. John 5:17). The context of this passage shows that the "sin" here referred to consists of some act either of commission or omission. "If a man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death. I do not say he shall pray for it" (verse 18). The phrase "sin a sin" shows beyond doubt that the sin is some overt act. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous" (chapter 3:7). Righteousness being conformity to the divine rule of action, unrighteousness is action contrary to that rule.

2. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). In this case, too, the sin consists of action contrary to the divine rule of right. "And he that doubteth is damned (that is, condemned of his conscience) if he eat, because he eateth not of faith." Then comes the statement, "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Therefore every act which does not proceed from faith must be placed in the category of sin because it misses the mark set by the divine rule.

3. We now come to a definition which deals with sin as an act of commission, the doing of that which is clearly forbidden. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law" (Greek, sin is *anomia*, lawlessness.—I. John 3:4). To transgress is to go over or beyond the bounds which have been placed by the rule of right. In this case the line is between righteousness and unrighteousness, between right action and wrong action. Law is a rule of action, and to transgress is to overstep the bounds set by that rule.

4. Another scriptural definition, negative in character, deals only with omission, and reads, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Such sin, though perhaps not as flagrant or grievous as overt acts of commission, is nevertheless sin, that is, non-conformity to right, and so falls short of the mark.

That sin in the broadest sense includes evil thoughts and desires favorably entertained is clear from the words of Jesus, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that *whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart*" (Matt. 5:27, 28). Adultery being a very grievous form of sin, the very thought of it, with intent to put it into execution, is sinful, and adultery has already been committed "in the heart," that is, mentally. Not in vain did Jesus say, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications," etc. (Matt. 15:19). Hence, as the wise man so appropriately warned, "Keep the heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23).

Secondary uses of "Sin"

There are several other uses made in Scripture of the word "sin," which are secondary in their nature.

1. We read of one having been "shapen in iniquity," and "conceived in sin" (Psa. 51:5); and of another who was said to have been "altogether born in sins" (John 9:34). The words "sin" and "sins" here manifestly refer to a state of guilt produced by sinning. The parents having sinned, the children were regarded as being the product of such sin.

2. Then there is the use of the word sin which is styled "metonymy," and is found, for instance, in Rom. 7:17, 20, where the apostle said, when personifying a Jew convicted by his conscience of having transgressed the divine law, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." As we examine the subject in its bearings, we find that the "sin" which dwelt in him consisted of the natural desires of the flesh unlawfully entertained, and elsewhere in this chapter styled, "the motions of sins," which "did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death" (verse 5).

Again, he spoke of "another law in my members warring against the law of my mind," etc. (verse 23). The "motions of sins," above referred to, were defined as well as stimulated to action by the law. They "were by the law" (verse 5). When the law said, "Thou shalt not," they said, "But I will."

By "metonymy" is meant a "figure of speech that consists of the naming of a thing by one of its attributes or accompaniments; thus 'the ermine' is used for 'the bench of judges'; 'the bottle' for 'drunkenness.'" In the matter under consideration the natural desires of the flesh, given by the Creator, are referred to as "sin that dwelleth in me." Not that they are actual sin, or transgression of law, but where unlawfully entertained they lead to it, and are the cause of it. Therefore by metonymy they are styled "sin," or "sin that dwelleth in me."

3. Another such secondary use of the word sin is to be found in passages such as the following:

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (Greek, *sarkos hamartias*, flesh of sin, or flesh that can commit sin), and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). The marginal reading has, "by a sacrifice for sin," instead of merely "for sin," as in the text. Because the sacrifice of Christ was made on account of sin (of which we shall see more later), therefore the word "sin" is used instead of "sacrifice for sin."

Christ was "Made Sin For Us"

The same remark applies to II. Cor. 5:21 and Heb. 9:28, which read thus: "For He hath *made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin*; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The manifest intent of these passages is to represent Christ as a sacrifice for sin, which is in the fullest accord with the teaching of Scripture throughout. Thus when it is said that Christ was "made sin for us," the meaning manifestly is that He was made a sin offering. This is particularly emphasised by the fact, appearing everywhere in Scripture, and also in II. Cor. 5:21, the He "knew no sin," and was "without sin." And in Heb. 9:28, where it is said that He will "appear without sin,"

the fact is that He appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. When He appears the second time, it will be "without sin," that is, without such sacrifice. This is the reading of the passage adopted by the *Emphatic Diaglott*, and others, what Jesus did "once" (Greek, *hapax*, once for all), when He made the sacrifice of Himself for sin, this He will never do again. Therefore His second appearing will be without a sin offering. There are many passages in the Old Testament which have either the Hebrew word *chattah* or the Greek word *hamartia* for sin offering. Under the Mosaic law, when the transgressor brought his offering to the priest, and he laid his hand on the head of the sin offering, confessing his sin, the animal became the man's sin. So when our sins were laid upon Christ He became our sin, and was treated as a sinner when He was not such.

Other Terms used to denote Sin

Besides the foregoing we find a number of other terms which come under the head of Sin. These are as follows:

1. Errors. "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7). "Errors" is a translation of the Greek word *agnoematon*, which properly signifies sins of ignorance (See Lev. 4:1-35).
2. Evil deeds, evil doing (I. Peter 3:17; II. John 11).
3. Iniquity. "Whose iniquities are forgiven" (Acts 3:26; Rom. 4:7).
4. Offense and offenses. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). "But the free gift is of many offenses unto justification" (chapter 5:16).
5. Transgression. "Whoso committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law" (I. John 3:4).
6. Trespass. "That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (II. Cor. 5:19). "And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).
7. Ungodliness. "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:26, 27). "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts" (Titus 2:14; Jude 15).
8. Unrighteousness. "All unrighteousness is sin" (I. John 5:17). "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I. John 1:9).
9. Wickedness. "God saw the wickedness of man, that it was great in the earth" (Gen. 6:5). "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (I. John 5:19). "Repent of this thy wickedness" (Acts 8:22).

Having thus defined, or learned the definitions of, the word "sin" and kindred terms, we shall use these definitions as occasion shall require as a working basis in the treatment of sin and its remedy.

CHAPTER II.

Sin in Relation to Law

IT is an axiom of scriptural teaching that "by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). The same truth appears in a number of other passages. "For where no law is, there is no transgression" (chapter 4:15). "Nay, I had not known sin but by the law, for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (chapter 7:7). "The strength of sin is the law" (I. Cor. 15:56).

Law is a rule of action prescribed by supreme authority. If it be true that "where no law is, there is no transgression," it is equally true that there can be no law without a lawgiver. The supreme Lawgiver is God, of whom it is said, "There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy" (James 4:12). To save in this case is either to preserve in life, or restore to life; and to destroy is to take away, or withhold life. As the "one Lawgiver" God is "able" to do both. He has both the power and the authority to do this. When He gives a law as a rule of action for His intelligent creatures, He has the right to enact such a rule, demand obedience thereto, bestow rewards for such obedience, and visit punishments upon the disobedient, as well as remit sins upon compliance with necessary conditions.

God's Character and Attributes

As to God's character, and His attitude toward sin, it is a matter of divine revelation that He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and that He cannot look upon iniquity (Hab. 1:13). Upon the other hand, "He loveth righteousness and judgment" (Psalm 33:5), not as abstract principles merely, but He desires to see these exhibited in the lives of His intelligent creatures. His throne is established upon "justice and judgment" (Psalm 89:14), and as the Judge of all the earth (Gen. 18:25) He cannot do otherwise than require that men engage in the practice of these principles.

God's law is the expression of His character and His attributes. In His relations with men and the enactment of laws for the regulation of their conduct He can no more deny His attributes than He can deny either His word or His oath. His counsel is immutable (Heb. 6:13), and so are His attributes and the principles of His law. Such is the "one Lawgiver, who is able to save, and to destroy."

God's right to make laws for the regulation of the actions of man upon the earth cannot be questioned, being based upon two considerations, viz., (1) the fact that He is the Creator, and (2) that He is the Possessor as well as Lord of heaven and earth. He made all things (Gen. 1:1; Matt. 11:25; Acts 17:24, 25) and is the Possessor of all things. His are not only the silver and gold (Hag. 2:8), and the cattle upon a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10); but "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). As such Creator, Possessor and Lord of the universe He needs to do nothing that has not already been done to acquire proprietorship over man, and with it the right to command what

man shall do or not do. Nor need man do anything to give the Creator the right to command him to serve Him. When He "commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:31), He does this because it is His prerogative to so command, and it is right that men should repent of their misdeeds. When He visited divers heavy judgments upon certain parts of the earth under the figure of the sixth angel's trumpet, as a result of which "the third part of men" were slain (Rev. 9:12-16). He exercised His sovereign authority, and the reason for the infliction of such judgments was not because of mutual agreements between them and God, which they had not kept, but because men in those parts did not repent of their idolatry, lasciviousness, sorcery, and covetousness, when they were called upon to do so (verses 17-21).

Jesus is Lord of all

Besides this it must be borne in mind that in order that Jesus might exercise the right to give eternal life to men, it was necessary for Him to be invested with "power over all flesh" (John 17:2). This power was given to Him by His Father. Just before His ascension He gave command to His followers to go and teach all nations, baptizing those so taught into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This command is founded upon the fact that "all authority in heaven and earth" had been given to Him (Matt. 28:18-20).

The apostle Peter twice referred to this lordship of Jesus. The first time was on the day of pentecost, when he said to a large assemblage of Jews, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). The second time was when addressing a company of Gentiles at the house of Cornelius, when he said that Jesus is "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). The apostle Paul showed upon what basis Jesus had acquired such lordship: "For to this end Christ both died and lived, that He might be Lord both of dead and living" (Rom. 14:9).

Thus we see that both Jews and Gentiles were informed in the apostolic preaching of the lordship of Jesus over them; and this was not because of anything they might do, or would do, but because of what He had already done. From this we see that the right to command men to repent of their sins, turn to God, and serve Him, is one which has its source in God, the Creator, Possessor and Lord of all things, and was by Him delegated to Jesus Christ, whom He exalted to this position on account of His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross (Eph. 1:19-22; Phil 2:8-11).

CHAPTER III.

The Cause of Sin: Lust

THAT sin arises from lust, otherwise called "desire," appears from what has already been considered. However, it is necessary that we enter more fully into the matter. "Lust" is a translation of the Greek word *epithumia*. This is also rendered "desire," as when Jesus said, "With desire have I desired to eat this passover before I suffer" (Luke 22:15); or when the apostle Paul wrote, "Having the desire to depart and be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23). Whether translated "desire" or "lust," the basic idea of *epithumia* is a wish, longing or craving for some object, together with an impulse toward action for its possession.

The Source of Lust

Whence is it? Upon the basis of the scriptural teaching lust, or desire, has its seat in the flesh. We cite a number of testimonies which deal especially with this point.

"Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (verse 24).

"We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh" (Eph. 2:3).

Thus it is seen that lust has its seat and source in the flesh. Broadly speaking, lust is desire extending toward objects which promise pleasure, whether they be food, drink, money, apparel, or indulgence of the passions. Men can lust after evil things (I. Cor. 10:6); and they can lust after good (See Deut. 12:15, 20, 21).

It is also taught that lust comes out of the heart; that is, it is a mental state with physical desires for its background. "God gave them up to uncleanness through the lust of their own hearts" (Rom. 1:24, 27). Then we have a characteristic statement of Jesus speaking of the heart as the source of evil thoughts and deeds. "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come out of the heart; and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man" (Matt. 15:18-20). Though the source of lust, the craving for indulgence, is primarily in the natural appetites and desires of the flesh, there is the reflex effect of such craving upon the mind, that is to say, the mind is conscious of such craving, and reflects upon the pleasure to be derived from the indulgence of those desires. This brings into action the moral faculties, and especially the judgment, which must decide the question of right and wrong, and say the final "yes" or "no" where the law says, "Thou shalt not."

When we consider some of the scriptural testimony relating to the human will, we see what a powerful factor it is in the commission of sin, or the doing of righteousness. A man can "will to do His (God's) will" (John 7:17); to serve the Lord (Josh. 24:15); to live godly in Christ Jesus (II. Tim. 3:12);

he can be willingly ignorant of certain things (II. Peter 3:5); he can will not to come to Christ (Matt. 23:37); not to have life (John 5:40)—all because he has "power over his own will" (I. Cor. 7:37). He can yield himself as a servant of sin unto death, or to obedience unto righteousness, and in the end obtain eternal life (Rom. 6:19-22).

The heart presents another interesting feature of our subject. Out of the heart as a treasure house can come good things, as well as evil (Matt. 12:35; 15:18, 19). With the heart man believes unto righteousness (Rom. 10:10); and there is also an evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12). There is obedience from the heart (Rom. 6:17); and the fool says in his heart, "There is no God" (Psalm 53:1). It is possible to understand with the heart (Acts 28:27); and there is a foolish heart which is darkened (Rom. 1:21). There is a true heart with which men draw near to God (Heb. 10:22); and there is a deceitful heart which is deperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). From the foregoing we see that the heart, as used in passages speaking of the lusts of the heart, cannot be thought of except in connection with the intellect, the mind.

Tempted when drawn of Lust

James most clearly defined temptation, and traced its connection with lust, sin and death. He would vindicate God from the imputation of tempting anyone to do evil, and said, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:13-15). We note here the following sharply defined points:

1. That God does not tempt any one to do evil.
2. That every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.
3. That lust conceived brings forth sin.
4. That sin when finished brings forth death.

We would note especially items 2 and 3. The former shows "when" a man is tempted, viz. "when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." From this we see that without lust there can be no temptation; and it is lust that draws or attracts the subject toward some forbidden object. The desire for permitted objects is not sin, though the psychological process with such desire is precisely the same as with lust for that which is forbidden. The sole difference is whether the object is permitted or forbidden.

Lust when it hath Conceived

Lust conceived brings forth sin. Although there may be desire for some forbidden object, yet sin does not become a fact until "lust hath conceived." What is this conception of lust? In the ordinary usage of the term, conception comes from the union of two elements, the male with the female. In the case with which we are dealing there is a union between two mental faculties, and there are two mental processes. The first of these is the judgment. Man as a rational being ordinarily engages in actions which his judgment approves. By

this we mean that he somehow justifies such acts as right. Once the judgment approves, one more element is necessary to effect the conception, that is, the will. When the judgment approves, and the will resolves to carry the desire into execution, then the union is complete, conception takes place, and sin as an act of transgression against the divine law is the child that is brought forth.

The Pleasures of Sin

It is said of Moses that when he was come to years he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:24, 25). Every form of indulgence of the natural desires, whether permitted or forbidden, affords some pleasure, gratification of mind, or satisfaction. We enjoy many things which come into our consciousness through the five senses: the beautiful things we *see*, the good things we *hear*, the sweet things we *taste*, the pleasant things we *smell*, and the grateful warmth or cooling breezes we *feel*. And such enjoyment, so long as it is within the bounds of right, is entirely proper. But when we look with satisfaction upon that which is forbidden, listen to that which is debasing, or employ with pleasure any of the other senses, such gratification is "pleasure of sin," or pleasure derived from sinning.

Desire is not Necessarily Evil

The desire, on the part of our first parents, for food and for knowledge, and the admiration of that which was beautiful, was not of itself evil; but when the divine law said, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil," then the desire for all that it contained and promised tended toward evil. Even so it is now. The desire for the necessities of life, and even luxuries, is not wrong; but when such desire leads to the taking, by stealth or force, of that which rightfully belongs to another, it is sin. Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman within the bonds of wedlock is not wrong, and, in certain circumstances, is both permitted and necessary; but the desire for such indulgence outside these lawful limits is base lust, and its execution a most heinous sin. Thus we see that certain desires, which are of themselves in every way legitimate and permissible, come in the category of "lust" when fixed upon forbidden objects, or when entertained outside the proper bounds, and tend toward sin.

Every Man's Sin is due to His own Lust

"Every man's" sin is, in the last analysis, traceable to his "own lust," which draws him toward some forbidden object. Whatever another may do to bring to his attention that which is forbidden, the lust which draws and entices him is, in every case, his own, and not that of another. The other may make that which is forbidden appear ever so desirable, but the lust which draws him in the direction of the sinful act is his own.

Adam's Sin

Since this is true of "every man," it must have been true of the first man who sinned—Adam. The tree of knowledge,

though made by the Creator, and "very good," was forbidden by the divine law. It had three desirable qualities, which must have appealed with considerable force to Adam: (1) It was a tree "good for food"; (2) it was "pleasant to the eyes" (margin, "a desire of the eyes"); (3) it was "a tree to be desired" because it possessed the quality to "make wise," or give "knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 3:6). For all these Adam as an earthy being must have felt a desire before he would eat of the tree. He was made by the Creator with both the desire and the need for "meat," or food (Gen. 1:29). He was endowed with the aesthetic sense to admire that which was "pleasant to the eyes." And he must have felt within him the craving for knowledge suited to his intellect, of which knowledge, owing to inexperience, he had very little. It would be quite natural for a being with desires such as these, imparted by the Creator Himself, and inwoven in his nature, to gratify these, if such gratification lay within the range of possibility.

Sin Defined by Law

Here, too, we observe, that it was law that determined what was right, and what was wrong. Had there been no law to circumscribe Adam's actions, there would have been no such thing as sin, otherwise styled "Adam's transgression" (Rom. 5:14). But indulging his "very good" natural desires by eating of a "very good" tree, which, however, had been forbidden, he became guilty of an act which is scripturally defined as "sin," "disobedience," "transgression," and "the offense"; and in due time sin, when it was finished, brought forth its inevitable result—death: "And he died" (Gen. 5:5).

This involves a principle which is as old and as unchangeable as are the attributes of the Eternal—a law which always was the same, and never can be changed. "Every man" as an earthy being, whether Adam, the first man, or the latest descendant of his, is "tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived," by the union of judgment and will, it "bringeth forth sin."

Adam Need not Sin

When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, in proximity to the forbidden tree, it was not made so that he *must* sin, whether he would or not. Nor was it made so that he *could not* sin, if he willed to do so. Having been endowed with mental and moral faculties, the latter of which are the exclusive possession of rational beings, both his judgment and his will were brought into action when he was placed under the divine law. The desire for food and for knowledge being present, and the prospect of gratification presenting itself, he allowed his judgment, despite the divine law and its penalty, to be influenced and swayed until he saw only good, and no evil, as the result of doing that which had been forbidden. When the judgment approved, and the will, as the executive officer, carried into execution the forbidden act, then sin, transgression of the divine law, became the result.

We are as Adam was

We reach the same result from a specific statement of the apostle Paul identifying us with Adam as an earthy being. "As

is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy" (I. Cor. 15:48). This puts all the earthy ones in the same class and upon the same plane with Adam, the first earthy one, and Adam with them. What they are as earthy beings, such he was. And what he was, such are they in kind, nature, and constitution. If they can be tempted by their divinely given desires, commit sin by indulgence of these, and die, so could he. Since lust, or desire, is the element which, unless controlled, leads to sin in the case of his descendants, they being such as he was, it could not have been otherwise in his case. He sinned, that is, committed the "one offense" (Rom. 5:12, 14, 17, margin): following him, all have sinned, that is, committed "many offenses" (chapter 3:23; 5:16). The underlying cause in all cases is lust conceived by the combination of the approving judgment and the executing will.

CHAPTER IV.

Sin and Guilt

WHERE transgression of divine law takes place, and sin becomes a fact, there a certain state is bound to follow, which is scripturally styled "guilt," or "guilty." In ordinary usage guilt is "the state of one who has transgressed the law, human or divine, and so become liable to its penalty."

That this is the correct view of the case, from the standpoint of the Mosaic law, is evident from many passages in the Pentateuch. Thus we read:

"If a soul sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them; if the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people, then let him bring for his sin which he hath sinned a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin offering," etc. (Lev. 4:2, 3).

"And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and are guilty, then shall the congregation offer a young bullock for the sin" (verses 13, 14).

"When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord his God, which should not be done, and is guilty, he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats; it is a sin offering" (verses 22-25).

"And if any of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and is guilty, then shall he bring his offering for his sin which he hath sinned" (verses 27, 28).

In all these cases, and many more of like nature, the Hebrew word translated "guilty" is *asham*, which properly means guilty. In every case guilt resulted from DOING things "against

the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done," i. e., things which had been forbidden. Such acts, and nothing else, constituted the doers "guilty."

Guilt required Sacrifice

It was on account of such "guilt" that "sin offerings" and "trespass offerings" were required and made (See Lev. 4:3, 14, 23, 24, 28, 29), and thereupon the sins which had been committed were "forgiven" (verses 20, 26, 31, 35; see also chapter 5:10, 16, 18; 6:7).

According to the law embodied in chapters 4 to 6 of the Book of Leviticus it was transgressions "against the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done" that constituted "sin." Such sin brought the transgressors into a state of "guilt." For this God required "sin offerings" or "trespass offerings." When such offerings were made in compliance with the law, the sins were "forgiven," and the disabilities which the law imposed or threatened were averted.

