

But it was no uncommon thing to take a live coal from the brazen altar, which Isaiah must have constantly seen. Live coals from that altar were used to burn the daily incense, as we learn directly from the Talmud, and indirectly from the rule against strange fire. The purification of Isaiah's lips with a coal from the fire of the burnt sacrifice is a most just and beautiful conception. For the service of that altar was a constant type of His atonement, who "loved us, and gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." By no other sacrifice could Isaiah's "iniquity be taken away, and his sin purged."

I have exposed the weakness of this piece of exegesis somewhat ruthlessly, because it affords such a perfect example of the failure of purely linguistic considerations, combined with a devout spirit, to explain the Holy Scriptures, unless the expositor also takes account of their general teaching. Six times is the sixth chapter of Isaiah cited in the New Testament. In Canon Cheyne's notes on the chapter there is absolutely no reference to the fact.

Holy Scripture is far more really the work of *one* author than of many scribes ; far more one volume than a collection of separate books. It is so far systematic that our thorough knowledge of any individual portion must be in proportion to our grasp of the whole. This is not the case to anything like the same extent with human writings. You can *sample* them. A good slice of Thucydides, or Virgil, or Homer, or Plato, or any ancient classic, will give the reader a very fair notion of what the writer is. There is no very serious risk of misinterpreting the first book of the Republic of Plato, in the fact that you have not yet read the last. Not so with Holy Scripture. You cannot *sample* it. You cannot isolate the prophet Isaiah and make sure of a sound interpretation, while you refuse to consider the law of Moses, or St. Paul's quotations from the book itself. If it be asked, Why not? the answer is no modern one. "For no prophecy of Scripture is of any *private interpretation*. For the prophecy came not in the old time by the will of man. *But Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*" C. H. WALLER.