

more to endure from "troublesome and cantankerous" office-bearers and members at home. Those who have read the Life and Letters of Robertson of Brighton, will remember how he fretted against the feeling of dependence on meddlesome people which he felt "curbing him like a Mameluke bit and reminding him of his servitude at every step," and how, though most loyal to the regular constituted authorities of his church, he objected to be governed by what he playfully called "his muslin episcopate" and to be "badgered by old maids of both sexes" intruding upon matters with which they had nothing to do. We believe it is well that the minister should feel himself to be, in certain respects, dependent on the great body of the congregation. Such a feeling is not at all unwholesome to his character, and may even furnish a helpful stimulus in his work. But we do not wonder that ministers should fret under offensive authority assumed without warrant in some congregations by a small clique of thoughtless or ill-meaning men.

There is another motive for change which we believe is often at work in the clerical mind, but on which we have not now space to dwell. We are persuaded that many fail to realize the amount of mental strain involved in the performance of the ordinary work of a clergyman who has for a length of time been settled in a single charge. The ordinary minister has to conduct two full services each Sabbath day before the same congregation. Where (as in our Church) forms of prayer are not in use, the devotional exercises have to be originated by him as well as the sermon. He has to conduct at least one service besides on some evening through the week. There are frequent calls upon him for extraordinary work. These, in addition to pastoral work and other engagements, constitute a very heavy drain upon his mental and physical resources. It is not to be forgotten too that, in our church, the people are singularly intolerant of anything but fresh and original matter from the preacher's lips. The charge of plagiarism established against one of our ministers would be his deathblow. He dare not steal from others. He dare not even steal from himself. If he preaches an old sermon a second time, some of his hearers very speedily acquaint him with the excellence of their memory, and remind him of the old saying about "cauld kail het again."

In our larger towns and cities the clergy now obtain every year a holiday of a month or more. They have thus an opportunity to recuperate their energies and replenish their mental stores. Their people find that it pays to give them such relief, and make provision for their enjoyment of such a rest. A great many congregations have yet, however, to learn this lesson. Their ministers cannot afford to take such a holiday. If they should leave their field of labour for a few weeks, they have even to pay the substitute who fills their place.

Who can wonder that, in such circumstances, ministers should sometimes regard the removal to a new sphere as desirable, because in that way only it seems possible to obtain a great and much needed relief?—*Canada Presbyterian.*

—The English Presbyterian Foreign Missionary Committee have adopted a new plan for new missionaries to China. They send them to Professor Legge, at Oxford, to study Chinese, and are convinced that three months spent at Oxford would equal a whole year's study passed in an unhealthy region like China.

International S. S. Lesson.

October 16th.

THE BURNT OFFERING.—Lev. i. 1-14.

(From the S. S. World.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many—Heb. ix. 27.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Access to God is by the atonement.

LESSON EXPLANATIONS.

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This book has its name in the Christian church, through the Greek, from the tribe of Levi, the rules for the guidance of whose members are here given, in continuation of Exodus, and preparatory to later Scriptures. That Moses is the writer is only questioned by authors so widely differing among themselves that they may be safely left to controvert one another. The book contains little history (Lev. v. 8-10 and xxiv. 10-23), and does not closely follow any order after the opening chapters, which contain laws for the altar.

It is assumed all through that the Hebrew offeror had devout, humble, grateful feeling, such as that with which Christians come to the Lord's table. The spiritual side of the service, therefore, is assumed, and the book is engaged for the most part with details of outward rites. The same dangers of course, of formalism, and of reliance on the mere outward deed done, that we have, they had, and the prophets show us how far they fell into them, in times of decay (Isa. i. 11-15; Jer. vi. 20; Amos v. 21-28).

The burnt offering, our lesson, comes under the class which is called in Hebrew *Zebach*, or a slain animal, and commonly in our version rendered a sacrifice or offering. It is itself called *Holah*, that which goes up, or *isheek*, burnt, and is commonly rendered burnt offering or burnt sacrifice, or from its being all consumed another word is used meaning whole burnt sacrifice. This sacrifice and others in which the idea of atonement is presented are carefully distinguished in Scripture from the meat offering which implies reconciliation, and might be of vegetables, *i. e.*, bloodless. This latter is called *Minchah*, *i. e.*, a gift (see Lev. ii. 1), and generally accompanied (many think always) a burnt offering. It always included salt and oil, but honey and leaven were forbidden.

These general statements prepare us for considering the burnt offering.