As will be readily seen, no case of guilt was recognized by the law of Moses other than action contrary to the commandments of the Lord; no offering was made for anything else, and nothing else was forgiven, or required forgiveness. There is the most direct and logical connection between the several items: First, sin; then, guilt; next, atonement, or covering, by sacrifice; and lastly, forgiveness.

The New Testament is equally explicit with reference to this question. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Guilt is a matter of action measured by law. The apostle Paul wrote, "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved (or charged) both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin" (Rom. 3:9). What did he mean by the phrase, "under sin"? Let us hear him: "Now we know what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become *guilty before God*," or subject to His judgment (verse 19). Not content with this, the apostle said further, "For there is no difference (between the Jew and the Greek.—chapter 10:12); for *all have sinned*, and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (chapter 3:23, 24). Thus in the New Testament, the same as in the Old, guilt exists where there is sin, or transgression of law, and "remission" relates to "sins that are past" (chapter 3:25).

Likewise condemnation relates to such as are guilty of infraction of the divine law. Jesus said to certain Jews, "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have *condemned the guiltless*" (Matt. 12:7). To condemn the guiltless is to condemn those who have not sinned, and are therefore innocent.

The phrase, "guilty of death," as used by the high priest at the trial of Jesus (Matt. 26:66), meaning "worthy of death," is now obsolete, and no longer enters into use. We find the latter also in Luke 23:15; Acts 23:29; 25:11, 25; 26:31.

CHAPTER V.

Sin and the Conscience

CONSCIENCE is lexically defined as "moral consciousness in general; the activity or faculty by which distinctions are made between right and wrong in conduct or character; the act or power of moral discrimination; ethical judgment or sensibility. In its proper comprehensive use the word conscience covers everything in man's nature that has to do with the decision and direction of moral conduct."

*Need have
no con-
science
with God
or religion*

Adam and Eve were endowed with Conscience

That this moral consciousness, this faculty to distinguish between right and wrong, was part of the mental equipment of the first pair is evident from a number of facts recorded in the transactions in Eden. It is related that after Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden tree, "the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves amongst the trees of the Garden" (Gen. 3:7, 8). Afterward, when called to account, Adam said to the Lord God, "I heard thy voice in the Garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself" (verse 10). Why afraid? Why cover their nakedness? Why hide themselves? Because of the effect produced upon their moral consciousness by doing that which had been forbidden. Their minds, prior to the transgression, were "corrupted" by entertaining unlawful desire (II. Cor. 11:3); and by yielding to such desire, and committing sin, the "mind and conscience" became "defiled" (Titus 1:15). This divinely given moral consciousness being sensitive and impressionable, responded instantly to the effect produced upon the mind by transgression, and a dark blot rested thereon—the consciousness of being transgressors, and the sense of guilt, accompanied by shame and fear. They felt themselves unfit for association with their Creator, and withdrawal from the place of communion immediately followed. Their conscience charged them with having done that which should not have been done; that which had been forbidden by clear and specific command; that which was not necessary, and did not minister to either their happiness or their wellbeing.

*for forgiveness.
I have not God that will atone for my sins, I must atone for them myself, just as when he should die for me.*

"Conscience of Sins"

It cannot be otherwise wherever sin is committed. Where the conscience is not seared sin must inevitably be followed by a "conscience of sins"; an "evil conscience," that is, the consciousness of having done evil. We read in the New Testament of a service under the Mosaic law which "could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience" (Heb. 9:9), and, on the other hand, of the blood of Christ having the power to "purge the conscience from dead works" (verse 14). In chapter 10:2, 3 "conscience of sins" and "remembrance of sins" are used interchangeably. In verse 22 the brethren are admonished to draw near to God "with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water." From all of which we see,

1. That it is sins that produce a "conscience of sins."
2. That such sins are styled "dead works."
3. That the conscience, being thereby defiled, is in need of "purging."
4. That such purging is effected through the blood of Christ.
5. That Christ, through the eternal Spirit, made a spotless offering of Himself to God.
6. That His blood is a most appropriate means to effect such purging of the conscience from wicked works.

CHAPTER VI.

Sin and Death

THROUGHOUT the sacred Scriptures there is an intimate and inseparable relation between sin and death. The explanation of this has its foundation in the fact that God will not perpetuate sin. This being so, then either the sinner must cease to do evil, or else, in order that sin may end in the individual case, the sinner himself must disappear.

We shall consider this matter under headings relating to the different periods in the history of the race.

The first Sinner

Adam was not only "the first man" (I. Cor. 15:45, 47), but also the first transgressor of divine law, and the first to come under the disabilities which that law imposed. Every law, in order to beget respect with a view to its observance, must bear some penalty. By this is meant some pain, punishment or retribution for wrong doing. The record of "Adam's transgression" shows that a penalty was threatened by the law relating to the case. Adam was commanded to eat of all the trees in the Garden of Eden: "but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). This command was probably communicated to Adam alone, but as we follow the record we see that Eve also was cognizant of the divine interdiction. Eve said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the Garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Gen. 3:3). The words, "lest ye die," show very clearly that she was aware of the law and the penalty which it carried with it.

Death, then, would be the final result of eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which act was sin. The record informs us that they did eat of the forbidden tree, in consequence of which the divine displeasure came upon them in the execution of the previously published penalty. God called Adam to account, and after conviction pronounced upon him a sentence containing the following items, viz.,

1. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake."
2. "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee."
3. "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life."
4. "Thou shalt eat of the herb of the field."
5. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground."
6. "For out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and

unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen 3:17-19).

It is evident, as we closely view these items, that they would eventuate in death; for an earthy being, a living soul, such as Adam was, could not return to the dust without first dying. Such, then, was the law which was intended to regulate Adam's actions, and such the penalty which would follow its infraction.

As we further examine the record we find what steps were taken to carry this sentence into execution. The Lord God (that is, the *elohim*, or powerful angelic beings; representing the Most High) said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever, therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3:22-24).

The penalty of the law said, "Thou shalt surely die." The divine sentence addressed to Adam after transgression ended with the words, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The thing done to execute the sentence was nothing else than the expulsion of the transgressor from the Garden of Eden, and his exclusion from the tree of life, the object being, "*lest he eat, and live for ever.*" The ability to "live forever" was not in Adam by creation as an earthy being. He was of a nature to be capable of dying, should the necessity therefor arise. This is also implied in the provision of "meat" or food for his needs (Gen. 1:29). Breath of life (chapter 2:7) and food entered into the requirements of these earthy beings to sustain life. But even though these needs were supplied, they would yet not live forever without some other means to perpetuate their being. This other means was the tree of life, which was also in the midst of the Garden (chapter 2:9). Though they were at liberty to eat of all the trees of the Garden, except the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it does not appear that they ate of the tree of life prior to the transgression. The words, "*lest he take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever*" (chapter 3:22), lead irresistibly to this conclusion. They had eaten of one tree with one result, which was guilt and condemnation to a life of hard toil ending in death; now they must not "also" eat of the other tree with the result of living forever as sinners. Hence their exclusion from the Garden, in the midst of which was the tree of life. To "die," as the law said; to "return to the dust," as the sentence said, and not "live forever," as was said at their exclusion from the Garden with its "tree of life," are one and the same thing. This was the ultimate aim of the divine law as relating to the transgressor. The record is careful to inform us what was the number of "all the days" that Adam lived, which was "nine hundred and thirty years," and then specifically states, "and he died" (Gen. 5:5). "All the days" must therefore date from the time when Adam, by the in-breathing of the breath of life into his nostrils, "became a living soul" (chapter 2:7), and end with the event of death. After he died at the expiry of those nine hundred and thirty years he was no more alive, or a living being, than he had been prior to their commencement.

As far as we are able to gather, the tree of life had the quality to arrest and prevent the breaking down of the tissues of the earthy beings, and so make it possible for them to "live forever." The divine wisdom not only was too wise to make Adam immune against death before he would prove himself worthy of endless life, but also knew what steps to take in order to prevent him from living forever in case he sinned. Nothing was added to Adam in order to cause him to die; and nothing was taken from him. He was simply driven out of the Garden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man" (Gen. 3:23, 24). This is the simple yet tragic story of the first transgression.

No Endless Suffering

Never, in all the history of the race, was there a more fitting time to announce an eternity of suffering, if such was in the divine mind as the desert of sin, as when God declared His law with its penalty to Adam. No sin had yet been committed; no sinner yet existed; no disharmony had yet been introduced into the relation existing between man and his Creator. This was the time to clearly announce the penalty in order, if possible, to deter Adam from sinning. But the record is as silent as the grave concerning such a form of punishment. Neither the law, nor the sentence pronounced upon the transgressor, nor the judicial proceeding in its execution, says a word about endless suffering. "Die," "not live forever," "return to dust"—this is the simple statement of the case; and it is all of it.

True, there would be "sorrow" caused by pain and suffering, (Gen. 3:17); but these were bounded by the days of Adam's life; and since "*all the days*" comprehended nine hundred and thirty years, and he died (chapter 5:5), therefore the sorrow could not exceed the limits of his life.

While the entire matter of Adam's sin and punishment is pathetic, there is nevertheless a fitness in it suited to the wrong done, to the divine attitude toward sin, and also to Adam's nature. God as the "one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy" (James 4:12), could not be otherwise than just in dealing with sin, and the sinner; but He was also merciful in limiting man's suffering to "all the days of his life." He would not inflict endless suffering upon Adam for one act of disobedience, regardless of how far-reaching its consequences would be. Nor would He perpetuate sin by allowing the sinner to live forever. No truer word was ever spoken than that written by the apostle Paul to the church at Rome, "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Adam had rendered service to the master sin, and death was the wages this master paid over to him. And this was just as true when the apostle penned those words as ever in human history. It can never be otherwise so long as the Most High retains His moral attributes, and maintains His moral government over men. He will not perpetuate sin by giving endless life to the sinner.

The Flood

Some of those living contemporary with Noah were so wicked that it grieved God at His heart, and He said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and the fowls of the air" (Gen. 6:5-7). The sequel shows that as the result of the flood "*all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man; all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land died. And every living substance was destroyed* which was upon the face of the ground, *both man, and cattle, and creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were all destroyed from the earth; and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark*" (Gen. 7:21-23). In this case, too, death terminated the life of the sinners, and therewith sin.

Sodom

The Sodomites, who were "wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly" (Gen. 13:13), were visited with divine judgment which swept them from the face of the earth. The Old Testament record tells us that "the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven, that He *overthrew* those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants, and that which grew upon the ground" (Gen. 19:24, 25). Jesus at a later period said, "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and *destroyed them all*" (Luke 17:29). The apostle Peter said in referring to this circumstance, "And *turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow*, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (II. Peter 2:6). This language not only shows that the Sodomites were visited and destroyed with death on account of their excessive wickedness, but holds up this instance as "an example" or "ensample" to others who at a later period would live ungodly (Jude 7).

The Mosaic Law

It is said that under the law of Moses "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2), and that "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses" (Heb. 10:28). Eight of the ten commandments were enforced by means of the death penalty. Death by stoning was inflicted for having any other than the true God (Deut. 13:6, 11); for making graven images (Deut. 27:15); for taking the name of God in vain (Lev. 24:16); for breaking the Sabbath (Exod. 31:14, 15); for disobedience to parents (Deut. 21:18-21); for taking human life (Lev. 24:17, 21); for adultery (Lev. 18:20, 29), and for bearing false witness (Deut. 19:16-20). Truly, as the apostle Paul said, that which was "written and engraven upon stones" was "the ministration of death" (II. Cor. 3:7). It was death, not endless life in misery, which the law visited upon the transgressor.

New Testament Teaching

The New Testament uniformly teaches that sin results in

death. A characteristic passage is one from the writings of James. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14, 15).

The apostle Paul referred to such among Jews and Gentiles as lived lives of profligacy and shame, and said of such, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that *they which commit such things are worthy of death*" (Rom. 1:32). He reminded the brethren at Rome of their former life, and said, "For when ye were the servants of sin ('Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.'—Jesus. John 8:34), ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof now ye are ashamed? *For the end of those things is death*" (Rom. 6:20, 21). It was in this connection that the apostle spoke of death as being "*the wages of sin*" (verse 26). Then we read further:

"*The sting of death is sin. The strength of sin is the law*" (I. Cor. 15:56).

"But the sorrow of the world worketh death" (II. Cor. 7:10).

"*Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*" (James 1:15).

"There is a sin unto death; I do not say he shall pray for it" (I. John 5:16).

This is the story from the beginning to the end of the human race. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

Only then will death be destroyed when sin shall disappear from the earth. Endless life in sin is incompatible with the fitness of things, and with the declared purpose of God in the earth. When God shall be "All in all" (I. Cor. 15:28), then there will be no more sin, and therefore "there shall be *no more death*; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4).

CHAPTER VII.

Sin Before the Law

IN considering this phase of our subject, we start out with the categorical statement of the apostle Paul, "For until the law sin was in the world" (Rom. 5:13). "The law" here referred to manifestly was the Mosaic law, which defined sin. This statement shows that the law was not as old as "the world" and came in later. "The world" is doubtless the world of mankind. Sin being the transgression of law, of which the law, as well as the lawgiver, takes cognizance, it was "in the world" before or "until the law." The record of the dealings of God with men amply proves this. There was not only "Adam's transgression," "the offense of one" (Rom. 5:12, 14, 18), but we find both "sin" and "guilt" strewn all along the path of human history, both before and since the enactment of the law at Sinai.

Cain's Sin

The Lord God said to Cain, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule

over him" (Gen. 4:7). Here we note.

1. It was required of Cain that he "do well."
2. This was the condition of divine acceptance.
3. The sin lying at the door, according to several translations, was transgression lurking at the threshold, seeking entrance.
4. The "he" whose desire was toward Cain, was sin.
5. "Thou shalt rule over him." Leeser's translation reads, "Unto thee is its desire, and thou shalt rule over it."

Again, after the announcement of the divine sentence upon Cain, "A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth," Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear" (Gen. 4:13). Luther's rendering reads, "My sin is greater than that it may be forgiven." If "punishment" be the proper word, then it was for sin committed: if "sin," then it was in keeping with what had been previously said to Cain, and confirms the apostle's statement that "sin was in the world." It began to manifest itself at this early period of human history, and has not yet ceased to run its course.

The Antediluvian World

We next turn for a moment's attention to the antediluvian world. Here we read, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen 6:5). Wickedness in this case is from the Hebrew word *ra*, which means bad, or evil. Men were not wicked from necessity, or because they could not be otherwise; else there could have been no wickedness of which to take cognizance. But, like Cain, they did not "rule over" sin when it lay at the door seeking entrance to their lives; hence the wickedness, which was great. The wickedness was sin, and it was "in the world." The apostle Peter styled some of those who were contemporary with Noah, "the world of the ungodly" (II. Peter 2:5).

Sodom

We read of "the men of Sodom," that they were "*wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly*" (Gen. 13:13) Repeatedly they were spoken of as "wicked" (Gen. 18:23, 25). The "cry" of Sodom and Gomorrah was "great," and their "sin" was "very grievous" (verse 20). The thing which was so grievous to God and so vexing to the righteous soul of Lot, was the "filthy conversation and unlawful deeds of the wicked" (II. Peter 2:7, 8). "Unlawful" means contrary to or in violation of a law. A thing cannot be unlawful unless there be some law which it contravenes.

The Iniquity of the Amorites

God said to Abraham: "*The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*" (Gen. 15:16). This "iniquity" consisted of *avon*, or perversity. From I. Kings 21:26 we gather that this iniquity was a particularly revolting form of idolatry. "He did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel."

Abimelech

God said to Abimelech, king of Gerar, "For I also withheld thee from *sinning against me*; therefore suffered I thee not to touch her" (that is, Sarah.—Gen. 20:6). Abimelech himself recognized that he had been withheld from committing "a great sin" (verse 9). Sin was "in the world." In this case it would have been "against" the Most High, and it was known to Abimelech, king of Gerar, as such.

Other Cases of Sin

A little farther on we find Jacob wroth, and chiding with his father-in-law Laban, and saying, "What is *my tresspass*? what is *my sin*, that thou hast hotly pursued after me?" (Gen. 31:36).

It was said by Joseph's brethren, "We are verily *guilty concerning our brother*, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us" (Gen. 42:21).

In Exodus 10:17 we read of a prayer by Pharaoh, king of Egypt, "I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive me, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat the Lord your God, that He may take away this death from me only." "Sin against the Lord God" existed in the days of Pharaoh, and the king himself acknowledged having committed such, and sought forgiveness.

It is said of Er, Judah's firstborn, that he was "*wicked in the sight of the Lord*," so much so that "the Lord slew him" as unfit to live (Gen. 38:7).

Transgressions and Sins outside of Israel

There are other instances of sin, transgression and guilt outside the nation of Israel since the giving of the Mosaic law, of which the following are examples.

The Lord through Samuel said to king Saul, "And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the *sinner*s the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed" (I. Sam. 15:18).

Then there were "beforetime" the "*children of wickedness*," who were contemporary with Israel after their entry into the land of Canaan, and afflicted them (II. Sam. 7:10; I. Chron. 17:9).

We read of "three *transgressions*" of Gaza, of Tyrus, of Edom, of the children of Ammon, as well as of Judah and Israel (Amos 1:6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4-6). To "transgress" is to cross the boundary between right and wrong. All, whether Israel or other nations, had transgressions, that is, they had transgressed, were guilty, and liable to the divine judgments.

Concerning the nation of Babylon it is said, "Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for *she hath sinned against the Lord*" (Jer. 50:14). Again, God would "punish the iniquity" of the nation of Babylon (Jer. 25:12). "Iniquity" and "sin" were also found in Tyrus (Ezek. 28:11-15).

Besides "the iniquity of the Amorites" (Gen. 15:16), we read of other tribes of Canaan committing "abominations," being "defiled," defiling the land with their "abominable customs" (Lev. 18:22-30), and that God cast them out of the land because of their excessive wickedness, etc. (Lev. 20:23; Deut. 9:4, 5; 18:9-12). We have in the New Testament a reflex of

these wicked practices, and the apostolic comment thereon (Rom. 1:20-32). It cannot be denied that there was a divine standard in the days of those nations of antiquity, as there has been right along, by which human actions were weighed, and divine judgments visited.

The mission of the prophet Jonah to Nineveh is another circumstance which illustrates the same truth. "The word of the Lord came to Jonah," and he was commanded, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me" (Jonah 1:1, 2). Passing over the strange opposition of the prophet and its accompaniments, we find Jonah in the city, and preaching, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (chap. 3:4). It is related that "the people believed God, and proclaimed a fast," etc. (verses 5-9). What was the effect of such preaching? We find in the sayings of Jesus that "the men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonas" (Matt. 12:41). Of what did they repent? It was of the "wickedness" with which they are charged in the Book of Jonah. The Hebrew word for wickedness is *ra*, which means evil or bad when applied to actions.

The people of Nineveh were not Israelites, and hence were not under the Mosaic law. Yet they did that which was wicked or evil in the sight of Jehovah, who threatened to overthrow the city. This judgment was averted by the repentance of the Ninevites. God's right to command people like the Ninevites, who were not under the law, cannot be questioned, seeing it rests upon the fact of creation, and the divine ownership and authority over men.

The Law was Added because of Transgression

Clear beyond all misunderstanding and contradiction is the reference of the apostle Paul to this matter. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). The matter in question is the promise made of God to Abraham and his seed, which is Christ (verse 16), together with those who are Christ's by faith and baptism (verses 26-29). The apostle said that "the law was 430 years after," that is, after the promise made to Abraham (verse 17). "The law" was the Mosaic system of morality and ritual. Being "after," it is evident that it was "added" to the promise made 430 years previously.

However, the point with which we are specially concerned is the cause or reason why the law was added. The apostle was very specific when he said, It was "added because of transgressions." Having already noted that "where no law is, there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15), we ask, "What were the "transgressions" because of which the law was added? Here we have the same conditions previously noticed, viz., (1) that God had made known to Abraham His "charge, commandments, statutes, and laws" (Gen. 26:5), and (2) that Abraham would enjoy these upon his children and his household after him (Gen. 18:19). His posterity transgressed these; and it was because of such transgressions that the law was added to the promise in order to enforce obedience. The very promise embodied a law, as we see by reference to Psalm 105:8-10: "He hath remembered His covenant forever, the word which He

commanded to a thousand generations, which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the same to Jacob *for a law*, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, *Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance.* The words and messages which God sent to the descendants of Abraham did not profit them, "not being mixed with faith in them that heard" (Heb. 4:2). Hence their transgression, and the subsequent addition of the Mosaic law, moral and ceremonial, with its death penalty attached, as a means of enforcing obedience through fear.

