

blood represented the pouring out of Christ's Blood on the earth for man, and the further fact that Christ pleaded, through His own Blood, His atoning Death.

But this acceptance by the Father of Christ's Sacrifice, and this pleading of that sacrifice by our Great High Priest, by means of His own Blood, is not an event of the past only, but has continued down to the present, and will continue to the world's end. This truth is extremely important to remember, for it helps us to understand more clearly the pleading through the Holy Eucharist. To repeat: although Christ's offering of Himself took place in the past, and His Death took place in the past, never to be repeated, yet the acceptance of that offering and the pleading, through His Blood, of that Death, will continue to the very end of the world. He is still our High Priest, and so He is employed still in the great Priestly work of pleading for His flock; and this pleading is accomplished in some mysterious way, in Heaven, through His Risen Body, which though full of highest life, spiritualized or glorified, still is "as it had been slain" (Rev. v. 6), and through His Blood which is as poured out, "the blood of sprinkling" (spoken of in this passage, Heb. xii. 24, as if still in some way separate from the Body of Jesus), "speaking better things than that of Abel." As the High Priest in olden days on the Day of Atonement, after the sacrifice had been slain, entered into the Holy of Holies, carrying the Blood of the Sacrifice and Incense, by which he pleaded the death before God, so Jesus, after He had been slain, Himself the Victim, entered not "into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true," nor "by the blood of goats and calves," but "by His own Blood He entered "into Heaven itself" (the true Holy of Holies), "now to appear in the presence of God for us." But whilst the Jewish High Priest was forced to repeat this entrance into the Holy of Holies year after year, Jesus entered in once into Heaven to remain there until the end of the world, for His One Sacrifice was all-sufficient and needs no repetition. Yet there is need of His offering and pleading that One Sacrifice before the Father until the end of time, ever through this means making Intercession for us before the Father. Abel's blood poured out continually cried for God's vengeance; Christ's Blood, on the contrary, continually pleads for God's mercy. The sins of mankind are ever calling down Heaven's anger; but the perfect offering of Christ on man's behalf is the means through which forgiveness and every other blessing is being lavishly poured down on our fallen race.

Since Christ's Ascension, then, we can see that the worship of Heaven is different in some important points from what it was before, for now there stands before the Throne of the Father man's Great High Priest, continually interceding for man and pleading His own great Sacrifice for man; and more than this, as we shall see, offering up the worship of His Church on Earth and in Paradise to the Father. It is a great mistake to think, as some seem to do, that Christ's work in connection with man's salvation is now over; on the contrary it will continue till He comes again. The very fact that He still is Priest, our Great High Priest, is sufficient to teach us that He must be still employed in Priestly acts; and the chief of these Priestly acts is the showing forth His own Sacrificial Death, thus placing before the Father's eyes His great and infinitely valuable offering for man.

It is important to bear in mind that Christ's pleading, Christ's Priestly Intercession, is effected not so much by word of mouth as by outward act. As the Jewish High Priest pleaded the death of the victim in the Holy of Holies, not by uttering some form of prayer, but by sprinkling the actual blood of the victim before the mercy seat, so Christ pleads His own Death, we think, in a manner typified by this, although we cannot know how the type is fulfilled, it being a great mystery hidden from us. Yet we can also believe that Christ's pleading is effected through words as well as acts; so that He pleads through His whole human nature, through Body and Blood, Mind and Spirit.

Let us now see what all this has to do with our Worship on Earth. We are commanded to offer the Holy Eucharist before the Father as a Memorial of Christ, and are taught that we do thereby shew forth before God, the Lord's death till He come. But we have just seen that our great High Priest is employed in Heaven in a similar work; hence, we in the Holy Eucharist are doing on earth what our Lord is perpetually doing in Heaven, and so as we are then working in union with our Lord, that Holy Service must be our most powerful manner of praying, our highest act of worship.

For, remember, our own lives and deeds and gifts and goodness and prayers and praises are in themselves worthless in God's eyes; the only offering pleasing in His eyes being the offering of Jesus Christ, in whom could be found no flaw, and with whose life and works and prayers and praises, God is well pleased. But Jesus, as it were, gives Himself to us in order that we might offer Him and all His excellencies to God instead of our own valueless selves with all our sins. Therefore we say, "Hear us, O God, not through our own merits,