V. 1 describes the manner in which Jehovah (so called throughout the book) gives directions. Moses receives the law from the top of Mount Sinai (Exodus xix. 8), but a tabernacle or tent of meeting (see last lesson) had been built at the foot of the mountain (Lev. xxvii. 34), and directions for the regular acts of worship are fittingly given from it. This is as promised in Ex. xxv. 22. Moses stands for the mediator. (See John i. 14.)

V. 2 shows the kind of offerings here described, not national nor at the public cost, but voluntary and individual, the priest's only responsibility being to see that the offering was in itself "perfect" (Lev. xxii. 17-24), and then to perform his part. "If any man of you" of his own free will bring an offering, it may be of "the herd" or "flock," both included in "cattle." (Our version is inexact in placing the words, but the sense is not affected.) But having done this of his own will the offeror's place to the priest, who must act strictly according to the law and prescription. The word here used *korban*, a gift, explains Mark vii. 11. "That heifer, or wheat, or money, would profit me," says the poor parent of a Jew, who replies, "It is a gift to God; I have dedicated it; you cannot have it," and so evades the duty of practical "honour" to parents.

V. 3 fixes the offering as a "male without blemish." Females might, however, be offered in peace offerings (Lev. iii. 1-6), and were appointed as sin offerings of the people (Lev. iv. 23-28 and v. 6). There is no other rendering "of his own voluntary will," "He shall offer it in order to be accepted," *i. e.*, for his acceptance, or making him accepted. The idea is implied in both that in this way he sought to be reconciled to God. The place is at the entrance of the tent of meeting, *i. e.*, of the court in front of it, in which the brazen altar and laver stood.

V. 4 describes the uniform way of identifying the offeror with his victim where it is of the herd or flock. "He shall put his hand." The second clause gives the idea of

the alternative reading of v. 3, stated above. (See "My faith would lay her hand," in Watts's hymn), (see Ex. xxix. 10). The point aimed at here, and never forgotten through all the offerings, is "to make atonement for him." He said in effect, "I deserve death, but Jehovah accepts another life instead of mine;" and if any one asked an intelligent Jew "What life?" he might have replied as Abraham did to Isaac, "He will provide himself a lamb." However the offeror may have shared in the benefits of general sin offerings, where the priest laid on his hands (see Lev. iv. 26, 35), his own acceptance is always through substitutionary burnt offering. So we never stand accepted before God, however many our advantages or however great our progress, but "in Christ." The rabbis say that a prayer or confession always accompanied the pressing of the hand on the victim's head. "While like a penitent I stand," etc.—Watts's Hymn.

V. 5 leaves it to the offeror to slay the victim, but the word is ambiguous, and many Jewish authorities make the "priest" the antecedent to "he." (See Lev. iv. 4; xvi. 11, 15, and 1 Chron. xxix. 24.) The throat was cut at the instant of concluding the prayer, and a vessel was held to receive the blood for the pouring out (rather than "sprinkling," which word is an inexact translation) of it at the altar. There is a separate Hebrew word for "sprinkling," which was done with a bunch of hyssop (see Pa. li. 7), or with the finger, in the sin offering. The pouring out from the bowl, so called from the verb here used in the Hebrew (*Mizrak*, from *Zarak*, to pour out), was to be by Aaron's sons. (See Heb. x. 11.) It was a sacrificial act. (See Heb. xii. 22, 24; 1 Pet. i. 2.)

V. 6. The animal was then flayed, or the skin taken off, the "hide" going to the priest (Lev. vii. 8), and cut into the pieces used for sacrifice.

V. 7 directs the mode of the sacrifice by the sons of Aaron; and "fire" applies to the first offering. After it the fire burnt perpetually (Lev. vi. 18) God's first estimate of sin's deserts is ever the same. "Our God is a consuming fire," the Hebrews (Heb. xii. 29) could understand. It is a quotation from Deut. iv. 24.

V. 8 continues the direction. Salt was here used (Lev. ii. 13; Ezek. xliii. 24. See allusion to in Mark ix. 49). The separate portions of fat which was not eaten, but which is of great value in the animal economy, supplying nourishment under disease or hunger, was carefully included and burnt. There was provision.

V. 9 directs the cleansing of portion of the sacrifice to be just as if it were for human food, and then the priest burns all on the altar. The word for "burn" is peculiar and confined to such offerings. It means cause to ascend. (A different word is employed, for example, in Lev. iv. 12, 21; Num. xix. 6. See margin in Ex. xxx. 8; Lev. xxiv. 2). Many of the translations like the Greek mark this difference. See on "sweet savour," so often used, Eph. v. 2.