Here we have an array of terms denoting wickedness among such as were not under the Mosaic law, of which the Lord God took notice, and for which he punished some with death. Some were before the law, and others contemporary with Israel after the giving of the law. We have "great wickedness" committed by "ungodly" persons; "iniquity," "sin," "trespass," "guilt," and "sin against the Lord God." How did the concept of sin enter into that period of the world's history? Not only did the Most High Himself take cognizance of "sin," "iniquity" and "wickedness" in those persons or nations, but some of these terms entered into the thought and language of such as we style "heathen." The fact is undeniable that "until the law sin was in the world"; and since "by the law is the knowledge of sin," it is certain that it was divine law in some form, and in some manner communicated, that made men conscious of sin.

"Laws" before the Mosaic Law

God testified of Abraham. "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and *my laws*" (Gen. 26:5). Here we discover that there was not only the "voice" of the Lord, but a "charge," "commandments, statutes and laws." And mark, these were not emanations from some human legislative assembly, but the Lord God solemnly declared that they were "MY statutes and laws." Thus they came directly from Him, with all the weight of divine authority. Is it reasonable, is it thinkable, that after the first man sinned against the divine law humanity would be turned loose, as it were, without a divine government or supervision of human affairs, without law or penalty? "God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past" (Heb. 1:1); and His speech related to proper conduct as well as to His purpose in future ages. He who "cannot lie," and cannot deny Himself, neither relinquished His moral government nor changed His attributes; nor was He indifferent toward the actions of the intelligent beings whom He had placed upon the earth. He knew Abraham, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do judgment and justice," etc. (Gen. 18:19). It is impossible to "do judgment and justice" unless there be a standard (and in this case a divine standard) by which to gauge the quality of human actions. This standard is to be found in the divine law. We do not know exactly what some of the "statutes and laws" were which the Most High gave to Abraham in the references above given, but the divine reprobation fell heavily upon nations and individuals on account of idolatry, adultery, and other forms of evil styled "sin." From the earliest dawn of human history to the present moment there was not a time

when God did not require men to "do judgment and justice." He would be untrue to Himself, He would "deny Himself," if He regarded with indifference the course pursued by men. As the "Possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:19, 22), "the Governor among the nations" (Psalm 22:28), always true to Himself in dealing with the sons of men, He never altered the principles of His moral government, although He suited His methods and means to particular times and certain people.

Other instances

We would direct special attention to the case of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee (Luke 3:1), who had married his brother Philip's wife Herodias, for which John the Baptizer convicted Herod of wrong doing (Matt. 14:3, 4; Mark 6:17, 18). John said to the wicked king, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife," and Luke informs us that for this unlawful act he "reproved" Herod (Luke 3:19). This was but one of the many "evils which Herod had done." The Greek word here rendered "reprove" is *elegcho*, which properly means convict. To convict anyone is to prove him guilty of a forbidden act. Of what crime was Herod guilty in marrying and living with his brother's wife? It was adultery. Though Herod was neither a Jew nor a Christian, he was nevertheless living in a state which was "not lawful," not permitted, but forbidden by the law of right and duty coming from God. And when John convicted him of this unlawful act, and reproved him for it, the wicked king instead of mending his ways, confessing his sins, leaving his life of adultery, and being baptized with the baptism of repentance for the remission of these, "added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison" (Luke 3:20). Thus did he rid himself of the unwelcome reproof for his wrongs and seek to stifle his guilty conscience.

Upon what authority did John undertake the hazardous task of convicting a Gentile king of his evil doings? It was because "the word of God came to John" (Luke 3:2), and John was a man "sent from God" (John 1:6). The baptism of John was "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3), and those who were baptized of him (with the single exception of Jesus, who did no sin) "confessed their sins" (Matt. 3:6). This "word of God" which came to John had to do largely with the people's sins, and was not confined to the Jews, but related to all who came within the scope of John's preaching. Thus he preached to the Pharisees and Sadducees, the publicans, some of the Roman soldiers (Luke 3:7, 12, 14), and even a haughty and profligate Gentile king, reproving their wicked deeds, and baptizing for the remission of sins those who "confessed" their wrongs.

We have a pertinent statement from Solomon regarding the hatefulness of sin. While "righteousness exalteth a nation, sin (the opposite of righteousness) is a reproach to any people," or nation (Prov. 14:34). To reproach is to charge with or blame for something wrong or disgraceful, as the violation of a duty, etc. In short, sin is a disgrace, and it is such not to one people merely, but to "any people." There is therefore no justification for any people the wide world over to sin. God most decidedly disapproves of sin wherever it is committed, and no justification for it can be found.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sin since the Law

WE have seen above, not only from the apostolic teaching, but from the Old Testament record as well, that "until the law sin was in the world." Inquiring into the period scripturally defined as "since the law" (Heb. 7:28), we ask, Has sin been in the world during this period? An affirmative answer must be given.

We introduce the language of the apostle Paul in Romans, chapter 3. Here it is said, "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise, for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin." The marginal reading conveys the idea that the apostle "charged" them all with sin. What he meant by the phrase, "under sin," is evident from the further course of his remarks. In verse 19 he says, "Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." "Guilt" arises from transgression of law, otherwise styled "sin." Here we see "all the world," Jews and Gentiles alike, involved in "guilt before God." The margin says that all the world is "subject to the judgment of God." The *Diaglott* says, "amenable to God." Young says, "under justice," that is, divine justice.

Again we read at verses 22 and 23, "For there is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The "all" of this passage are the "all," "both Jews and Gentiles," of verse 9, and "all the world" of verse 19.

We continue: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (verses 24-26).

Archbishop Newcombe translates the passage thus: "Whom God hath set forth as a mercyseat, through faith in His blood, to show His method of justification concerning the remission of past sins, through the forbearance of God; to show, I say, His method of justification at the present time, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus."

Such gratuitous justification is from the "sins that are past," in contrast with "this time" when justification had taken place. (1) The condition of such justification is faith; (2) the object of faith is Jesus Christ, and His blood; (3) its basis, the propitiation made possible, or the mercyseat provided, through the shedding of that blood; (4) its result, "remission of sins that are past," or justification; (5) its scope, "all" who have sinned who believe in Jesus, Jews and Gentiles, without difference or distinction.

It is no wonder therefore that the apostle asked the question, "Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not of the Gentiles also? Yes of the Gentiles also; seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith" (verses 29, 30).

From the foregoing we observe that there neither need be,

nor indeed can be, "remission of sins that are past," no justification for Jews and Gentiles, if there be no sins; if Jews and Gentiles have committed no sins, and hence are not "under sin," as the apostle "charged," and are not "guilty before God."

Of what Sins are all "guilty"?

The question occurs, "of what sin" or "sins" are all "guilty"? The apostle said he had "before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin," that all were "guilty before God," that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

"Before proved" manifestly refers to something the writer had said in the early part of this Epistle. We shall not have far to seek. We read of the "wrath of God" being "revealed from heaven" in the gospel "against all unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (chapter 1:16-18). The word "hold" here means to suppress, hold down. How did they "suppress the truth in unrighteousness"? The context clearly shows: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in (margin, 'to') them; for God hath showed it unto them" (verse 19). The writer then proceeds to show that they had turned away from God to idolatry (verses 20-23), and followed the lusts of their own hearts to almost unmentionable forms of uncleanness and wickedness (verses 24-27). They "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (verse 28). They were "filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, who knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (verses 28-32). Thus did men "suppress the truth in unrighteousness."

Was this said of Believers?

It would appear like a most amazing assertion to affirm that those referred to were members of the church at Rome. In fact, the apostle's statement that their "faith was spoken of throughout the whole world" (chapter 1:8), effectually negatives this, and shows that the members of this church had, at least since their reception, been of a different character than the description given in chapter 1:17-32. Their reputation for morality was most excellent throughout the Roman Empire. Therefore this language can only refer to Jews and Gentiles outside of the pale of the church. Such had sinned, were guilty before God, and in need of the remission of sins provided in the "redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

The World to be Convicted of Sin

Jesus set forth the same truth when He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove (margin, 'convince') the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not in me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 14:7-11). This

authoritative testimony of the Son of God attributes sin to the world—sin of which it was to be convicted by the Holy Spirit.

Condemned because of Unbelief

In line with this is the further declaration of Jesus, "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). As the reader will see from the language, such condemnation "already" is due to no cause other than that he "hath not believed." Of this sin the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, would reprove, convince, or convict, the world after the ascent of Jesus to heaven.

Men are "commanded" to "believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ" (I. John 3:23). This command, the same as the command to repent, is universal. "But now He *commandeth all men everywhere to repent*" (Acts 17:31). The word "command" in this passage is from the Greek *parangello*, occurring thirty times in the New Testament, and is rendered "charge," six times, "command" twenty times, and "declare," "give charge," "give commandment," and "give in charge" each once. Consult Acts 4:18; 5:28, 40; 15:5; 16:18; I. Cor. 7:10; I. Tim. 4:11, as to its import. "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," were "testified" by the apostle Paul "both to the Jews, and also the Greeks" (Acts 20:21).

The Sins of the Whole World

Again, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I. John 2:1, 2). Here are the sins of two classes, viz., "our sins," and "*the sins of the whole world*"; and for both Jesus Christ is "the propitiation." This does not say, nor can it mean, that because Jesus Christ is the propitiation for these sins, therefore both classes will be unconditionally forgiven, or justified. As we saw in Rom. 3:25, He was "set forth to be a propitiation *through faith in His blood*." Where such faith is exhibited, whether in the penitent believer who has sinned, or in one belonging to the "world," be he Jew or Gentile, there the propitiation becomes effective in securing to the individual remission of sins or justification, so that righteousness instead of trespass is imputed to him. And it is his faith, like that of Abraham, that is counted to him for righteousness.

That Gentiles as well as Jews are sinners is a fact arrived at, not by a laborious process of reasoning, of setting up premises, and drawing conclusions, but from direct scriptural testimony. Said the apostle Paul, "We who are Jews by nature, and not *sinners of the Gentiles*, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:15, 16). Gentiles as well as Jews are sinners requiring justification from sins, thus corroborating the apostle's teaching that "all have sinned," and "all the world" is "guilty before God."

Christ died for the Sins of the Gentiles

The apostle reminded the brethren at Corinth that they

had been "Gentiles, carried away by these dumb idols," even as they were led (I. Cor. 12:2). To them he had delivered "first of all," or among the first things, that which he also had received, viz., "how that *Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures" (chapter 15:1-3). The phrase, "*our sins*," shows that the Corinthian Gentiles had had sins as well as the Jew Saul of Tarsus, or any other Jew; and it was just as necessary for Christ to die for the sins of one class as for those of the other. Moreover, the apostle reasoned with these brethren upon the hypothesis laid down by "some among" them, that there is no resurrection. Said he, "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised"; then "your faith is vain! *ye are yet in your sins*" (verses 12-17). In what "sins" would they "yet" be in this case? In those sins for which Christ died according to the Scriptures. And it was "while we were yet sinners" that "Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6, 8).

Gentiles Dead in Trespasses and Sins

Gentile believers at Ephesus were called upon to remember that in time past they had been "Gentiles in the flesh," and as such "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:11, 12). "In time past" when they were such Gentiles they were "*dead in trespasses and sins*," wherein they "walked according to the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom we all had our conversation in time past, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (chapter 2:1-3). The apostle three times in this connection placed such a state of deadness in trespasses and sins together with such conversation and walk, "in time past." "By nature" (Greek, *phusis*, physically, naturally, or by instinct) they were the "children of wrath, even as others." As the apostle elsewhere pointed out, it is "*because of these things that the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience*" (chapter 5:6; Col. 3:6). Such "children of disobedience" and "children of wrath" were they "by nature" in following the "desires of the flesh and of the mind."

In Col. 3:7 the apostle reminded those brethren of the "uncircumcision" that "some time" they had lived in "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (verse 5). It was the habit or custom of the Gentiles to so walk. "This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:17-19). The apostle Peter wrote to the same effect: "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries" (I. Peter 4:3).

Shall we say, in view of the foregoing array of testimony, which might be greatly augmented, that Jews and Gentiles who are not in Christ have no sins which require forgiveness? To

do so would be to go in the face of the most indubitable and incontrovertible evidence. We shall see more about this when we come to consider the remission of sins.

CHAPTER IX.

Sin and Sacrifice

IT is a matter of record in the Scriptures of truth that offerings and sacrifices for sins were required by the divine law. The Lord said to Moses, "*Command Aaron and his sons. This is the law of the burnt offering,*" etc. "This is the law of the meat offering," etc. "This is the law of the sin offering," etc. "Likewise this is the law of the trespass offering," etc. (Lev. 6:9, 14, 25; 7:1). This law was a rule of action coming by direct and specific "command" from the Lord, and was in every way as obligatory upon the children of Israel in cases of sin and trespass as were any of the items of the decalogue. This legal feature also comes to view in the New Testament. "As it is written in the *law of the Lord,*" etc. (Luke 2:23). The ceremonies of the Mosaic ritual were an integral part of "the law of the Lord." The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews said, "If He (Christ) were on earth. He should not be a priest, seeing there are priests that offer *gifts according to the law*" (Heb. 8:4). Again, "Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, *which are offered by the law,* then said He, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (chapter 10:8).

Offerings and Sacrifices on Account of Sins

Such offerings and sacrifices were made because, on account of, and for, sin. This fact appears very clearly from some of the testimonies already considered. "*If a soul sin and . . . is guilty, he shall bring an offering*" (Lev. 4:2, 13, 22-27). While there were more than a dozen kinds of offerings under the law, those which had to do most directly with sin were styled either "sin offerings" or "trespass offerings," which were regulated by special "law" (Lev. 6:25-30; 7:1-10). The law shows that it was "sin against the commandments of the Lord" that constituted persons "guilty"; and it was for sin of this kind that such sin and trespass offerings were required and made. No guilt existed, or was imputed for any other cause, than action of some kind contrary to the commandments of the Lord, and no offering was required for any other cause. We are aware that "atonement" was commanded to be made for the "holy place" and the altar (Exod. 29:36, 39; Lev. 16:8, 16, 18, 20, 33). But why an atonement for places and things which were "holy"? This is explained in a manner most clear and satisfactory. "He shall make an atonement for the holy place, *because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel,* and because of their transgressions in all their sins; and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of *their uncleanness*" (Lev. 16:16). Uncleanness was due in part to contact with objects which were unclean and defiling, such as dead bodies (Lev. 5:2, 3), and in part to per-

sonal transgression. The altar was to be "cleansed and hallowed" "from the uncleanness of the children of Israel" (Lev. 16:19). The "iniquities" and "transgressions of the children of Israel" were to be put upon the head of the scapegoat (verse 21). The people were to be cleansed and thus be "clean" from "all their sins before the Lord" (verse 30). The chapter ends with the announcement, "And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (verse 34). Thus it is shown that it was the sins of the children of Israel or contact with unclean objects that made them unclean, and required them to be "cleansed," and it was for these that offerings were made, and cleansing effected.

Without the Shedding of Blood no Remission

Under the Mosaic economy there was no remission apart from the shedding of blood. As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews said, "Whereupon neither the first testament (covenant) was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, and scarlet-wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament (covenant) which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:18-22). We notice in this extract the following points:

1. That the first covenant was dedicated with blood—the blood of animals.
2. Of this covenant Moses was the mediator.
3. Under it all things were purged, consecrated, or set apart, by means of blood.
4. That without the shedding of blood there was no remission.

Whatever therefore was done in the way of remitting sins was in accordance with this covenant. Since without the shedding of blood there was no remission, we see the fitness of the appellation, "the blood of the covenant," as used by Moses in Exodus 24:5. The Levitical priesthood held its position and performed its functions by virtue of this covenant. Therefore should the covenant ever be changed or abrogated, this would in like manner affect the priesthood existing under that covenant.

Atonement

The word "atonement" is a translation of the Hebrew *kaphar*, which occurs 99 times in the Old Testament, and is translated into English by 13 different words. "Atonement" occurs 70 times in the English Bible, but *kaphar* is also rendered "forgive" 3 times, "be merciful" twice, "pacify" twice, "purge" 9 times, "reconcile" 3 times, and "reconciliation" 4 times. Besides these it is translated "appease," "cleanse," "disannul," "pardon," "pitch," and "put off," each once. Scholars are quite generally agreed that the central thought of the word is "to cover," or "a covering." It may be that this idea was before the mind of the Psalmist when he said, "Blessed is he whose

transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Psalm 32:1). That which was "forgiven" and "covered" was "transgression," or "sin," and the reason for such forgiveness and covering is to be found in the acknowledgment of sin, and the confession of transgression: "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (verse 5).

However, the Hebrew word here translated cover is not *kaphar*, but *kasa*. This word is translated "hide" 5 times. Then we also have *kapporeth*, which is 27 times rendered "mercy seat," and *kippurim*, 8 times translated "atonement."

To cover is to conceal, hide, or put out of sight. If sins are covered, they are hid, out of sight; in fact, the word covered in Psalm 32:1 is used synonymously with "transgressions forgiven," and in verse 5 the forgiveness of the iniquity of sin, which had been acquired by transgression. When God provided a covering for the sins of the children of Israel, He made possible the remission of those sins upon the fulfillment of certain divinely imposed conditions.

Sacrifice and Forgiveness

In the case before us the condition was the bringing of certain prescribed offerings, which required sacrifice. Thus, "If any of the common people sin, . . . then he shall bring his offering, . . . for his sin which he hath sinned. . . . And the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 4:27, 28, 35). Such sacrifice and atonement, or covering, could not be made, nor such forgiveness secured, "for his sin which he hath sinned," without compliance by obedience with the divine law. Hence we see that so far as the immediate effect of this ceremonial was concerned, it involved the principle of obedience to the divine law; in fact, to the Lawgiver Himself. And therein, to our mind, lies the essence of this entire legal transaction. Even while it is said that "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11), the atonement was of benefit only to the person who was a party to the making of the offering, either when offering was made for him individually, or on the day of atonement, when offerings were made for the sins of the entire nation.

The Law was a "Shadow"

It was expressly affirmed by the apostle Paul that that which was written upon tables of stone, and was glorious, was "done away" (II. Cor. 3:7-11); and we are also definitely informed when this was done: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross" (Col. 2:14). There are many other similar items of teaching in the New Testament, such as, for instance, Rom. 6:14; 7:4-6; Gal. 2:19; Eph. 2:15; and others. This covers the entire legal arrangement, both moral and ceremonial.

In view of the fact that this ceremonial, along with the other ceremonies of the law, as well as the law itself, was done away, we inquire, what was the reason for such removal? It

is said, "*The law made nothing perfect*" (Heb. 7:19), and that its gifts and sacrifices "could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience" (chapter 9:9). The reason for this is stated in the words, "For the law having a *shadow of good things to come*, and not the very image of the things, could never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (chapter 10:1). The sacrifices of the law were only "a shadow of good things to come." Therein lies the secret of the situation, and the reason for the removal of the law and its aperturances. "Which are a *shadow of things to come*" (Col. 2:17). The priests who offered gifts according to the law "served *the example and shadow of heavenly things*" (Heb. 8:5). Where do we look for the reality, the body, the substance? The apostle Paul tells us in few words: "BUT THE BODY IS OF CHRIST" (Col. 3:17).

CHAPTER X.

The Sacrifice of Christ

WE introduce the subject of this chapter by a quotation from the writings of the apostle Paul, which is at once clear and comprehensive. By "comprehensive" we mean that it embraces so much. The passage is this: "Be ye followers of God as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:1, 2). From this the following items stand out prominently, especially as regards the offering of Christ:

1. That Christ love us.
2. That He gave Himself for us.
3. That He was both an offering and a sacrifice.
4. That He offered Himself to God, and
5. That the offering was acceptable. Let us view these

items more closely:

1. Since it is said that Christ "hath loved us," it is manifest that this love existed in the past, and not merely "since we believed" (Rom. 13:11). As the apostle Paul said elsewhere, "While we were yet sinners," and "when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6, 8).

It is both necessary and important that attention be directed to that which was offered. Our passage says that Christ "*hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God.*" This statement is corroborated by a considerable number of passages in both Testaments, which are too many to be quoted at length, and we give the references under appropriate headings:

(a) It was Christ that gave Himself, died, etc. (I. Cor. 15:1-3; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2; I. Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:14; Heb. 7:27; 9:14, 25, 26, 28).

(b) It was the body of His flesh that was offered or given (Luke 22:19; John 6:51-55; I. Cor. 11:24; Col. 1:22; Heb. 10:10, 12, 14, 18, 26).

(c) It was "our Lord" who was delivered up (Rom. 4:25).

(d) It was His soul that was offered up for sin (Isa. 53:10, 12;

Matt. 20:28).

These passages make clear that that which was given, offered or sacrificed was Christ Himself, His body, His flesh, and that the offering was "without spot." This spotlessness was the ground of its acceptability to God, to whom the offering was made.

2. That Christ gave Himself "for us" does not signify that it was in our stead, but it was on our behalf, for our benefit, in our favor.

For What and Whom Christ Gave Himself

We give herewith a list of New Testament passages which set forth "for" what and whom He gave Himself. It was:

For many (Matt. 20:28; 26:28; Heb. 2:9).

For our offenses (Rom. 4:25).

For the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

For us (Rom. 5:8; Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14).

For us all (Rom. 8:32).

For you (I. Cor. 1:13).

For the brother (I. Cor. 8:11).

For our sins (I. Cor. 15:3; II. Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4).

For all (I. Tim. 2:6).

For the sins of the people (Heb. 2:17).

For sins (Heb. 10:12-18).

For sins, the Just for the unjust (I. Peter 3:18).

For the sins of many (Heb. 9:28).

For us (I. Peter 2:21).

He bare our sins (I. Peter 2:24).

For us (I. Peter 4:1).

For our sins and those of the whole world (I. John 2:2; 4:10).

He washed us from our sins in His own blood (Rev. 1:5).

We were redeemed to God by His blood (Rev. 5:9).

The Voluntariness of the Offering of Christ

The fact that He "gave Himself for us" at once suggests the voluntariness of the gift. The impelling force in giving Himself was love: His love for humanity, for us; His love for His Father, and submission to His Will. "The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Jesus Himself taught this great truth. "I lay down my life for the sheep that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:15-8). The *Diaglott* reading of verse 18 is, "No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." The phrase "no one" is more broad than "no man" of the Authorized Version, and is also more in accord with the Greek text. Hence "no one," whether man or the Father, took Jesus' life from Him. "Authority" (Greek, *exousia*) is also better than "power." The "commandment from the Father" implies authority. "Take again" implies personal effort, while "receive again" conveys the idea of obtaining as the result of communication or transmission.

In view of the foregoing we say, there was nothing that could force Jesus to lay down His life "for the sheep." It

was His love for them, and His desire to save them, that impelled Him to make this great "sacrifice of Himself."

3. Jesus was both "an offering and a sacrifice." These words convey two distinct ideas. An offering (Greek, *prosporos*) is that which is borne forward, or toward; that is, presented. A sacrifice (Greek, *thusia*) is an animal whose life is taken by being slain. Jesus combined both ideas in Himself. As an offering He voluntarily presented Himself to God, and as a sacrifice He gave up His life for the sake of the people.

The Nature of Christ's Sacrifice

It is in order at this point to inquire into the nature of the sacrifice which Jesus made. We see from the "shadow of things to come" that "sin offerings" and "sacrifices for sins" were required by the law. From this we would expect to find Jesus, as the body, or substance, to be the *real* offering for sin, or the true "sin offering." He is presented to us as such already in Old Testament prophecy. In that great prophecy of the suffering Savior (Isaiah 53) we read of Him, "When Thou shalt make His soul *an offering for sin*, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands" (verse 10). The "offering for sin," according to the Hebrew text, was for *asham*, which means "guilt." The context fully bears out this thought. "But He was *wounded for our transgressions*: He was *bruised for our iniquities* . . . The Lord laid on Him the *iniquity of us all* . . .

For the transgression of my people was He stricken . . . He shall bear their *iniquities* . . . He bare the *sins of many*" (verses 5, 8, 11, 12). As for Himself, the prophet saw Him innocent, guileless, guiltless, as "a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth . . . He had done no violence, neither was deceit found in His mouth" (verses 7, 9. See also I. Peter 2:22).

There are three passages in the New Testament with descriptive terms, equally clear and explicit, which specify the kind of offering or sacrifice Jesus made. We transcribe these in full, emphasizing the pertinent words.

"But this man (Jesus), after He had offered one *sacrifice for sins* for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12).

"Now where remission of these is (that is, of sins and iniquities), there is no more *offering for sin*" (verse 18).

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more *sacrifice for sins*" (verse 26).

Thus, in conjunction with Old Testament prophecy, we have an offering or sacrifice "for sin" or "for sins," the "sin" in every case being acts of commission or omission contrary to the revealed will of God.

No name or term other than the foregoing is employed in Scripture when speaking of the offering or sacrifice of Jesus. Hence its proper name and designation is either "sin offering" or "sacrifice for sins."

Christ's Offering was made "to God"

4. When He gave Himself as "an offering and a sacrifice," the offering was made "to God." This is upon the basis of the "commandment" received of His Father, to whom He rendered

perfect obedience. This obedience, which was voluntary, as the obedience of rational beings always is, was most beautifully described by the apostle Paul when he said, "And being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). Such obedience being required of Him as a "sin offering," or "sacrifice for sins," for us, when it was made, it was "to God." "Through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9: 14).

5. The elements of voluntariness, submission and obedience entering so largely into the offering and sacrifice of Jesus, its fragrance came up as "a sweet smelling savor" before God; that is, it was acceptable to Him; He was delighted with it. It was for this reason that God highly exalted him: "*WHEREFORE* God hath also highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). "This mind which was in Christ Jesus" was by the writer recommended as the example of the "mind" to be in the brethren. Such willingness, such submission, such obedience, "let" it "be in you"! No coercion here, no compulsion of any kind, any more than in the case of Jesus, except the impelling force of that inward urge of the submissive mind.

When Jesus was put to death by crucifixion, this was a sacrificial, not a penal, death. He could have evaded the death of the cross by availing Himself of the "more than twelve legions of angels" that had been placed at His disposal (Matt. 26:53). Yet He did not do this. But being of mortal nature, He could not have obviated what we call "natural death," unless God had in some way intervened to prevent Him from dying. His was not a penal death which could not by any means be avoided, but one of deliberate choice and set purpose, being prompted by the loving submission to His Father's will and intense affection for those whom He had come to save. No one was ever raised from the dead upon the basis of having died the "common death of all men" (Num. 16:29). And when Jesus was raised from the dead, this is traced back, not to death simply, but to His extreme loyalty and loving obedience unto the death of the cross (Phil. 2:9; Acts 5:30, 31; Heb. 12:2).

CHAPTER XI.

The Sacrifice of Christ (Concluded)

THE testimony relating to the kind of offering made by Christ not having been exhausted, we shall consider this subject further. With the array of scriptural teaching upon this phase of the subject, and the variety of terms and figures employed, it is beyond the possibility of doubt that He was a "sacrifice for sins." Beginning with the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, we follow the New Testament teaching upon this subject.

The apostle wrote concerning Christ our Lord, "Who was

delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). Two things stand out prominently, viz., (1) "our offenses," for which Christ was "delivered," and (2) our "justification" from these offenses, for which He was "raised again." The word "offense" in this chapter is from the Greek *paraptoma*, which means a falling or stepping aside. The departure in this case was from the right path, or course. In chapter 5:15, 17, 18 we have "the offense of one," which is also styled "sin" (verse 12), and "Adam's transgression" (verse 14). Thus "sin," "transgression" and "offense" are used interchangeably for the same thing. In verse 16 we see "many offenses" by many offenders following the one offense. These many offenses were those of Adam's descendants, and it was for such that Christ was "delivered" up. They were acts contrary to the divine rule. These offenses required "justification," that is, that the offenders be made just, or right; and Christ was raised again for the justification of such as had committed offenses, even "many offenses."

With this agree the words of Paul to the church at Corinth: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day" (1. Cor. 15:1-3). One of the outstanding features of this testimony is that "*Christ died for our sins.*" Sins, "*our sins,*" were the factor that played so important a part in the death of Christ. And this was true of all, whether Jews or Gentiles. All had "sins," and Christ died for the sins of all.

The writer recounted a number of things which would exclude those guilty of them from the kingdom of God. We read of "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners" (1. Cor. 6:9, 10). To this he added, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (verse 11). Of what had these Corinthian Gentiles been washed, sanctified, and justified? Of the things just named, the "sins" referred to in chapter 15:3. It is "sins" and "dead works" from which persons are "washed" and "purged" (Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5; II. Peter 1:9; Heb. 9:14); and it is for such "sins" that Christ died. "According to the Scriptures" means that the death of Christ was in accord with the teaching of the Scriptures, that is, those of the Old Testament, both in prophecy and type.

We further read that Christ makes "*reconciliation for the sins of the people*" (Heb. 2:17), which shows most clearly (1) that it is sins which cause alienation, and necessitate "reconciliation"; and (2) that these sins are "the sins of the people."

"But this Man (Jesus), after He had offered *one sacrifice for sins forever*, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). At verse 26 we read again of Christ having made a "sacrifice for sins," and at verse 28 that He "bare the sins of many."

"Who *His own self bare our sins* in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness"

(I. Peter 2:24). (1) What did Jesus bear? "Sins." (2) Whose sins? "*Our sins.*" (3) How? "In His own body." (4) Where? "On (Greek *epi*, upon) the tree." (5) With what result? "That being dead to sins, we should live unto righteousness." (6) Did we live in sins in the past? We did; but "the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles" (chapter 4:3).

"For Christ also hath once *suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust*, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (chapter 3:18). We note the following:

1. The cause of Christ's suffering were "sins."
2. He "suffered . . . being put to death in the flesh."
3. Himself not having committed sins, He was "the Just."
4. They for whom He suffered, having committed sins, were "the unjust."
5. The object of the Just One suffering for the sins of the unjust was "that He might bring us (them) to God."
6. The result: The "stripes" which the Just One received in suffering for the sins of the unjust resulted in the latter being "healed," that is, justified from their sins under the new covenant.

To Bear Sin

To "bear sin" is to die, as the following will make manifest: "Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh to the tabernacle of the congregation, *lest they bear sin, and die*" (Num. 18:22).

When Christ "*bare our sins* in His own body on the tree," He was "cut off" by dying; "cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people" (Isa. 53:9). The Messiah was "cut off, but not for Himself" (Dan. 9:26). The marginal reading says, "And shall have nothing," instead of "not for Himself." However, the passage is quoted to show that in bearing our sins Christ was "cut off," that is, that He was "killed" (Acts 3:15).

Put away and Take away Sin

We read of Jesus as "the Lamb of God which *taketh away the sin of the world,*" and, "He was manifested to *take away our sins*" (John 1:29; Heb. 9:26; I. John 3:5). The meaning of this is illustrated in the prayer of David after he had numbered Israel, and his conscience smote him. "I have sinned greatly in that I have done; and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, *take away the iniquity of thy servant*" (II. Sam. 24:10); likewise in the passage in which David acknowledged his sin in causing the death of Uriah. David said to Nathan, who had convicted him, "I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord hath *put away thy sin*; thou shalt not die" (chapter 12:13). To "take away iniquity," and to "put away sin" was to forgive the iniquity, the sin. The context of both passages, as well as other considerations, prove this. In both passages David confessed, "I have sinned," and it was such sin that was taken or put away. In Psalm 32 David pronounced a blessing upon the man "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (verses 1, 2). Not content therewith, he used another

form of words: "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and *thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*" (verse 5). Take away is used in the same way in Heb. 10:4, 11. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should *take away sins*." "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never *take away sins*." Verse 18 shows that to "take away sins" is the same as to remit sins. "But *where remission of these is*, there is no more offering for sins." All of which makes clear that to "take away" or "put away" sin is the same as to forgive sin.

The Character of Christ's Sacrifice

We quote entire, as bearing directly upon this point, two testimonies from two New Testament writers, as follows:

"For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, 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" (Heb. 9:13, 14).

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning with fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, *as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*" (I. Peter 1:17-19).

Both testimonies agree, without the slightest reservation, in ascribing absolute spotlessness to Christ in His redemptive work for men. One says that He "offered Himself without spot to God": the other, that the brethren had been "redeemed by the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Literally, a "blemish" is a disfiguring defect, a physical mark of injury or deformity. Figuratively, a blemish comes from one's own ill-doing. Morally, it is a blot or stain upon one's reputation. A spot literally is a stain or discoloration. Figuratively, it is a stain or blemish on moral character or purity; a disgrace, reproach. In the case of Christ both terms refer to moral purity. Other spot there is none of which the Scriptures take cognizance.

Jesus did no Sin

From the foregoing it is manifest that the Scriptures regard Jesus as THE SINLESS ONE, and it would almost seem superfluous to multiply testimony bearing upon this point. However, other terms are used in both Testaments as touching the sinlessness of Jesus, to some of which we shall advert briefly.

Jesus Himself had the consciousness of living a sinless life, and to His bitter enemies, who lost no opportunity to involve Him, if possible, in a breach of the divine law, He said, "*Which of you convinceth me of sin?*" (John 8:46).

He could say, what no other before nor since was able to say, viz., "The Father leaveth me not alone; for *I do always those things that please Him*" (John 8:29). Anyone who always does God's pleasure cannot be reasonably convinced, that is, convicted, of sin.

The apostle Paul, to whom Jesus had given a special revelation of Himself, said of Him, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, *who knew no sin*, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II. Cor. 5:21). (1) When did Jesus know no sin? During His life among men. (2) What sin did He not know? The sin of transgression against God's holy commandments. (3) In what sense did He know no sin? In the sense of personal transgression. (4) When was He made sin? After He had not known sin experimentally. (5) For whom was He made sin? "For us," or on our behalf. (6) In what sense was He made sin? In the sense of a sin offering. The Greek word *hamartia* as here used is many times rendered "sin offering" in the LXX. translation of the Old Testament. The *Diaglott* renders the passage thus: "For Him who knew no sin, He made a sin offering on our behalf, that we might become God's righteousness in Him." The reader will turn to Leviticus, chapter 4, and read verses 4, 8, 20, 21, 24, 25, 33, 34 in the LXX., and in every place he will find the word *hamartia* for "sin offering" in the Greek. The word used in the Hebrew is *chatath*, which is rendered "sin" 169 times, and "sin offering" 116 times. (7) With what object was He made sin for us? "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

In Him is no Sin (I. John 3:5)

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law. And we know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin."

The sin which is not in Jesus is that which He was manifested to take away, that is, transgression of the law, as shown in the context preceding and following. In verse 3, "He is pure." In verse 5, "In Him is no sin." In verse 7, "He is righteous." Thus He is pure, righteous and sinless. And what He is "to-day," in His exalted position at the right hand of God, He was "yesterday," during His life among men, and this He will be "forever" (Heb. 13:8). Though having undergone the physical change from mortality to immortality, He has had no change in respect to sinlessness. In this respect He was, is and will be for ever "the same." It is character that counts with God; and it is character that either endures or perishes with its possessor.

Jesus was Tempted, yet without Sin

It is related with considerable detail that Jesus was tempted (a fact which was due to His having the same nature with the same kind of desires which make temptation a possibility in others); and one of the passages even goes so far as to say that He was "in all points tempted like as we are." Yet even with this in mind, it makes an exception of Him in one particular by saying that, although thus tempted, He was "*without sin*" (Heb. 4:15). Such sinlessness was not due to a want of susceptibility to temptation, and consequent incapacity for sin, but to the resolute and fixed determination on the part of Jesus not to commit sin, and with it the full use of the means which the Father had placed within reach to overcome temptation. The most searching scrutiny will reveal no sin in Him, and no flaw can be found in His character. He was "tempted . . . , yet without sin."

Jesus was Just

As regards the appellation "just," the wife of Pilate pronounced Jesus "*that just Man*." This fact had been revealed to her in a dream (Matt. 27:19). Likewise Pilate, after seeing the accused, and hearing the things with which He was charged, "washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of *this just Person*" (verse 24). Thus did Jesus measure up to the highest concept of justice existing in the minds of the Roman procurator of Judea and his wife.

The apostle Peter, occupying a still higher plane, said boldly and without reserve before a large assemblage of Jews at Jerusalem, "But ye denied *the Holy One and Just*" and desired a murderer to be granted unto you" (Acts 3:14). Not only was Jesus "the Holy One and Just" since His resurrection, but He was such while He was "denied" by those who clamored for His death.

Likewise Stephen, "a man full of faith, and of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:3), testified to the same effect. In addressing a company of Jews who were "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," he said to them, "Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before the coming of *the Just One*, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts 7:51, 52). They had betrayed and murdered the Just One.

Ananias, a disciple at Damascus, said to Saul of Tarsus, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldst know His will, and see *that Just One*, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth" (Acts 22:14).

His blood, which was shed for our redemption, is not to be counted "an unholy thing" (Heb. 10:29),* but rather as "*precious*" (I. Peter 1:19), the "innocent blood" of a "Just Man"; and dire judgment awaits those who regard it as in any sense "unholy," unclean, or vile. "Precious" is the estimate which God places upon it; so inspired writers regard it, and so it behooves us to regard it, as those who have been "redeemed," "washed" and "cleansed" by it. All this is true because of the spotless life which Jesus lived, and the flawless character He exhibited in the sight of God and men.

God's Estimate of Jesus

The apostle Peter said without reserve before thousands of Jews that "Jesus of Nazareth" was "*a Man approved of God* by miracle and wonders and signs which God did by Him" (Acts 2:22). At different times it was attested that God was "pleased" and even "delighted" with Him (Isa. 42:1; Matt. 3:17; 17:5). He is "*The Beloved*," on whose account others are accepted by God (Eph. 1:6), and obtain forgiveness of sins (chapter 1:7; 4:32). Jesus was God's "*Holy Child*" both before and after His anointing with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:27, 30).

* The Greek word here rendered "unholy" is *koinos*, and is translated "common" (Acts 10:14; 11:8); "defiled" (Mark 7:2), and "unclean" (Rom. 14:14). The blood being the life of all flesh (Lev. 17:11, 14), and the flesh being nourished by the blood, it follows that the flesh of Jesus was also free from the qualities described by the word *koinos*.

When wicked men had crucified and slain Jesus, God intervened with His mighty power by raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies (Eph. 1:19, 20), thus making Him a Prince and a Savior to all who would approach God through Him. "And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. 53:10), both now, and to the remotest age.

CHAPTER XII.

The Death of Christ Divinely Decreed

WHILE it is true, as stated by Stephen in his address to the Jews just prior to his death, that they were the "betrayers and murderers" of the "Just One" (Acts 7:52), it is no less true that the death of Jesus was a necessity, and that it was decreed in the counsel and purpose of God.

Its Necessity

The necessity for the death of Jesus is set forth with great clearness in the following testimonies:

From a certain time Jesus Himself began to show to His disciples, "How that *He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day*" (Matt. 16:21).

"The Son of Man *must be delivered* into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again" (Luke 24:7). Note the imperative "must."

"*Ought not Christ to have suffered* these things, and to enter into His glory?" (verse 26).

"Thus it is written, and thus it *behooved Christ to suffer*, and to rise again from the dead the third day" (verse 46).

The apostle Paul at Thessalonica on three Sabbaths "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that *Christ must needs have suffered, and risen from the dead*" (Acts 17:1-3).

It was Divinely Decreed

A thing which "ought" to be done, which it "behooved" to be done, which "must needs" be done, is a necessity which involves a pressing obligation. This obligation is to be found in the requirements of the situation, in accordance with the divine wisdom. We therefore proceed to the testimony which speaks of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God which made the death of Christ a fact.

That Christ Himself, even before His death, had full knowledge of this counsel is evident from the foregoing; but it appears still more clearly from other sayings of His.

"But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And *the Son of Man goeth as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom He is betrayed*" (Luke 22:22).

The same truth stands out in the teaching of the apostles, showing that they, too, were thoroughly informed of what had existed in the mind and purpose of God.

The apostle Peter said to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, "*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have cruci-*

fied and slain" (Acts 2:23).

Again, the believers at Jerusalem said after the release of Peter and John from prison, "For of a truth against Thy Holy Child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do *what Thy hand and counsel determined before to be done*" (Acts 4:28).

The apostle Paul set forth this truth in these words, "*Who (Jesus) was delivered* for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

Once more: "He that spared not His own Son, but *delivered Him up for us all*, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

Thus we see that the delivery by God of the Lord Jesus Christ with a view to His death was a truth which was most clearly understood by the Lord Himself, and also by the apostles; and this truth entered largely into the public teaching of these emissaries of the Lord both to Jews and Gentiles.

According to the Scriptures

After His resurrection Jesus said to some of His disciples, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24:26). To which the historian adds, "*And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself*" (verse 27).

Again, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were *written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.*" And it is stated, "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And He said unto them, *Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to enter into His glory,*" etc. (verses 44-46).

We listen to the apostle Paul as he discourses to the Jews at Thessalonica. It is stated that, "as his manner was, he went in unto them, and three Sabbath days *reasoned with them out of the Scriptures*, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ" (Acts 17:1-3).

Likewise when he went to Corinth the apostle delivered that which he also had received, viz., "How that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*; that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (I. Cor. 15:1-3).

The same truth stands out in the teaching of the apostle Peter. Thus we read, "*Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*" (I. Peter 1:10, 11).