Vs 10, 11 direct when the offering is from the flocks (the "herd" means the oxen), *i. e.*, sheep, which were preferred, and goats. Some of the rules already given (v. 3) apply here and are not repeated. The slaying was to be done on the north side of the altar in burnt offerings and others of the same kind (Lev. iv. 24, 29, 33; vii. 2). Reasons for this have been guessed but are not given, and we may assume it was simply for convenience, the laver being on the west, the ashes poured out on the east, and the south reserved as the approach of the priests.

Vs. 12, 13 require no special further explanation.

V. 14 provides for the offering of one too poor to bring an ox or a sheep (just as he who had not a sheep might bring a kid). The poor are admitted and provided for as truly as the rich, and the obligation on them to come with what they can is as binding as on the rich. This is a lesson greatly needed in our time. See, as illustrative of this, the dove offering, John ii. 14. The offering of doves by the mother of our Lord is sometimes adduced in proof of the poorness of the family; but mistaken. For her, however rich she might have been, this was the fixed offering (see Lev. xv. 29). Learn—

I. The importance of this book of Leviticus. It contains the gospel for the Hebrews, and as Dr. Bonar, whose book on it is, in many respects admirable, says, "Its statements dovetail into the unfigurative New Testament, which contains about forty references to its ordinances."

II. The nature of the typical in Scripture. Natural resemblances are taken by God to convey spiritual ideas. See "lamb"

"without blemish," "blood" "sprinkled," etc., as in the bread and wine of the supper. Types do not prove; they teach, illustrate, and impress. Hebrews is the key to Old Testament types.

III. How important it is to respect God's will as to our worship and service. A month is given (comp. Ex. xl. 17 with Num. i. 1) to the deliverance of these regulations.

IV. Mark the view given of wrath, represented by fire, wholly consuming the sacrifice, exhausting itself thereon, so that the sinner himself escapes, and the victims were more accessible and fitting. So God sends His Son (see Rom. x. 6-8).

V. See the difference between the priest of the law, who approaches God for men, and the minister of the gospel, who comes to men on God's behalf.

VI. Christ is the one great sacrifice. We are to be sure that we lay our hands on the head of this sacrifice.

TOMMY.

The *Watchman* tells the following story:—A remarkable episode in a public religious service once occurred while the clergyman was preaching from the text, "Is it well with thee?" It was at a little church in Yorkshire, England, in the year 1831. The minister was a good man, with no little gospel power in his heart and manner, and he made it solemnly plain to the auditory that the Saviour was present, looking into their thoughts with kind inquiry, and testing the spirit of every one. "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thee?" Suddenly an exclamation was heard from one of the pews, and a boy twelve years old, who had been intently listening, fell on his knees, and began to weep and pray.

A strange thrill ran through the congregation, and many rose to their feet. The minister paused in his sermon, and all attention was riveted on the kneeling boy. Everybody knew little Tommy, for he belonged to one of the oldest Yorkshire families, and his ancestors of Barnsley won the arms of a baronet. He was a bright, gifted boy, now six years motherless, but carrying in his heart the indelible impression of his mother's early religious teachings. The honest Yorkshire people felt too deeply themselves the effect of the sermon, to misunderstand Tommy's emotion. They did not think he was crazy. The minister did not. "Let us pray," he said, for he saw more need of prayer than preaching at a moment when before men and angels a young soul first spoke its want.

The whole congregation at once assumed the attitude of devotion. Many strong and loving petitions went up to God for the little boy whom, like Samuel, He had called in His own tabernacle. The scene was a strange one—that sudden prayer-meeting in the middle of sermon-time. The prayers were answered, too. Tommy rose from his knees with a radiant face. Thenceforth the seal of a Divine anointing was on him. For the next eight years he continued to give increasing proofs of a Christian spirit, and Christian zeal, and rare and happy fitness for winning souls. When very young he was licensed to preach.

At the age of twenty he left his native land and came to the United States. Since then he has not neglected the gift that is in him. The voice that so long ago said to him, on the other side of the sea, "Is it well with thee?" has ever been gladly recognized, and he has "followed Jesus all the way." It led him to Long Island; it led him to Albany; it led him down the Hudson again; and very many whom his words first taught the heavenly lesson, now know "it is well" with them. Today few stand higher among the American clergy, or more honoured of the Great Master, than Tommy, the Yorkshire boy, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Armitage of New York.

—Dr. Cuyler while passing through Cairo was astonished to find 10,000 students in the university preparing to teach Mohammedanism.