Thus Moses, the prophets, the psalms, in fact, "all the Scriptures" of the Old Testament, are pervaded with the idea that Christ "must" suffer and die for the sins of men; and since "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II. Peter 1:20, 21), the predictions of the Old Testament

dealing with the death of Christ for the sins of men were from God and expressive of His counsel and purpose. It was God who "moved" these "holy men" to speak in accordance with His predetermined purpose; and it is for this reason that the apostle Peter designated the sufferings of Christ as the fulfillment of what God had previously spoken. "But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, *He hath so fulfilled*" (Acts 3:18). That "He" who so fulfilled the Scriptures is God, appears more clearly from the rendering of the *Emphatic Diaglott*, which is also in accord with the construction of the Greek text. "But God hath thus fulfilled what He foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Anointed should suffer."

This did not in any manner or degree lessen the sin of Judas in betraying Jesus, nor release him from its guilt. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that hath delivered me unto thee *hath the greater sin*" (John 19:11) "*Judas by transgression fell,*" when he was "guide to them that took Jesus." He lost his "bishopric," or overseership, and another, more worthy, took his place (Acts 1:16, 17, 20, 25). Judas no more than Adam was under necessity to sin, but following the natural bent of his mind, to acquire and possess, "to have and to hold," for a small sum betrayed his Master. Being a thief, he did not exercise that restraint over his craving for money that was necessary to deter him from committing an act so base, a deed so wicked.

Christ the Lamb of God

In the prophetic Scriptures Christ is represented as "a lamb brought to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb" (Isa. 53:7); that He was wounded, oppressed, afflicted, bruised, stricken, put to grief; that He poured out His soul unto death, and that His soul was made an offering for the guilt of the transgressions and iniquities of His people (verses 5, 7, 8, 10).

Truly, He was the antitypical lamb, the "*Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29, 36), whose precious blood, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," was able to effect the redemption of men (I. Peter 1:19). In the mind and counsel of God He "verily was *foreordained before the foundation of the world,*" but was "manifest in these last times" for the believers (II. Peter 1:20, 21). In promise and in prophecy, in shadow and in type, He was "*slain from the foundation of the world*" (Rev. 13:8). When he was manifested in person, He took away sin, first in making the offering and sacrifice "for the sins of the people," and then by forgiving sins, and cleansing from unrighteousness those who comply with the necessary conditions. The blood of animals was not able to "take away sins" with a view to granting everlasting life (Heb. 10:4, 11); but God has since made a covenant, dedicated by the blood of His Son, which "*takes away their sins*" (Rom. 11:27), so that these are remembered no more. "And we know that He was manifested to *take away our sins*; and in Him is no sin" (I. John 3:5). "But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to *put away sin* by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9:26).

The Father gave the Son, and the Son gave Himself

In the giving, sending and delivery of Jesus for the sins of the world there are two important factors which must be borne in mind, namely, first, that the Father gave the Son; and second, that the Son gave Himself. On the former we cite two passages.

"For God so loved the world that *He gave His only begotten Son*, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

"He that *spared not His own Son*, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32).

Then there are those passages which have to do with the fact that the Son gave Himself.

"Who *gave Himself* for our sins, that He might deliver us from the present evil world according to the will of God our Father" (Gal. 1:4).

"The Son of God, who loved me, and *gave Himself for me*" (Gal. 2:20).

"As Christ also hath loved us, and *hath given Himself for us* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:2).

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and *gave Himself for it*" (verse 25).

"Who *gave Himself a ransom for all*, a testimony in due time" (I. Tim. 2:6, margin).

"Who *gave Himself for us* that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

The impelling motive in Christ giving Himself for others was the great love which He bore toward them. The gift was "according to the will of God and our Father." There existed the most perfect accord between God, who gave the Son, and the Son, who gave Himself. In this respect the Father and the Son were "one," that is, of one mind (John 17:11, 22). Therefore it is true that the Father gave the Son, and it is equally true that the Son gave Himself. The Father sent and gave the Son as the Savior of the world, and the Son gave Himself as an offering and a sacrifice to the Father in order to become such Savior.

What was Accomplished by the Death of Christ?

As we consider the subject in its different bearings and relations, three things stand out in the teaching of the Scriptures, viz.,

1. That Christ died for, or on account of, our sins (I. Cor. 15:1-3).

2. That His blood of the new covenant was shed for many for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28).

3. That whosoever complies with certain divinely imposed conditions shall receive remission of sins. These conditions are, broadly speaking, faith and obedience. We mention here faith, repentance, and baptism.

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

(b) Repentance and baptism. "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

"*Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out*" (Acts 3:19).

(c) "And now, why tarriest thou? *Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:16).

What was made possible by the shedding of the blood of Jesus, and the ratification of the new covenant securing remission of sins, viz., not having their sins imputed to them, this becomes a reality to those who fulfill the divinely imposed conditions. The underlying condition of all conditions on the part of man for the remission of sins is *faith*. Faith is counted to the believing one for righteousness. This is stated more often in Scripture, and in more ways, than almost anything else.

CHAPTER XIII.

The New Covenant

REFERENCE has been made to the new covenant, which was consecrated, "dedicated," or ratified by the blood of Jesus and of which He is the mediator; but the discussion of this subject would be incomplete without a fuller consideration of the new covenant.

Covenants ratified by Death

According to Heb. 9:16, 17, based upon the Mosaic "shadow" or type, a covenant, in order to have validity or force, must be ratified by the blood of a covenant sacrifice. "For where a covenant exists, the death of that which has ratified it must be produced, because a covenant is firm over dead victims, since it is never valid while that which ratifies it is alive" (*Diaglott rendering*). The old covenant was not ratified without blood. "Whereupon neither the first was dedicated without blood" (verse 18, A. V.). While the first was instituted with the blood of animals, the second, being "better," was ratified by a "better sacrifice" (Heb. 9:23), even the "precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1. Peter 1:19); and Jesus has been made mediator of the new covenant, which is many times attested in the New Testament, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews. Here we read of "the blood of the new covenant" (Matt. 26:28; 1. Cor. 11:25), and of Jesus as the "mediator of the new covenant" (Heb. 7:22; 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). Besides ratifying the "new" or "better" covenant, the blood of Jesus was shed "for the remission of sins"; in fact, this was the object in view when He gave Himself for the sins of the people. The covenant of which He is the mediator is the "new covenant" which God, ages before, had promised to make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jer. 31:31-34). This is very clearly shown in Heb. 8:6-8, where we are told of the "more excellent ministry" or service of Jesus, "by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Then, after re-

ferring to the faultiness of the "first," the writer cited the Jeremiah passage entire, to show that here is the better covenant, of which Jesus is the mediator.

Again we read, "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (chapter 10:14). Then follows the explanatory statement, "Whereof the Holy Spirit also is a witness unto us; for after that He had said before, This is the covenant I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (verses 15-17). As will be seen, this covenant was to secure to the covenantees of the second part remission of sins. This was to be one of its outstanding features. We therefore ask, Is remission of sins obtainable now? Answer: It is. Under what covenant? Under the promised new covenant, of which Jesus is the mediator.

1. His blood was shed as the blood of the new covenant for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28).

2. "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" (Heb.10:18). Is there remission? Who will deny? And since this was to be under the new covenant, it is this covenant which secures it to the covenantees of the second part.

3. This is further evident from the statements contained in Heb. 10:19-25. Here we have:

(a) "Boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," the blood of the new covenant which was shed for many for the remission of sins.

(b) "An high priest over the house of God." The "boldness" is due to the fact that "we" have remission of sins through the blood of Jesus, who is the high priest over the house of God, and the mediator of the new covenant. Who would question that in comparison with the "first covenant" this is both "new" and "better," and the "ministry" which Jesus obtained "more excellent" than that of the priests of the old covenant?

How the Blood of Jesus cleanses from Sin

Since then the blood of Jesus was the means by which the new covenant was "consecrated," "dedicated," and given "force," "strength," or effect, we see in this fact the reason for the use of the terms "cleanse," "purge," "take away," and "wash," when speaking of sin. The physical blood of Jesus, which coursed through His veins while living among men, is not literally applied to the persons with cleansing effect, but by a figure it cleanses, washes and purifies because it is the means by which the new covenant with remission of sins was brought into force. In this way it is as true under the new as it was under the old, that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). The blood of goats and calves was a shadow or type of the blood of Christ. The absence of physical spot or blemish from those animals foreshadowed the spotless life and flawless character of Jesus. The covenant under which those services were performed was in comparison with the new a mere shadow of good things to come, but not the reality, the substance.

Under the old covenant, which could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4, 11), there was a "remembrance again made of sins every year" (verse 3); but under the new covenant the sins and iniquities once forgiven are "remembered no more" (verses 16, 17); nor is there need for any more or further offering for sin (verse 18). Jesus ever lives; and continuing ever, and having an unchangeable priesthood (chapter 7:24), He is able to save to the uttermost, or ever more, them that come unto God by Him (verse 25).

As between the priesthood and the covenant, the latter is the greater of the two. The priesthood pertains to the covenant, and exists and operates by virtue of it. The first covenant was taken away in order that the second might be established (Heb. 10:9). This was done when Jesus was nailed to the cross (Eph. 2:15, 16; Col. 2:14). The old with its Levitical priesthood and its shadow offerings having been thus taken away, the new with its Melchizedec priest and its more excellent service was established. The beginning of its operation as to time and place is very clearly marked. Repentance and remission of sins were to be preached "among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). The time was the day of pentecost referred to in Acts, chapter 2; and the place, Jerusalem. Here repentance and remission of sins were preached in Jesus' name (verse 38), and by granting remission to those who were baptized in response to the apostles' word (verse 41), Jesus for the first time after the dedication of the new covenant performed the functions of the more excellent ministry of His priesthood under the new covenant. This being intended for "all nations," it has come to us.

Covenants must be Ratified with Blood

When it is said in Scripture that "a covenant is of force over dead victims" (Heb. 9:16, 17), this applies equally to the new covenant. But for the death of Jesus it would not now be in force; and if, as has been said, the new covenant is not yet in existence, and does not operate, then all who are supposed to have come into it are "yet in their sins" (1. Cor. 15:17). But more than this: If it is not in force and operation, then someone must die in the future in order to bring it into force. However, since Jesus is already deathless, and death having no more dominion over Him, it follows that He could not die in order to bring it into force. This would then require that the blood of another be shed in the future for the remission of sins under the new covenant. Such a contingency would constitute the most powerful proof of the insufficiency of the work of Christ in undergoing death as a covenant sacrifice for the people (Isa. 42:6; 49:8). If one covenant which God made, or promised to make, for the benefit of Israel or humanity was not covered by the blood of Christ, that covenant will never be made. Upon the other hand, if the blood of Christ availed to bring into force *one* covenant, of which we are most firmly convinced, then it was sufficient for and did confirm *every* covenant, or every one of the various items constituting the covenant of God with men, whether Noahic, Abrahamic, Davidic, or the new covenant promised in Jer. 31:31-34.

The Relation of Jesus to this Covenant

The dealings of God with men are based entirely upon relationship, which is based upon action; and this in turn has its foundation in the state of mind toward the divine rule of action. If God is angry with men, it is because they are wicked (Psalm 7:11), and not for any physical cause, such as, for instance, that they are mortal; but solely and alone for transgression of His holy law. It is here that relationship is disturbed, reprobation falls, and punishment is visited. Likewise the remedial measures are directed, first of all, toward the correction of the disturbed relation between man and his Maker. Here sins of the past are forgiven, righteousness instead of trespass is imputed, and the justified are cautioned, "Sin no more!" From this point forward it is a matter of walking worthy of God, and thus maintaining the relation entered into through faith and obedience.

Was there ever, as far as can be learned from the record, any want of adjustment in the relationship between Jesus and the Father? We know of none. Do we ever read of a correction of relationship between them? Never. Are we ever told of a satisfactory reaction resulting from such adjustment? We are not. There being no other way of judging of the relation existing between the Son and the Father, we take our position upon the ground that there was always the most perfect accord and amity between them. There were no sins upon the one hand, and no wrath of God upon a child of disobedience upon the other (Col. 3:3). No remission was sought by the one, for none was required; and none was granted by the other, and for the same reason. The relation never having been disturbed, there was no need of even an attempt at adjustment. Jesus sought no priest to intervene between Himself and the Father, but always approached Him direct, and without intermediary; nor do we read of His making sacrifices for sins of omission or commission on His part. As far as we know, the only ceremony of the law in which He took an active part was that of the pass-over; and this was of a memorial character. When He submitted to the baptism of John which, as far as the people were concerned, was "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," His part in this ceremony was the fulfilling of God's righteousness (Matt. 3:15) in being made manifest to Israel as the Lamb and Son of God (John 1:29-34).

Jesus rendered Perfect Obedience

When it comes to obedience to God, He always rendered this with scrupulous care and unremitting zeal and devotion. His salvation from death, His resurrection, as well as His exaltation to the right hand of God, and His position as Savior of men, depended thereon. This He did for Himself. If it was left undone, He was lost, and all were lost. While possessed of a nature like that of the race He was to redeem, yet His position was unique, and His work of singular merit. He wrought out by perfect obedience the problem of human salvation. His devotion to God, which caused Him to drink to the dregs the dreadful cup of pain, opened a new and living way, and dedicated

the new covenant with remission of sins for such as obediently believe in Him, and ultimate salvation for those who obey Him to the end. Though tempted as others are, He had no sins; He sought no remission for misdeeds (the only thing which requires forgiveness); He was neither alienated from God by wicked works (Col. 1:21), nor thereupon reconciled to Him. His death did not appease a God who was angry with Him, and thus ward off His wrath. But He yielded to His Father's will, even to the death of the cross, His blood being the means by which the new covenant with remission of sins became effective, and He is the priest through whose mediation the blessings of this covenant are bestowed. This at once defines His relation to things in the redemptive scheme, and relieves Him of the anomalous position into which theology would place Him by its doctrine of "vicarious atonement."

When He "made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1:20), this was not that He might thereby become reconciled to God, or God to Him, but He was the mediator, the peacemaker, the means of reconciling others to God. He was not the enemy either of God or man, but it was men who were enemies of God by wicked works. Had He not yielded to the Father's will to undergo death in order to bring into force the new covenant, in this case there would have been alienation and estrangement between Him and the Father, and He would thereby have become wholly unsuited for the position of administrator of the new covenant, and dispenser of the blessings of God to men. We can only think with a shudder of such a contingency. Instead of making peace for others, He would have made enmity for Himself; the salvation of the race would have gone by default as far as He was concerned, and it would have been necessary in this case to "look for another" (Matt. 11:3). But we rejoice with unspeakable joy to know not only that God gave Him, and delivered Him up for us all, but that He Himself was willing to be thus delivered, and out of love gave Himself for us "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:2).

The Law written in the Heart

The new covenant, ratified by the blood of Jesus, and administered by Him, not only provides for the remission of sins that are past, but also for the inscription of God's law as the rule of action in the heart, thus insuring its constant presence at the source from which spring the issues of life (Prov. 4:23), and out of whose abundance the mouth speaks (Matt. 12:34). "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart." Such is the ministry of the new covenant "not of the letter, but of the Spirit" (II. Cor. 3:3, 6). What God ages ago promised to do He is now doing through His Son as mediator of the new covenant for those who come to the blood of sprinkling.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Forgiveness of Sins

IN dealing with this phase of our subject it will be necessary not only to consider what is meant by forgiveness and related terms, but also to determine exactly what it is that is forgiven. We mention the latter first. Seven terms are used in the Scriptures in speaking of sin. These are "errors," "iniquities," "offenses," "sin," or "sins," "transgressions," "trespass," and "unrighteousness."

1. "Errors" (Greek, *agnoematoon*, sins of ignorance under the Mosaic law.—Heb. 9:7). Offerings were made for such, and they were "forgiven" (Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35).

2. "Iniquities." Iniquity is deviation from right; not equal to the standard of rectitude. In the divine economy iniquities are "blotted out" (Psalm 51:9), "forgiven" (Psalm 32:1, 5; 78: 38; Rom. 4:7), "pardoned" (Psalm 35:11).

3. "Offenses." An offense is any transgression of law, human or divine. Justification may be obtained from such, even from "many offenses" (Rom. 4:25, 5:16). To justify is to declare or make right, as if the offense had not been committed.

4. "Sin" or "Sins." Transgression or acts of commission or omission. Such are "blotted out" (Acts 3:19); "cleansed" (Psalm 51:2; I. John 1:7); "covered" (Psalm 32:1; Rom. 4:7); "forgiven" (Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:7); "not imputed" (Rom. 4:7); "purged" (Psalm 79:9; Heb. 1:3; II. Peter 1:9); "remembered no more" (Jer. 31:34; Ezek. 33:16; Heb. 8:12; 10:17); "re-mitted" (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; Rom. 3:25); "taken away" (Rom. 11:27); "washed away" (Acts 22:16; I. Cor. 6:11; Rev. 1:5).

5. "Transgressions." These are "blotted out" (Psalm 51:9; Isa. 44:22), and "forgiven" (Psalm 32:1).

6. "Trespasses." Such are "forgiven" (Matt. 6:14, 15; Col. 2:14), "not imputed" (II. Cor. 5:19).

7. "Unrighteousness." "He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I. John 1:9).

Forgiveness is lexically defined as release from punishment, or from obligation to make amends. The word "forgiveness," as also "remission," is from the Greek *aphesis*, which means "a sending away," or "letting go." The meaning of "remit" is to "send back." *Aphiemi* is translated "send away" in Mark 4:36. This comports with the idea of the terms "blot out," "cleanse," "not impute," "purge," "remember no more," "take away," and "wash." Sins thus forgiven are "away" from those who have been forgiven. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).

When God forgives sins He takes them away, and remembers them no more, that is, makes no more mention of them. They are forever a thing of the past.

Original Sin

Sins of commission or omission are the only things which require forgiveness, or are forgiven. "Original" or "inborn"

sin of Catholic and Protestant theology is not taken into account in God's dealings with sin. By this is meant an inborn, hereditary taint deriving its guilt and stain from Adam, the first sinner, and that it is the cause of actual transgression. Theology teaches that satisfaction was made for original sin, that it is subject to forgiveness, and that its effects remain after it is forgiven (Catholic Catechism of Doctrine, question 49).

If this doctrine were true, it could not in reason be said that God would remember sin no more. Though He had forgiven it ever so much, it would still be a fact, and He would remember it quite as well as any other fact of human history. It would be constantly before Him. But if we understand that in the mercy of God sins are blotted out, forgiven, purged, put away, taken away, washed away, then they are removed, and the promise to remember them no more is most appropriate as well as comforting. This applies equally to the word "impute." Its meaning is to set to the account of a person. When God does not impute trespasses to those who are guilty of such, He does not set them to their account. The debt is discharged; the account is closed. This is God's method of dealing with sins.

CHAPTER XV.

The Conditions of Forgiveness

THAT God does not unconditionally forgive men their sins, even though Christ died for our sins, is clear from what has already been considered. True it is, "our God *will* abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7), but this is only upon certain well defined conditions, which we shall now consider more fully.

1. At the forefront of these stands faith; that is, *faith in Jesus*. At the introduction of the gospel at the house of the Roman centurion Cornelius the apostle Peter said, "To Him (Jesus of Nazareth) give all the prophets witness, that through His name *whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts 10:43). An announcement such as this could scarcely interest a Gentile unless he had committed sins, and it were necessary and possible for him to obtain remission of these. Not only did the apostle preach remission of sins to "whosoever believeth" in Jesus, but the words which he spoke were such as tended to the salvation of those, of whatsoever nation or people, who should hear and believe. At an important meeting of the brethren at Jerusalem the apostle related what Cornelius had said to him, "Who (Peter) shall tell thee *words whereby thou and thy house shall be saved*" (Acts 11:14). Among these "words" were none that were idle or superfluous; none without meaning and force; all had their proper place. Therefore the word to Cornelius and his house that remission of sins was for believers in "every nation" (chapter 10:35), was most fitting. Though two servants and a devout soldier pronounced Cornelius "a just man" (verse 22), he was nevertheless an unsaved man, and had need that remission of sins be preached to him in Jesus' name, as well as to his house. And these sins were not sins merely which Cornelius and those of his house might possibly commit at some time in the future, but sins which they, although Gentiles, had already committed. They were "sins" that were "past" (Rom. 3:25).

First Visit to the Gentiles

Nor is this all. This was the first official visit of an apostle to the Gentiles; and Peter afterward related to the brethren at Jerusalem, "How that God a good while ago made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe" (Acts 15:7). James said, in commenting upon this speech, "Simeon hath declared *how God at the first did visit the Gentiles* to take out of them a people for His name" (verse 14). These testimonies show that remission of sins in Jesus' name is an integral part of the gospel; and it is by this means, and in the manner as was done at the house of Cornelius, that God visited the Gentiles for such purpose. This is "how" it was done.

This being "at the first," the introduction of the gospel to the Gentiles, it is clear that this was the method intended as the rule during the entire gospel dispensation, and was in keeping with the words of Jesus, "Thus . . . it behooved . . . that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). Thus it "behooved" to be done; and the "conversion" of Cornelius and his house (Acts 15:3) was the first case of this kind among the Gentiles. In this way was the foundation laid, the course to be followed among the Gentiles indicated, the doctrine to be taught set forth, and the results to be achieved held to view. We may therefore expect to find the same principles embodied in the further dealings with the Gentiles.

Belief in Jesus

To "believe in Him" is the outstanding condition toward receiving remission of sins. It is said that Abraham's "*faith was counted to him for righteousness*" (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3, 5, 9, 22-24; Gal. 3:6). The terms "count," "impute," and "reckon," are here used interchangeably. An important lesson is drawn from the fact that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness *before he was circumcised*. "How then was it reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision" (Rom. 4:10). Being "in uncircumcision," he was therefore in the fullest sense of the word a Gentile. That he was reared in idolatrous surroundings we know from the statement that his immediate ancestors "served other gods" (Josh. 24:2). That Abraham, the same as all others who require to be justified, was "ungodly," the apostle Paul very clearly taught. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that *justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:1-5). When Abraham was circumcised, this was not that he might thereby be justified, but he "received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet circumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also" (verse 11).

The writer had just quoted some pertinent words from David showing "the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (verse 6). Wherein does this blessedness consist? "Blessed are they *whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered*. Blessed is the man to

whom the Lord will not impute sin" (verses 7, 8). "*This blessedness,*" then, of having one's iniquities forgiven, his sins covered, and righteousness imputed in place of sin, "cometh not upon the circumcision only, but upon the uncircumcision also" (verse 9). This is a case of the most clear and definite teaching, not only that Gentiles are justified, counted righteous, and have their sins forgiven, upon the exercise of faith, but as antecedent to this, that they are "ungodly," and in need of such forgiveness and justification the same as are Jews. "There is no difference" here between Jews and Gentiles, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and are justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood; to declare His righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:22-26).

Baptism

2. As a second condition for the remission of sins to Jews and Gentiles we mention baptism. So far as the mechanical act is concerned, baptism consists of the immersion of persons in water. It rests upon the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, who commanded His followers, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in (Greek, *eis*, into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18, 19). Proper subjects for this ceremony are persons who hear, believe and accept the gospel (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41; 16:14, 15, 33, 34; 18:8; 19:5). Its design is indicated in the language addressed by the apostle Peter to inquiring Jews on the day of Pentecost, "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38). This was at once the "beginning at Jerusalem" of "repentance and remission of sins," which were to be preached "among all nations," and the foundation of the teaching and practice which were to obtain throughout "all the world," and "among all nations." This is in accord with the divine testimony which shows that those in all nations irrespective of nationality have committed sins, and are therefore sinners, and in need of remission.

The object of the apostolic preaching among "*the people (the Jews) and the Gentiles*" was "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith" in Christ (Acts 26:17, 18). The apostle Paul related that he had "showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (verse 20). "The people and the Gentiles" appear also at verse 23, again showing that both were involved in sins, and both must be enlightened with reference to the remission of these.

Such as had been baptized in accordance with the Lord's command and the apostolic preaching, whether Jews or Gentiles, were assured that their sins had been forgiven. Thus wrote Paul to the erstwhile Godless, Christless and hopeless Gentiles

*Or, "method of justification."—So Bishop Lightfoot.

at Ephesus (Eph. 2:11, 12), that "*God hath for Christ's sake forgiven you*" (chapter 4:32). They had been baptized with the "one baptism" (verse 5), with which believing Jews were baptized at the "beginning at Jerusalem." Colossian uncircumcised, who had been "dead in sins and the uncircumcision of their flesh," were told that they had been *buried with Him* (Christ) *in baptism*, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, *having forgiven you all trespasses*" (Col. 2:12, 13). Thus was the forgiveness of the trespasses of these Gentiles connected with their baptism into relation with Christ. Buried with Christ in baptism, risen with Him, having their trespasses forgiven. This is the happy condition of those who through faith and baptism have become united to Christ.

Confession

3. Another condition for the remission of sins is confession. It was said anciently, and holds good to-day, "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, *I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*" (Psalm 32:5). "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but *whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy*" (Prov. 28:13). And in the New Testament: "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (I. John 1:9).

Seeing that baptism in the days of John the Baptist was "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3), submission to this rite was of itself a confession of having committed sins. "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, *confessing their sins*" (Matt. 3:5, 6; Mark 1:5). While these confessors were Jews, there is also a case upon record where Gentiles made confession. "And many (at Ephesus) that believed came and *confessed, and showed their deeds*" (Acts 19:8). Probably among these were some who had used curious arts, and burned the books pertaining to those arts (verse 19). Such confessing and showing their "deeds" was an acknowledgment of their sins—the "trespasses and sins" wherein they had walked in time past, when they were by nature, or by following the fleshly desires, "children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:1-3.) But they, the same as the uncircumcised at Colosse, had been quickened together with Christ in baptism—the "one baptism" (Eph. 4:5)—and with the same result. Their confession, both verbally made, and implied in their baptism, was an important factor in securing to them the "forgiveness of sins" (Eph. 1:7; 4:32).

God being the one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy (James 4:12), all sin is primarily against God, and confession must be made, first of all, to Him. Those who were baptized of John "confessing their sins" made confession to the great baptizer as representing God; and those who confessed and showed their deeds in Asia Minor perhaps confessed to the apostle Paul and those who were with him as servants of the Most High. It would seem appropriate that confession should be made in our days to the person administering the rite of

baptism "for the remission of sins." Not that the administrator has power to absolve from guilt, but rather that the candidate be duly impressed with the sinfulness of sin, and the greatness of the favor of being granted remission of sins through Jesus Christ.

Often there is connected with sin a certain personal element, which makes it necessary not only to confess the sin or sins to those sinned against, but to make restitution as far as this is possible. When Zaccheus said to Jesus, "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold," the Master said, "This day is salvation come to this house" (Luke 19:8, 9). This was a salvation which righted any wrongs that might have been done. Here was the beginning of "fruit" or "works meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). It must be so now with every "sinner that repenteth." All sin being in the first instance against God, the sinner must admit before God that he has sinned, and in the divinely appointed way seek forgiveness.

Forsaking Sin

4. Intimately connected with this is the forsaking of sins. *"He that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."* A notable illustration of the necessity to forsake sin is to be seen in the case of Simon the sorcerer at Samaria. This man also "believed" the preaching of Philip, at least nominally; but when he saw a possibility of plying his former trade of mystifying the people, with the prospect of deriving revenues therefrom, he offered money to the apostles to give him the power to impart the Holy Spirit by the laying on of his hands (Acts 8:13-19). His heart was not right with God; he was "in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity" (verses 20-23). It is evident that he had not at heart forsaken his old ways.

Repentance

5. Along with this we must direct attention to repentance in relation to the remission of sins. We again call to mind the words of Jesus, "And that *repentance and remission of sins* should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47)

What it is to repent is aptly illustrated in the case of the man who said to one of his sons. "Go, work to-day in my vineyard." The son said, "I will not," but "afterward he repented, and went" (Matt. 21:29). It is clear that repentance means a change of mind. The meaning of the Greek word *metanoia*, translated "repentance," is a minding after, or again. This must be done by every one who desires forgiveness of his sins. There must be a definite and complete break between the individual and sin, and at the same time a firm resolve to walk henceforth in newness of life.

Following the apostles in their activities beginning at Jerusalem, we hear the command of the apostle Peter, "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38). And later: "*Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*" (Acts 3:19).

All having sinned, the call to repentance was not restricted to the Jews, but was to be preached "among all nations." And so it was. The apostle Paul assiduously showed both to Jews

and Gentiles "that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:20). Also to Gentiles was granted "repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18); in fact, *God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent"* (Acts 17:30, 31).

Who shall Repent?

Jesus "came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32; 15:7). That repentance has to do with "works" is manifest from the fact that in the preaching of the apostles "repentance and remission of sins" are linked together. This truth is further emphasized by a passage in which "repentance from dead works" is laid at the very foundation of the doctrine of Christ. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again *the foundation of repentance from dead works,*" etc. (Heb. 6:1). It is sinners, not just persons, who need and are "called to repentance"; and since repentance has been granted also to the Gentiles, we see that Gentile sinners, too, (Gal. 2:15) must repent in order that they may receive the remission of sins.

CHAPTER XVI.

Remission of Sins due to God's Grace

THE apostle Paul mentioned the grace or favor of God, "wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even *the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*" (Eph. 1:6, 7). The arrangement that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Jesus' name among all nations was one which did not originate with anything man could propose or do, but arose purely out of the riches of God's grace, or favor. It was "by the grace of God" that Christ "tasted death for every man" (Heb. 2:9), and it is by His unfathomable love that Christ died for the ungodly and sinners (Rom. 5:6, 8). It is by the grace of God that remission of sins is offered to all upon the conditions referred to. Here are "the riches of His grace." There is nothing that the ungodly and sinners can present to God as deserving of His recognition, for they are altogether unprofitable, all having sinned, and come short of the glory of God. It is here that the great love, grace, and mercy of God come to the rescue of the helpless, and remission of sins is offered to wicked sinners, justification through the Just One to the unjust, non-imputation of trespasses to those dead in trespasses and sins, and righteousness to those whose righteousnesses are in the sight of God as filthy rags; and all this upon the condition of believing in Jesus and obeying His will, as set forth in the apostolic proclamation.

Apart from sin God's love to sinners was impossible

Had it not been for iniquity, sin, transgression, ungodliness, wickedness; in short, the moral evil represented by these terms, there would have been no scope for the exercise of the love

of God toward His enemies, the ungodly and sinners (Rom. 5: 6, 8, 10), and no place for the "kindness and love of God our Savior toward man" to appear (Titus 3:4). We do not say that God introduced sin into the world (this was done by one man), or that He made sin a necessity; but He did create the circumstances which made it possible, and when it was introduced by the deliberate act of man contrary to the divine command, He did not intervene to prevent it, but permitted it to be introduced with its long and dismal train of consequences, including the multiplication of the "one offense" a millionfold into the "many offenses." These were committed by many offenders or sinners. And yet, despite the waywardness and sinfulness of multiplied millions of human beings since "Adam's transgression," "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." This is how "His great love wherewith He loved us" (Eph. 2:4) found expression. This could not have been done had He prevented the act which plunged the world of mankind into the evil.

Here was an entire race of beings who were together unprofitable, among whom, left to themselves, there was not one to do good, until God begat a Son who did His pleasure, and whom, out of love for the sinners, He gave to make just those who were unjust, the simple condition being that they believe in Jesus, such belief being shown by obedience to His commands. Wonderful indeed that God would, upon such conditions, count as righteous those who are altogether unrighteous!

Forgiveness for Christ's Sake

This truth appears in various forms in the apostolic teaching. We cite from the writings of the apostles as follows:

"And be ye kind one to another, forgiving one another, even as God hath for Christ's sake forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

"I write unto you, little children, because *your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake*" (I. John 2:12).

"For the sake of" means "out of regard for." Hence when God for Christ's sake forgives sins, it is out of regard for Him; that is, for what He did in giving Himself as an offering and a sacrifice for the sins of men. He having been set forth by God "to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Rom. 3:25), when an individual, whether Jew or Gentile, shows his faith or confidence in Jesus, whose blood was shed "for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28), by being buried with Him by baptism into death to sin, then God, in consideration of what Jesus did, is merciful to that one's unrighteousness, forgives his sins, and counts his faith to him for righteousness. The only way in which God *can* "justify the ungodly" is to reckon the believing one who is baptized into Christ as having become united to Him, buried with Him, and risen with Him. This is in harmony with the teaching of the apostle Paul both to the Romans and the Colossians (Rom. 6:1-4; Col. 2:12). It recognizes Christ as the divinely given offering for sins,

and places the believing one upon his own footing, who is counted righteous, not for anything he has done, but because of his union, through faith and baptism, with "Jesus Christ the righteous." It was with this in view that He who "knew no sin was made sin (that is, a sin offering) for us, that we might be made the *righteousness of God in Him*" (II. Cor. 5:21). Not that our sins were imputed to Him, and He were guilty of them; nor yet that His righteousness is imputed to us; but our faith in Him is counted, imputed or reckoned to us for righteousness, that is, that we are righteous in God's eyes. Regardless of what Jesus did, or how well God was pleased with His work, so long as we do not "believe in Jesus," we are sinners, ungodly and unrighteous, and His work will avail us nothing; but when we believe in Him and obey that form of doctrine divinely delivered, then our faith is counted to us for righteousness. Thus does God for Christ's sake forgive sins.

That the believer's faith, and nothing else, is counted to him for righteousness, must appear the moment we consider a number of testimonies dealing with the subject of justification. First, it is said that "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3, 9; Gal. 3:6; James 3:23). These passages make unmistakably clear that Abraham's individual faith was counted to him for righteousness; and the words "count," "impute," and "reckon" are used (Rom. 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24). To impute is to set to one's account. Hence when Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness such faith on his part was set to his account for righteousness. Neither God's righteousness, nor that of any other, was imputed to Abraham, but righteousness on account of his own faith.

We would specially emphasize the following, which is directly pertinent. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:4, 5). The one who "worketh not" is "ungodly," and as such can claim no righteous works as bringing God into his "debt." Therefore if God insists upon works of righteousness, he is undone; but if God justifies the "ungodly" upon condition of faith, this is done purely as an act of favor, or "grace." What is it in this case that is counted to him for righteousness? Not Christ's righteousness, for the alien sinner is not related either to it or Him; not God's righteousness, for God does not give away His righteousness; not that of any other, for one's righteousness can not be transferred to another; but "*his* (own) *faith* is counted to him for righteousness." There is no departure anywhere in Scripture from this rule. When we inquire as to the reason for this, we find that nothing that one possesses can be counted, imputed, or reckoned as belonging to another. We know that Jesus both loved and did righteousness; but to place His righteousness to the account of another would be to take away from Him that which is His own, and place it to the account of one whose it is not. And since He has but one righteousness, that is, His own, to impute this to another would require all there is, and therefore upon this principle but one person could be justified. But

since faith comes by hearing the word of God, and everyone must believe for himself in order to be justified, there is righteousness for just as many as believe, regardless of the number of believers.

The prophet Isaiah centuries before saw Jesus as Jehovah's "righteous Servant," who "by His knowledge" would "justify many" (Isa. 53:11). This makes Him the active agent through whom the "many" should be justified, or made righteous. What the prophet foretold concerning Jesus as the one to justify sinners, the apostles constantly affirmed on their mission to Jews and Gentiles. This was most aptly and concisely stated by the apostle Peter on his visit to the Gentile Cornelius, "To Him give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

Christ forgives Sins

The Lord Himself during His life among men taught that as "The Son of Man" He had "*power on earth to forgive sins,*" and could say to sinners, "Thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. 9:3-6). He has since then been to the right hand of God exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, "for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31); and as such Prince and Savior He has official charge of the administration of the new covenant which secures to all believing persons remission of sins. This is why it is said, not only that He was "delivered for our offenses," but also that He was "raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). Had He not been raised again, i.e., were He still dead, then believers, however whole-heartedly they might believe, being outside of covenant relationship, would be "yet in their sins" (I. Cor. 15:17). But now that He ever liveth, He has an unchangeable priesthood, and is able to save to the uttermost, that is, evermore, them that come unto God by Him (Heb. 7:24, 25).

It is Jesus who forgives sins. The apostle Paul wrote to the brethren at Colosse, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, *even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye*" (Col. 3:13).

This shows plainly that the power to forgive sins is vested in the Lord Jesus Christ, and what an important office He holds as Prince and Savior to give repentance and forgiveness of sins! No wonder the apostle said to the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, "Be it known unto you, therefore, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and that *by Him all that believe are justified* from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38, 39). Here the forgiveness of sins and justification are "by Him," that is, by Jesus. This shows incidentally that in this instance the forgiveness of sins and justification are the same. Both are "by" Jesus; both upon condition of faith; and while the one sends away the subject's sins, so making him right, the other justifies him, that is, counts, makes or declares him righteous.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Law of Christ and Sin

LAW, whether divine or human, is always a rule of action. In order to produce obedience, law must have some penalty which is enforced by competent authority, to which the subject is amenable. This must also be true of what is scripturally styled "the law of Christ." We shall cite a number of passages which speak of this law.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

"To them that are without law (I am) as without law (being not without law to God, but *under the law to Christ*), that I might gain them that are under the law" (I. Cor. 9:21).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man is blessed in his deed" (margin, "doing."—James 1:25).

There was a marked change, a transition from one law to another, under Christ. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). From the foregoing passages we see that there is a law "in Christ Jesus" which is styled "the law of the Spirit of life." Since "it is the Spirit that quickeneth," as Jesus said (John 6:63), or that "giveth life," as the apostle Paul wrote (II. Cor. 3:6), here is a law of an entirely different order than that referred to in chapter 6:21, 25; 7:5, 23. "The end of these things is death"; and, "the wages of sin is death." The mental powers of those who are under this law "in Christ Jesus" have been "quickeneth" by the action of the word and Spirit within, so that they are not walking after the flesh, but after the Spirit. They are "free from sin," having been freed therefrom when they obeyed that form of doctrine which was delivered to them (chapter 6:17, 18, 22). The Son made them free through the truth (John 8:32). Instead of being written upon tables of stone, external to the second party to the covenant, the law was written within "in the fleshy tables of the heart" (II. Cor. 3:3). Instead of inspiring them with fear as the motive to obedience, as the law of sin and death did with Israel, they were imbued with "the Spirit of adoption," whereby they cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15), and render service to God from love (Gal. 5:6). Such love is the law of the Spirit of life.

The apostle Paul was "under the law to Christ" ("under Christ's law."—*Diaglott*), and so are all who are "in Christ Jesus." Instead of serving God from fear, the covenantees under the new covenant serve Him from love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (I. John 4:16).

What the New Law commands

The new law provides for a life which is endless and joint rulership with Christ in His kingdom for those who prove faithful after their union with Christ by baptism. Certain

conditions must be fulfilled in order to the bestowal of these blessings. "And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation *unto all them that obey Him*" (Heb. 5:9). "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have *always obeyed*, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*" (Phil. 2:12). "Blessed are they that *do His commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

What the New Law Forbids

It forbids idolatry (Eph. 5:5; 1. Cor. 10:14; I. John 5:21); the misuse of the name of God (Matt. 5:35; James 5:12); disobedience to parents (Eph. 6:1, 2); lying (Col. 3:9); fornication (Eph. 3:3, 5), as well as covetousness. While the law of Moses said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3), the new law goes vastly farther than this when it says that "covetousness is idolatry" (Col. 3:5), or, "a covetous man is an idolater" (Eph. 5:5).

The law of Moses said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but the new law goes beyond this when it says, "That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28).

The Law of the Spirit is Love

The old law would prevent the act; and when this was accomplished, it had gone far toward serving its purpose; but the new law would prevent the lustful thought. The old served mainly to purify the life, or keep it free from sinful acts; the new aims to purify the heart, out of which are the issues of life. The old was the law of fear; the new is the law of love. If covetousness is idolatry, or idol worship, it is because the covetous desire has usurped the place of the true God, and self-indulgence and self-gratification have taken the place of veneration and love for the Supreme One, and stolen the service which should be rendered to Him. All this the new law, the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," aims to correct by writing the law in the individual's heart, and engraving it upon the tablets of his memory.

In its relation to men, the new law of love seeks the good of the neighbor. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

Love is greater than either faith or hope, and also more enduring (I. Cor. 13:13). Being "the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:14), love embraces in itself all that is good, and makes its possessor a joy to all with whom he comes into contact. Love "suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Love "never faileth," being more enduring even than the gifts of the Spirit, such as prophecy, tongues, and knowledge. Yes, love "now abideth." This is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

Willful Sin

Grave are the consequences of sinning wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth, that is, having come within the scope of the law of the Spirit. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have come to the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:26, 27). This language relates to such as have "come to the knowledge of the truth." The "judgment" referred to is future, as the word "remaineth" very clearly proves, the same as the "rest" which "remaineth for the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).

That the Most High will have only saints and righteous persons associated with Christ in His reign on the earth is a truth which stands out with unmistakable clearness in the teaching of Scripture, as the following will show:

"Know ye not that *none of the unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom of God?* Be not deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1. Cor. 6:9, 10).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that *they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*" (Gal. 5:19-21).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. 5:5).

The righteous God would have righteous persons associated with His righteous Ruler in administering a righteous government, and hence will admit none but righteous persons to the honors of that high position. All who do not measure up to this rule will be rejected by the righteous Judge when rewards are given at the judgment of God. Such will be "devoured" by the "fiery indignation." Having lived after the flesh, and not having mortified the deeds of the body, they shall "die" (Rom. 8:13).

The law of Christ was given for the guidance of believers in order that they may not sin. God would not have His children commit sin, and therefore it is written, "My little children, *these things write I unto you that ye sin not*" (1. John 2:1). Yet it is possible, through the weakness of the flesh and faulty judgment, and with no intention on their part to do evil, for even believers to commit sin. What about them? Are they hopelessly lost, and forever excluded from God's favor? Will not God, who gave His Son to die for the ungodly and sinners, forgive His children if they repent and seek His forgiveness? The case is not necessarily hopeless, for we read, following the last quotation, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1. John 2:1, 2). Jesus Christ the

righteous, as the advocate with the Father, being "the propitiation for our sins," it is possible for such as have sinned a sin not unto death (chapter 5:16) to obtain forgiveness upon the conditions mentioned in the earlier part of this Epistle. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is in this way that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (chapter 1:7, 9). Christ is "the propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom. 3:25). Where such "faith in His blood" is manifested by confession and prayer on the part of the erring saint, there the "advocate with the Father" will perform the functions of His office, "be merciful to their unrighteousness, and remember their sins and iniquities no more" (Heb. 8:12). Being thus "justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1), and there is no barrier between such and eternal life, together with an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A Sin unto Death

This should have some attention. We quote entire the passage which refers to this matter. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin a sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; and I do not say that he shall pray for it; and there is a sin not unto death" (I. John 5:16, 17). This language shows,

1. That it is possible for a brother to commit sin.
2. That there is "a sin unto death."
3. That there is "a sin not unto death."
4. That prayer for one who has committed a sin not unto death is commanded, with the assurance that "he shall give him life."
5. That prayer is not commanded for one having committed a sin unto death.

What is this "sin unto death"? It is clear at once that it has in it the element of deliberateness and wilfulness. It is that which in the Old Testament is styled "presumptuous sin." "But the soul that *doeth ought presumptuously*, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth 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 commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him" (Numb. 15:30, 31). "David prayed, "Keep back thy servant also from *presumptuous sins*; let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression" (Psalm 19:13). As we see by reverting once more to Heb. 10:25-31, it is possible for those who have received the knowledge of the truth to tread under foot the Son of God (crucify Him to themselves afresh—chapter 6:6), count the sanctifying blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of grace (chapter 10:29). Such a course, deliberately conceived, and wilfully executed, must draw upon the guilty ones the displeasure of the Almighty, as sin always does, and expose them to the "fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Let no one think that because the law of Moses, with its death by stoning, has been done away, and because God has for Christ's sake forgiven the sins of the past, therefore believers may sin

with impunity. There is a dignity and a majesty about the divine law which must be respected. And it is just as possible to sin wilfully, or commit presumptuous sin, now as it was in the days of David or the apostles. The same God lives, and the same rule of right and duty exists and must govern men in their relations with the Most High. Not in vain is it said, "Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." But let us cherish and put into effect the closing words of this most solemn chapter, "But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (verses 38, 39); and also the cheering words of that other warning chapter, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak" (chapter 6:9).

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sin Condemned in the Flesh

ACCORDING to the Authorized Version the apostle Paul wrote to the brethren at Rome, "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:3, 4). In order to obtain a clear view of the teaching of this passage it is necessary to consider the different items separately. Here we have:

1. What the law could not do.
2. This was due to its being weak through the flesh.
3. What the law could not do. God did in sending His own Son.
4. The Son was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh.
5. This was "for sin."
6. Thus was sin condemned in the flesh.
7. The object of this: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

What the Law could not do

The law" here referred to without doubt is the Mosaic law, which was a "law of works" (Rom. 3:27). Its aim was to produce perfect righteousness. It said, "The man that doeth them shall live in them" (Lev. 18:5; Gal. 3:12). Upon the other hand, it said to all concerned, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them" (Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10). But we are taught that no law was given, apart from the law of the Spirit, that could give life. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. 3:21). A practical illustration of this is to be seen in the case of Saul of Tarsus, who wrote of himself as "an Hebrew of the Hebrews; . . . touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless" (Phil. 3:5, 6). Though a most scrupulous observer of the law; though blameless according to the legal standard, and full of burning zeal to enforce the law upon others (matters wherein one might see vast gain), yet all this was loss to him. Righteousness he would have;

however, not his "own righteousness, which is of the law" (verse 9), which he tells us, is "not God's righteousness" (Rom. 10:3), but that which is by faith in Christ Jesus. All of which makes it evident that the law could not produce perfect righteousness before God.

But there were other disabilities attaching to the law, which we present herewith:

1. It could not justify from sins (Acts 13:39; Gal. 5:4).
2. It could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4, 11).
3. It could not give the Spirit (Gal. 3:2-5).
4. It could not give life (Gal. 3:21).
5. It could not give the inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed (Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:18).

The Law was Weak through the Flesh

In dealing with this phase of our subject, two things need to be particularly borne in mind, viz., (1) the flesh, and (2) the weakness of the law through this flesh.

"The flesh" here contemplated was not human flesh in general, but Jewish flesh. When Jesus said to His Jewish contemporaries, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; *the flesh profiteth nothing*" (John 6:63), He must have had in mind this Jewish flesh, by which the Jews were judging (John 8:15), and of which the apostle Paul wrote, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and *have no confidence in the flesh*" (Phil. 3:3). This Jewish flesh prided itself in its distinguished ancestry, saying, "We have Abraham to our Father" (Matt. 3:9). This is the flesh which was unprofitable because it ignored the righteousness of God, set up a righteousness of its own—a righteousness of works, instead of faith, and so defeated the very object aimed at in the giving of the law.

The law, written upon tables of stone, was the "ministration of condemnation" and of "death" (II. Cor. 3:2-9), otherwise styled "the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2), which through its death penalty could only inspire the subjects with "fear" (Rom. 8:15), to which they were all their life time subject and in bondage (Gal. 2:4; 4:9; 5:1; Heb. 2:15).

Inspiring the subjects with fear, and not with faith which works by love (Gal. 5:6), the law could not produce perfect righteousness through or in Jewish flesh; and when they were guilty of infraction of the law, it could neither by added works nor by the blood of goats and calves justify the guilty from their misdeeds. The law not having the power to produce perfect righteousness, another means must be provided which would insure this result (Rom. 10:3).

What God did in sending His Own Son

What did God do through the Son that the law could not do? The Son's mission was to do the will of God. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7-9). For the reasons above mentioned, the Son took away the first, that is, the old or Mosaic covenant, as a means of justification, that He might establish the second (verse 9), namely, the new covenant with a perfect system of righteousness, that of faith without the works of the law, and justification or remission of sins to him that "believeth in Jesus" (Acts 13:38, 39; Rom. 3:22-26). Such a system

of righteousness was effected through the perfect obedience which Jesus rendered to God—an obedience which was “unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil 2:8), and brought into effect and operation the new covenant which secures to the covenantees the forgiveness of their sins, and writes the law of the covenant as the rule of action into their inward parts (Matt. 26:28; II. Cor. 3:3; Heb. 8:6-13; 10:15-18).

In the Likeness of Sinful Flesh

The Greek phrase rendered “sinful flesh” is *sarkos hamartias*, and is literally “flesh of sin.” That it has to do with sin is manifest; nor is it difficult to see that it is flesh which, owing to its natural desires and tendencies, “its affections and passions” (Gal. 5:24, margin), is capable of committing sin, if it does not actually do so. Jesus, coming in the likeness of such flesh, possessed these affections and passions. Hence He could be tempted, and therefore commit sins, the same as other human beings. Such susceptibility to temptation and sin is a fact which is fully recognized in Scripture, which speaks of Him as having been “in all points tempted like as we are” (Heb. 4:15). Though tempted in this manner, there was one particular in which He distinguished Himself from all others, the most devout not excepted: He was “without sin.” By this we understand, in conjunction with the consensus of Scripture teaching, that He did not commit sin. For one who is tempted in as many points as it is possible to be tempted, and yet not commit sin, it is necessary that he overcome the affections and passions of the flesh. This is what Jesus always did, never deviating in the least from the path of rectitude and duty. With Him the law of right was written in the inward parts, on the fleshy tablets of the heart, instead of externally upon lifeless stones. Instead of merely seeing duty in the doing of the will of God, it was to Him meat and drink. Instead of the dread and fear which the law from Sinai inspired in the Jewish flesh, He rendered service to God through faith and trust—a faith which works by love. In place of being moved from without by the letter of the law, He was moved from within by the ever-present law of the Spirit of life, which is love

“Likeness”

We cannot leave this subject without giving some attention to the word “likeness” as here used. It is from the Greek word *homoionia*, and occurs six times in the New Testament. It is rendered “likeness” three times, and “made like unto” “shape,” and “similitude,” each once. From the use made of it by the sacred writers we shall be able to determine its meaning. The apostle Paul used it five out of the six times it occurs in the New Testament. In Rom. 1:23 we read of “an image *made like* to corruptible man.” In chapter 5:14 we have those who have not sinned “after the *similitude* of Adam’s transgression.” In chapter 6:4 we are told of having been “planted together in the *likeness* of His death.” Then comes the passage under consideration. In Phil. 2:7 Christ Jesus, while appearing in the form of a servant, was “made in the *likeness* of men.” In Rev. 9:7 it is said that the “shapes” of the locusts seen by John were “like unto horses prepared for battle.” Passing by Rom. 8:3 for the present, we notice that in none of these instances does the word

homoioma go farther than suggest a resemblance, an approximate similarity. In Luke 13:18 we have the verb *homioio*, and the A. V. not incorrectly gives it as "resemble." If, then, the verb form of the word may properly be rendered "resemble," the noun form may with equal propriety be rendered "resemblance." And the use made of this word in the writings of Paul shows that no more was intended.

Retaining this idea when we come to this word in Rom. 8:3, we may appropriately say that "God sent His Son in the resemblance of flesh of sin." His flesh was not flesh of sin itself, in the sense that it committed sin, for neither in thought, word nor act did He cause His flesh to sin (See Eccl. 5:6). Therefore though sent in the likeness, or resemblance, of flesh of sin, His flesh was not flesh of sin itself, for the reason that it "did no sin" (I. Peter 2:22). This is manifest when we consider the fact, also set forth with great clearness in the Scriptures, that when Jesus bore sins in His own body upon the tree, it was not *His* sins that He bore, but those of others: "*our* sins" (verse 24). It is here that He, the sinless One, made the great sacrifice for the sins of the sinners. He received "stripes" and "wounds" such as were the desert of sinners (Isa. 53:5, 8, 10, 11, 12; I. Peter 2:24).

"For Sin"

The Greek words rendered "for sin" are *peri hamartias*. The word *peri* ordinarily means about or concerning. Hence it was about or concerning sin that the transactions previously mentioned took place. The marginal reading suggests that it was "by a sacrifice for sin" that God condemned sin. This is not at all incompatible with the idea of sacrifice, for it is a fact that Christ was a sacrifice for sin—a sin offering. Prophecy and fulfillment alike regard Him as being "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities"; and He made His soul "an offering for sin" (Hebrew, *asham*, guilt.—Isa. 53:5, 10).

When He thus offered Himself to God, it was "without spot" (Heb. 9:14; I. Peter 1:19); that is to say, the offering was not in any sense "corrupt" (Mal. 1:14), and so obnoxious to God. On the contrary, it was a sacrifice which was acceptable to God as "a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:2). The object of this sacrifice was to ratify, consecrate or dedicate the new covenant, which insures to the covenantees of the second part the remission of sins. "For where a covenant exists, the death of that which ratifies it is necessary to be produced, because a covenant is firm over dead victims, since it is never valid while that which ratifies it is alive" (Heb. 9:16, 17, *Diaglott*). This covenant is the "new covenant" in Christ's blood, shed for many for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28), and such remission being now obtainable under it, "there is no more offering for sin" (chapter 10:18).

Sin Condemned in the Flesh

It must be borne in mind that in this entire transaction God was the actor. It was He that sent forth His Son in the resemblance of flesh of sin, and by a sacrifice for sin condemned sin in the flesh. Two things here stand out prominently, viz., (1) sin, and (2) its condemnation. The primary signification of

the Greek word *hamartia*, translated "sin," is "missing the mark." Scripturally defined, it is transgression of law—lawlessness (I. John 3:4; see R. V.), or action contrary to law. God in the flesh of His Son condemned sin. Does this mean that the name of that which God condemned in the flesh is "sin," as transgression of the law, or that that which was condemned is properly styled "sin in the flesh"? The former is sin in action, which the Scriptures fully recognize, while the latter is something of an entirely different kind, with which the Scriptures do not occupy themselves. Sin being action which is in contravention of law, it justly falls under the divine reprobation. Since Jesus "knew no sin" (II. Cor. 5:21), and "did no sin" (I. Peter 2:22), there was no sin in His flesh to condemn. Who or what dwelt in Jesus? We know from His own testimony, and that of other reliable witnesses, that God was in Him, and dwelt in Him. "As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee" (John 17:21). "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works" (John 14:10). The word of reconciliation as committed to the ambassadors for Christ was, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (II. Cor. 5:19). Thus we see that that which indwelt Jesus was not sin, but God. God, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:13), does not dwell in that which is full of sin, as the word "sinful" of the A. V. imports. The temple in which He would dwell must be holy (I. Cor. 3:17). And this is precisely what Jesus was: holy, and without blemish or spot (Acts 2:26, 27; 3: 14; Heb. 9:14; I. Peter 1:19). The offering which Jesus made, so far from being vitiated and made obnoxious by sin, was one which was to God "a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:2). Therefore it cannot, in reason, be said that there was an element in Jesus which may properly be styled "sin in the flesh."

That sin was condemned in the flesh of God's Son is a matter of scriptural testimony, which we heartily believe; but that there was a physical element in Jesus called "sin in the flesh" is not once affirmed in Scripture. If this idea were correct, then we should have to account in some way as to how sin came to be in the flesh of Jesus. If it be said that it was by inheritance from His mother, this would trace it back to Adam. If it was in Adam, then he could only have had it either by creation, or by an act of God after transgression. In either case, then, it would be there by a direct act of God. Since "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3), then if He placed sin in the flesh of Adam, we would be led to the strange and anomalous position that God is the author of sin. And are we to believe that God subsequently condemned this creation of His in His Son? We are categorically taught that "every creature of God is good," and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving" (I. Tim. 4:4). Then why should God condemn that which He created, and which we are to receive with thanksgiving? Upon the basis of Scripture teaching we affirm with all confidence that "sin in the flesh" is not a creature of God either in Adam, or his posterity, including Christ. For this reason Adam did not possess and could not transmit to his posterity an

element called sin in the flesh; God's Son did not inherit it from His mother, and therefore that which God condemned was not a hereditarily transmissible chemical or physical thing, agent, or property. Sin was condemned in the flesh; but not sin in the flesh was condemned.

How was sin condemned in the flesh? By an offering for sin. According to prophecy Jesus made His soul "an offering for sin" (Heb. *asham*, guilt; also "transgression."—Isa. 53:5, 8, 10). Verse 11 says that He was to "bear their iniquities," that is, of the transgressors, who were guilty. Though "He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth" (verse 9); though He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (I. Peter 2:22), yet "His own self bare our sins in His own body (*epi*) upon the tree," where He received the "stripes" by which true believers are "healed" (verse 24). Here, as also in Isa. 53:9, that which He bore was the punishment due to sins; and supplying the elliptical words, we may say without doing violence to the truth, He "bare the punishment of their iniquities," their "sins." And all this was done "by a sacrifice for sin." Since the flesh or body of Jesus was offered once for all (Heb. 10:10), it was "in the likeness of flesh of sin" that this result was achieved, though Jesus "suffered for sins" as "the Just for the unjust" (I. Peter 3:18).

The Object here aimed at

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4). The Greek word for "righteousness" (*dikaïōma*) is rendered "judgment" twice, "justification" once, "ordinance" thrice, and "righteousness" four times. Some translate it "righteous requirement." From this we see that the law required righteousness of action and character, which, owing to the weakness of the flesh, it was not able to produce. Wherein the law failed, this God did in His Son, who both loved and fulfilled righteousness, secured an effective system of justification through the consecration of a covenant which provides for the remission of sins, which are to be remembered no more, and gave the Spirit to be the guide for the "walk" or conduct of His followers, writing the law in the heart, upon the living consciousness, instead of upon lifeless tables of stone. "Walk after the Spirit" is the object aimed at in this entire transaction; and if this be not understood, or is lost sight of, the real point is missed. "Fulfill righteousness." This was uppermost in the mind of Jesus (Matt. 3:15), not only at His baptism, but throughout His life among men. This must be the believer's aim. "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Col. 2:6). "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (I. John 2:6). This is the example. To this we add the apostolic admonition, "This I say then. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16, 25). Here it is in order to repeat the words, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (chapter 6:16). This is what the law could not do, being weak through the flesh. It could not give the "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2), the Spirit that

"quickeneth" (John 6:63), the "Spirit that giveth life" (II. Cor. 3:6). The law was not the medium of the impartation of the Spirit. "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, doeth He it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:2, 5). The Spirit is not given by the law, but comes by the hearing of faith. This rule obtains only "in Christ Jesus." Here it is "Christ that strengtheneth" and enables the devout believer to "do all things" required of the followers of God (Phil. 4:13). Such are "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness" (Col. 1:11). As regards the means by which such strength is imparted, we need but read the words of Paul, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . that he would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be *strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man*, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," etc. (Eph. 3:14-17). Here is the Spirit indwelling the believer and the latter "living in the Spirit," as well as walking in the Spirit. Here is no condemnation, as under the law, which was weak through the flesh, and could give neither the Spirit, nor the strength required to produce the righteousness which is acceptable to God.

CHAPTER XIX.

Why was Jesus Baptized?

WHEN John was baptizing many people of Israel in the river of Jordan with the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Matt. 3:6), and those so baptized were confessing their sins (Mark 1:4, 5), Jesus of Nazareth also came to John to be baptized of him. It is related that "John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest Thou to me?" Whereupon Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:13-15).

Fulfilling all righteousness

We are especially concerned with the words of Jesus, "For thus (that is, by Jesus being baptized by John) it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." First, the word "becometh" claims our attention. This word means to be proper or suitable; accord with; be worthy of. The Greek *prepo* has the same meaning. From this we see that the baptism of Jesus by John was becoming, suitable to or in keeping with all righteousness. The plural "us" in Jesus' reply to the remonstrance of John indicates that both had a part to perform in thus fulfilling all righteousness: Jesus no more than John; John no less than Jesus. What was this "all righteousness" which it was proper for them to "fulfill"? It was what God required, and was therefore in every way right. But this passage does not specify of what such righteousness consisted. The baptism of John was "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," and we are informed that those who were baptized of John were "confessing their sins." But there is nothing in the context

nor elsewhere in the Scriptures that shows either that Jesus had sins to be forgiven, or that He made such confession with forgiveness as its object. Hence we shall have to turn to other testimony for the reason why Jesus was baptized by John.

The Real Object of John's Baptism

There is a very clear statement in the words of John the Baptist bearing directly upon the point in question. We quote the entire passage in which this statement occurs:

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a Man which is preferred before me; for He was before me. And I knew His not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not; but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1:29-34).

After introducing Jesus to the people as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (vs. 29), John called attention to Jesus as a man who was preferred before him (vs. 30). John knew Him not, and added, "But that He (Jesus) should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water" (vs. 31). As who or what was Jesus to be made manifest to Israel? We shall see. John bore record, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him" (vs. 32). He who sent him to baptize with water said to John, "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit" (vs. 33). John concluded by saying, "And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God" (vs. 34). Then we have the additional fact recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke, that a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). Here, then, are the facts:

1. John showed Jesus to Israel as the Lamb and Son of God.
2. God gave to Jesus the Holy Spirit.
3. The voice from heaven acknowledging Jesus as God's beloved Son was heard not only by Jesus, but also by John, and possibly by the people.
4. After the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus John bare record to the people. "This is the Son of God." Thus and in this manner was Jesus publicly and officially manifested to Israel for their acceptance as the Son and Lamb of God, and this was the real object of the baptism of John.

John being the divinely appointed medium through whom Jesus was to be manifested to "all the people of Israel" (Acts 13:24, this manifestation could not be effected by any other person, or in any other way. Jesus knowing this, went to John to be baptized of him, and thus, in keeping with the fitness of things, would be fulfilled all righteousness.

The Baptism of John not a Private Affair

The baptism of John was by no means a private affair, since there were present persons from all walks of life, "from Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan" (Matt. 3:5). There were among the "multitudes" who were present Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, lawyers, publicans, harlots, men of wealth and high station, as well as the poor of the land, soldiers and private citizens; and one would even believe that king Herod himself was present (Luke 3:7-20). And these visitors represented not a particular clique or coterie, but the entire nation of Israel. As far as Jesus was concerned, this ceremony, accompanied by His anointing with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:38), constituted both His public installation as the Messiah, and His proclamation to the people as the Lamb and Son of God; and the people were most solemnly admonished to repent of their sins, believe on Jesus as the One who was to come, and obtain remission of their sins. Those who rejected the counsel of God concerning themselves, and were not baptized of John (Luke 7:30), did not acknowledge Jesus, notwithstanding He was thus publicly declared to be God's Son. They would therefore justly be subject to "the wrath to come" (Luke 3:7).

CHAPTER XX.

First for His own sins, and then for the people's (Heb. 7:27)

THE entire passage reads, "For such an high priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." Let us ask ourselves the question, *Did Jesus make a sin offering for Himself to make atonement "for His own sins," as the high priest under the law was required to do?* Whether we view the offering of the Levitical high priest, either for himself, or for the people, it was for "sins," or acts of transgression against God's law, and for nothing else. This is made so clear in Leviticus, chapters 4, 5, 6, and 9 as to be beyond the possibility of doubt. Both Testaments alike teach that the offering of Jesus was an "offering for sin," a "sin offering," a "sacrifice for sins." Again we ask, Of what "sins" was Jesus "guilty" that required an offering in order to procure forgiveness for Him? He "knew no sin" (II. Cor. 5:21). He was "without blemish and without spot" (Heb. 9:14; I. Peter 1:19). He "did no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth" (Isa. 53:9). There being neither transgression nor guilt, He required no forgiveness. Then why is it said, "This He did once when He offered up Himself"? What, if any, were "His own sins"? We feel constrained to ask. Is it altogether certain that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews intended to convey the idea that Jesus made a sacrifice "for His own sins"? The high priest under the law

offered up two distinct sacrifices, "first (one) for his own sins, and then (one) for the people's." The offering for himself is dealt with in Lev. 9:8-14. It took some time to make an "atonement" for himself, as a close study of the context will show. "The people's offering" followed after the high priest's offering "for his own sins" had been finished (verses 15-24). The priest's "sins" were the same in kind as were "the people's" (sins); and he shared with the people the forgiveness or remission that was theirs when an atonement or covering was made for them. If then Jesus did precisely what the high priest did under the law, the further question obtrudes itself:

Did Jesus require Reconciliation?

When Jesus made "reconciliation for the sins of the people," was He in need of reconciliation for sins of His own? When He was "delivered for our offenses," was He guilty of such? When He "suffered for sins, for the unjust," was He unjust? When He "gave Himself for our sins," did He share these, and the consequent guilt? When He died for the "ungodly," was He ungodly? When His blood was shed "for many for the remission of sins," was it shed for sins of His own? The scriptural testimony most clearly and emphatically negatives all these queries, and entirely exempts Him from both sin and guilt. In this respect, He "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:18). And certainly it cannot be said of Him, as has been said, that "whatever He must do and did for us, He must do and did for Himself." This would argue that it was necessary for Jesus to be "reconciled to God in the body of His flesh," and that prior to such reconciliation He was "alienated" and at enmity with God (Col. 1:21, 22). That such a position is untenable must appear the moment it is considered.

This He did once

When it is said, "This He did once" (Heb. 7:27), this can only refer to the sacrifice "for the sins of the people." This is what the entire testimony of Scripture, Old and New Testaments, set forth with a clearness and directness at once unmistakable and convincing. Let us note the following facts:

1. The pronoun "this" in Heb. 7:27, both in English and Greek is in the singular, and has for its antecedent the phrase, "and then for the people's" (sins). "This," that is, to offer for the sins of the people, "He did once when He offered up Himself." This is in harmony with the type in the law; in harmony with the direct prophecy concerning the kind of offering Jesus was to make, that is, "an offering for sins," "for the transgressions of the people," and in harmony with the teaching of the New Testament regarding the nature and object of the sacrifice of Christ.

2. Had the writer intended to say that Jesus made a sacrifice "first for His own sins, and then He made a sacrifice for the people's sins," the Greek plural pronoun *toutoon* would have been used so as to say, "These He did once when He offered up Himself." The sin offering which Jesus made was "one offering" (Heb. 10:14), not two, as in the case of the priest; it was for one party, not two parties. The Greek pronoun in this case is *touto*, singular.

3. When it is said, "This he did once," this must refer to the elliptical statement, "And then to offer for the people's" (sins). The *Diaglott* says, "then for those of the people." The Greek pronoun for "those" in this case is *toutoon*, plural, having reference to the "sins" covered by the offering for "the people." Thus we find this text in perfect harmony with the teaching of both Old and New Testaments, which makes Christ's offering a "sin offering" "for the sins of the people."

If we say that Jesus offered up sacrifice, "first for His own sins," we inevitably by such a construction involve Him in personal transgression and guilt. If, to avoid this difficulty, we say that He offered for what is variously styled "original sin," inherited from Adam, we are introducing an element of which this passage knows nothing. The sin offerings under the law had to do with "guilt" contracted by transgression against the "commandments of the Lord." It was for these that "atonement" was made. But Heb. 7:27 says that the high priest offered "first for his own sins, and then for the people's." There is no scriptural warrant for saying that Jesus made an offering for what is styled "original" or "inherited" sin. There is no clear and direct teaching to this effect in the Scriptures dealing with sin and sin offerings, and there is nothing in the type referred to in Hebrews, chapter 7, which in any way suggests the idea of sacrifice for what is so designated. That the priest could and did sin is evident from the legislation of the Mosaic system. Thus it is written, "If a priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people, then let him bring for his sin which he hath sinned a young bullock without blemish unto the Lord for a sin offering" (Lev. 4:4-12). It was a "sin which he hath sinned" that made the "sin offering" necessary. In such case, the same as "the sin of the people," there was "guilt" on account of having done that "which ought not to be done," that which the law forbade. Then why should Jesus "offer for His own sins" when He had no sins of any kind for which sacrifice was required?

Holy, Harmless, undefiled

If the words, "Holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), refer to Jesus at the time when He made the offering of Himself, then there was no sin of any kind or description in Him, whether as personal transgression, or an "original," *alias* "inherited" sin; in view of which it would be extremely inappropriate to say that He made an offering "for His own sins." To say that in His case the offering was for "original" sin is to say what the text neither says nor warrants, and is in fact contrary to it. By no process of construction known to us can the plural *hamartioon*, translated "sins," reasonably be made to mean a physical element in human nature variously styled "sin," whether "original," "inherited," "federal," "racial," or any other extra-scriptural term that may have been invented. Such an element, if it exists, is not recognized in this passage, and could only be referred to in the singular number. This at once eliminates it from the purview of Heb. 7:27, which deals with "sins" as acts of commission of omission, and nothing else. Furthermore, it is inconceivable how an inspired writer could say that Christ was "undefiled," and then in the next breath that He "offered

up sacrifice for His own sins" the same as for "the sins of the people."

Jesus in all Point tempted

That Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are," is a fact which all who are acquainted with the testimony most clearly recognize, and willingly acknowledge; but when He was thus tempted it was "without sin"; that is, His temptation, unlike ours in many instances, did not result in acts of transgression, which are styled "sin." It is only when lust has conceived that sin is produced (James 1:15). We know that in the case of Jesus lust did not conceive; hence He "knew no sin" in the sense of transgressing God's law. Why, then, should He make a sin offering "for His own sins," when He was both sinless and guiltless?

There are more than two score passages in the New Testament which testify with remarkable directness and clearness that when Jesus made an offering to God, it was "for us," "for our sins," "for the sins of the people." It cannot be said that there is one, equally direct and clear, which teaches that He made a sin offering or that He suffered and died for sins of His own, either "original" or personal.

It is not by accident, we may be sure, that it is so, but by design in keeping with the wisdom of God. The reason for this is to be found in the fact, already established, that He who made the sacrifice for us was Himself the spotless Lamb of God, both sinless and guiltless. He who always did those things that pleased the Father (John 8:29); whose meat it was to do the Father's will (John 4:34); who sought not his own will, but the Father's (John 5:30; 6:38); who spent whole nights in prayer and communion with the Father (Luke 6:12); whom the Father always heard (John 11:41, 42), was never alienated or at enmity with God by wicked works, but was Himself the Peacemaker, the means of reconciling others to the Father. It was the Father's good pleasure to employ such a One as Mediator between Himself and men, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, that is, through the blood of His cross.

Things which Defile a Man

We may be sure that the blood of no other would have availed to effect our redemption, even the forgiveness of our sins. But here was One of whom it may be said without reserve that He was sinless, and therefore spotless. Pure religion is to "keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Spots are acquired by action whose effect is defiling. Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). He Himself most clearly defined and described the things which are defiling in their effect, viz., "Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: *these are the things which defile a man*" (Matt. 15:18-20). Jesus being undefiled in every sense of the word, it was with the utmost fitness that He "offered Himself to God" (Heb. 9:14).. It may be said without qualification or reservation, as it was by one directly inspired, that He was "*without blemish and without spot*" (I. Peter 1:19). True, His nature was like ours, but this was not counted to Him as a spot which required

cleansing.

When we partake of the fruit of the vine at the memorial service, we think of Him as the One who was not only "innocent" (Matt. 27:4), but whose blood was "precious," in fact, so precious that it was a suitable means to effect our reconciliation to God. Instead of regarding the blood of Christ, wherewith believers were redeemed and are sanctified, as "an unholy thing," we are to think of it as "precious" (I. Peter 1:19), and a thing whose value cannot be adequately appraised. We shall never get beyond the obligation of the most humble and devout gratitude to Him who "loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5). What the blood of bulls and goats could not do (Heb. 10:4, 11); what no other man's blood could do, that is, take away our sins, and secure for us eternal life, this was accomplished in the wisdom of God when the blood of Christ flowed on Calvary.

The Blood of Jesus was "Precious"

We accept without question or reservation what the Spirit-filled men of old said regarding the offering of the Lord Jesus, and do not hesitate to attribute to Him what they affirmed, whether in prophecy, in type, or in the record of what Jesus did and taught. On the other hand, we are not only loth, but quite unwilling, to say of Him what He neither affirmed of Himself, nor authorized those to say whom He entrusted with the message concerning Himself. It does not appear why we should say that He made a sin offering for what is styled "original" or "inherited" sin, when the Scriptures dealing with His "sacrifice for sins" do not once affirm this. As the matter appears to us from the teaching of Scripture, as well as from its silence, regarding the offering of Christ, we can safely go as far as the testimony goes; and where this stops, we shall not be amiss in calling a halt, and observing a respectful silence. We are confident the Lord will condemn no one for regarding His blood as "precious," because it is the divinely appointed means of our redemption; but there is waiting a fearful judgment for those who regard the blood of the new covenant as an unholy or unclean thing (Heb. 10:29, 30). He who was begotten of God by Holy Spirit power as "that Holy Thing" (Luke 1:30-35); who was sanctified to the service of God and humanity; whom God the Father sealed (John 6:26); upon whom He attested His approval, unbounded pleasure and delight (Acts 2:22; Matt. 17:5; Isa. 42:1), was a fit sacrifice for sins; and He will conduct many sons to the glory which He Himself obtained on account of the suffering of death. "To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5).

Heb. 9:12

Another passage cited as proof that Jesus made a sin offering on His own behalf is Heb. 9:12, which reads, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." We omit the words "for us" because they are not found in the Greek text, and were supplied by the translators. From the absence of these words from the Greek text it is argued that such redemption was from what is called

"original sin," and that Jesus obtained redemption therefrom for Himself. The context directly contradicts this. Here we have the high priest under the law entering the second compartment of the sanctuary with the blood of animals which he "offered for himself and for the errors of the people" (verse 7). The Greek word here rendered "errors" is *agnoematoon*, which literally means ignorances, that is, sins of ignorance. Manifestly this refers to such passages as Lev. 4:2, which says, "If a soul sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them," etc. (See also verses 13, 22, 27). That both priest and people had such "errors" of conduct or action is a fact which only needs to be stated. That the day of atonement, when the offering was made, was for the purpose of securing forgiveness of sins committed under the Mosaic covenant, is a fact. Such forgiveness was the same as redemption, as the context shows. It was a "redemption from the transgressions under the first covenant" (verse 15); and priest and people alike were in need of this. But this redemption was an annual one that recurred "again every year" (chapter 10:3). On the other hand, the redemption which is in Christ is one which is "eternal," in contrast with one which was annual. The blood of Christ "purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (chapter 9:14). This redemption is "even the forgiveness of sins" (Rom. 3:24, 25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).

We may say with the utmost assurance that Jesus had neither "errors" nor "transgressions" nor "dead works" that required either offering or purging. The scriptural testimony relating to this matter shows that it was "our sins" that were "purged by Himself" (Heb. 1:3), either in making the "sacrifice for sins," or in its application to the individual—"purged from his old sins" (II. Peter 1:9). If Jesus was as much beset with "errors" as were "the people," then it is inconceivable how He could "by Himself purge our sins." To purge is to purify, or make pure. That which purges must be purer than that which is to be purged. Hence if Jesus Himself needed to be purged (and it was "dead works," "sins" and "transgressions" that required "purging," "redemption" or "remission") it would follow the He Himself was impure, not to use the even more objectionable word "defiled." The contextual teaching of Hebrews, chapter 9, is diametrically opposed to such a view. The only view possible is that the "eternal redemption" which Jesus obtained according to verse 12 is one which was on account of the "errors" and "transgressions" of "the people," and not that He Himself was the subject of it. It was the conscience, the "conscience of sins," that was to be purged (chapter 10:2).

We submit in all candor and humility that this chapter does not support the teaching which has been deduced from it, viz., that the redemption here contemplated was for "original sin," and that Jesus was the subject of it. In sharp and striking contrast with those who required redemption from errors and transgression, Jesus was "without spot." It was in this that He differed from all others; and it was this difference that made it possible for Him "by Himself" to "purge our sins." The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as no other blood,

has the power to "cleanse from all sin, from all unrighteousness" (I. John 1:7, 9). "The redemption that is in Christ Jesus" provides for the "remission of sins that are past" (Rom. 3:23, 24; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). But we may most searchingly scan His entire "past" up to the time when He offered the "one sacrifice for sins forever," and we shall search in vain for a single error, or the most isolated thing that would produce a "conscience of sin" requiring to be purged. He was faultless, flawless, and sinless, and therefore we are morally bound to exempt Him, as God exempted Him, from the necessity of making a sin offering for Himself, or obtaining "redemption from transgressions," or forgiveness of sins.

CHAPTER XXI.

Did Jesus Benefit by His Offering?

THE inquiry will arise, "If Jesus did not make a sin offering for Himself to obtain release from sin, what personal benefit did He derive from the offering He made?" We shall see. First of all stands out the fact of His perfect obedience to the Father's will. Such obedience could not be without effect. God's plan contemplated that one of the human race should give his soul as an offering for sin, or guilt, "the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us (them) to God." This could only be done through obedience to God's holy will. And here comes to view the most remarkable and beautiful trait in the character of Jesus. In giving His life for others He not only rendered perfect obedience to the Father's command, but at the same time exhibited His unselfish love for them. The Son of God "loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). "He loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). "He loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev. 1:5). When He, as the good Shepherd, laid down his life for the sheep, this was not because He was under condemnation to die a violent death; but as the Son of Man His nature, like ours, was mortal, and therefore He must sooner or later die. It is also a fact that wicked men "condemned" Him (Matt. 20:18; 27:3). But it cannot be said in truth that God condemned Him. In speaking of laying down His life for others. He said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep I lay down my life for the sheep. . . . Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.* I have power (or right) to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:11, 15, 17, 18). The laying down of His life was in voluntary obedience to His Father's commandment, and not that He went as a condemned criminal to His doom.

It is testified that "though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. 5:8); and also that it was through suffering that He was "made perfect" (chapter 2:10). We understand this perfection to embrace the

bestowal of the divine nature, and exaltation to the right hand of the Father as Prince and Savior, as Captain of our salvation. Had he not rendered such obedience in making the sacrifice of Himself as a sin offering to put away sin, He would never have been thus perfected and exalted.

Exaltation due to Obedience

This exaltation is constantly in Scripture attributed to His obedience unto death. It was said by the apostle Peter, "The God of our Fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30, 31). The testimony of the apostle Paul relating to the same point is this: "Wherefore also God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9, 10). The "wherefore" in this case has its basis in Christ's humiliation and obedience unto the death of the cross. Now He is "highly exalted," but the time was when such humiliation and obedience lay between Himself and exaltation.

For Joy He endured the Cross

Again it is said of Him as the "Author and Finisher of our faith," that "for the joy set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). As to the "joy set before Him," one feature of this joy is referred to in Psalm 16:11: "In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." Also: "Thou hast made me full of joy with thy countenance" (Acts 2:38). Again: "Thou hast made Him exceeding glad with thy countenance" (Psalm 21:6). He has the joy, not only of living, of having "life for evermore," but also of being in the "presence" of His Father, beholding His "countenance," and as priest pleading His household's cause in heaven, exercising compassion on their weaknesses, extending mercy and grace to help in time of need, rejoicing at their progress in the Christian life, and granting to the penitent remission of sins, made possible through the shedding of the blood of the new covenant. Yes, on account of having made His soul an "offering for sin" He shall "prolong His days, and see His seed" in those whom He turns to righteousness. The "joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" is a joy that must come to Him through whose death repentance and remission of sins are granted to Jews and Gentiles.

The Joy of Saving Others

Nor is this all. When He shall impress upon the worthy the divine nature, and thus forever lift them above and beyond the power of death, and receive as a token of grateful recognition the encomium of praise, "To Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5); when all the saints shall have "entered into the joy of their Lord" (Matt. 25:21, 23), only

then will His joy be full, and He will say with profound satisfaction, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. 2:13). All this and more is involved in the "joy set before Him," for the sake of which He "endured the cross, despising the shame." He coveted that joy; and it being attainable only by enduring the cross, He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He is now at the right hand of the throne of God, rejoicing when sinners turn to Him, and His brethren run with patience the race set before them; and again, when, in contemplation of the glorious destiny that awaits these, they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I. Peter 1:8), the smile of His benign countenance is upon them, and He rejoices with the joy that was His incentive in enduring the cross.

What yearning, what intense desire, must have filled His soul! not only for His own salvation from death, wherein He now greatly rejoices (Psalm 21:1), but the salvation of the multitudes whose weal or woe depended upon Him. Though the path was rugged, the cross cruel, the shame humiliating, yea, crushing to every element of human pride, He submitted in love, He bore patiently, He endured with resignation, He drank to the dregs "the dreadful cup of pain," His one and only thought being that He might give His life as a ransom for many, thus pleasing the Father, and by rising again and prolonging His days ever live to save to the uttermost those who would come unto God by Him.

In Suffering Jesus set us an Example

It will be observed that in giving His life for us, Jesus set us an example. Whether we consider Him as the humble servant who was obedient unto death on the cross, we are admonished to let "this mind" be in us (Phil. 2:8); whether we consider the joy that was set before Him as a motive to endure the cross, this is for us to view that we may run with patience the race that is set before us (Heb. 12:1, 2); whether we see Him suffering for us in the flesh, we are to "arm ourselves with the same mind" (I. Peter 4:1). "He suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps" (chapter 2:21). Though He suffered for us in a manner most acceptable to God, His sufferings will avail us nothing unless we arm ourselves with the same mind, and follow the example He set before us.

Believers must depart from Iniquity

When "He gave Himself for us," it was that He might "redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14); but unless we "depart from iniquity" (II. Tim. 2:19), it will avail us nothing. It is true, Christ died to sin once; but it is no less necessary that His followers reckon themselves likewise dead to sin, and at the same time alive unto God (Rom. 6:10, 11). The most precise theory concerning the sacrifice of Christ will of itself save no one, unless there results from the truth apprehended such deadness to sin, and a corresponding life unto God. Least of all does it tend toward anyone's salvation to attribute to the Lord what the testimony concerning Him not only does not contain, but actually forbids. If it were necessary to our sal-

vation to believe or affirm that Jesus needed to make a sin offering for Himself, whether for personal sins, or for being a natural body of flesh and blood, we should read of it in the divine testimony in terms which cannot be misunderstood; and in the absence of such testimony it suffices us to humbly and gratefully accept the truth so aptly expressed in prophecy, that "*He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*"; that "the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5).

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5, 6).

Conclusion

Prompted by "the same spirit of faith" which moved one of old time to speak, the author of this treatise voices his conviction with reference to the things herein presented. "I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (Psalm 116:10; II. Cor. 4:13). Conscious of the fact that some of the points touched upon have been the center of energetic and prolonged controversy, we have earnestly sought to avoid the arena of polemical strife, but have written rather that the reader may see the exceeding sinfulness of sin; sense the beauty and warmth of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the sins of men; behold the attractive side of Christ who gave Himself for us, and admire the wonderful wealth of the grace of God in making possible, through the blood of Christ as the blood of the new covenant, the remission of sins and endless life in a kingdom that shall never pass away. May it be given to reader and writer alike to show our gratitude to God Most High for a favor so great and glory so transcendent, by walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit!

We close with the fitting words of the seer on Patmos, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5, 6).

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