

The Satisfaction of Christ Studies in the Atonement 21. Its Typification

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Transcript

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Christ has been greatly dishonored and His atonement grievously misrepresented by the attempts which have often been made to illustrate it from supposed analogies in human relations. Rightly has it been said that, "The plan of redemption, the office of our Surety, and the satisfaction which He rendered to the claims of justice against us, have no parallel in the relations of men to one another. We are carried above the sphere of the highest relations of created beings into the august counsels of the eternal and independent God. Shall we bring our own line to measure them? We are in the presence of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; one in perfections, will and purpose. If the righteousness of the Father demands a sacrifice, the love of the Father provides it. But the Love of the Son runs parallel with that of the Father; and not only in the general undertaking, but in every act of it we see the Son's full and free consent" (Waymarks in the Wilderness, Vol. 6). But while no parallel to the Great Transaction, or to the relation of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to its accomplishment, can be found in any of the relations of mere creatures to one another, God has graciously adapted a series of types, historical and ceremonial, to the illustration of His wondrous plan, and especially to portray the various aspects of the office and work of Christ. In them the Divine wisdom is signally displayed, and it is the part of human wisdom to devote our closest attention to the same. By the typical system, God was not only educating His people for the "good things to come," but was also preparing human language to be a fit medium for the revelation of His grace in Christ. It is to the types we must turn if we would define aright the sacrificial terms of the New Testament. But an impression obtains in some quarters that instruction by the types belongs to an inferior dispensation, and was only designed for the Church in the days of its infancy. Scripture teaches otherwise. It is true that "the typology of the Pentateuch is the Divine kindergarten," yet it is also true that "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4), and that God's dealings with Israel were "our types" (1 Cor. 10:6 margin). Yea, so far from the study of the types being an elementary one, Hebrews 5:10-12 shows that they furnish our "strong meat." While it is true that the "typology of the Pentateuch is the Divine kindergarten," this does not mean either that the teaching of the types is to be lightly esteemed, or that the instruction which they furnish is inferior in quality to that which is given in the Epistles. No schoolchild is really qualified to take in the teaching of the higher grades until he is thoroughly familiar with and has more or less mastered the lessons of the lower grades. So none are fully equipped to receive the evangelical teachings of the New Testament, if the key-phrases of the Old Testament types are neglected. Not only has the sacrificial work of Christ as many aspects as there are

great sacrifices in the Pentateuch, but the doctrinal statements of the Epistles are frequently couched in the language of the types, and can only be rightly interpreted in the light which they furnish. "A type is something emblematic or symbolic, used to express, embody, represent or forecast, some person, truth or event. It is an image or similitude of something else, sustaining to doctrinal teaching some such relation as a picture does to a precept or promise, representing to the eye or imagination a concept addressed to the ear or understanding. It is one of the most frequent forms of figurative teaching in Scripture, but being sometimes more obscure than obvious demands keener insight and closer study" (A. T. Pierson). The types were prophecies, forecasts of things to come, and therefore do they furnish one of the most striking and conclusive proofs of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, for only He who knew the end from the beginning could have so accurately, so fully, and so marvelously anticipated and adumbrated Calvary thousands of years before Christ died. "The Old Testament types were a mode of instruction of the way in which God was to be approached, and were peculiarly suited to the human mind struggling with a sense of guilt; and they have furnished to the Church of all times, a vocabulary or nomenclature, without which men could not with sufficient precision have been able to hold intercourse with each other on the subject of the Atonement. It deserves special notice that prophecy and the sacrifices are always found together, and throw light upon each other; and that they run in parallel lines through the entire Old Testament economy. Nay, the sacrifices may be regarded as a sort of prophecy, or a guarantee to which the veracity of God was pledged, for the shadow must one day be a reality" (Geo. Smeaton). "A type is a prophetic symbol, and since prophecy is the prerogative of Him who sees the end from the beginning, a real type, implying as it does a knowledge of the Reality, can only proceed from God" (Liddon's Bampton Lectures). The Old Testament types supply incontrovertible evidence that the Gospel was no novel invention of New Testament times. When the risen Savior would make known to His disciples the meaning of His death, we read that, "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). So far from the evangel of the apostle's being any (absolutely) new thing, every element in it was revealed long centuries before their birth, not only in words, but in visible representations: there was both a wondrous anticipation of and preparation for the Gospel. Thus a reverent contemplation of the types supplies a blessed confirmation of faith, for they attest the Divine authorship of both Testaments. Moreover, they stimulate adoration; even when we know a person, we enjoy looking at his picture; so here. It is Christ that is before us in them. The Divine origin of sacrifice is self-evident. Whoever would have dreamed of the device of offering animal sacrifices to God as a method of acceptable worship? That Abel should have "brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof" (Gen. 4:4), can only be satisfactorily accounted for on the ground that he knew this was what God required from him. And this is precisely what the New Testament affirms: Hebrews 11:4 declares that it was "by faith" that Abel offered his sacrifice, and Romans 10:17 says "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Thus, Abel had received a revelation from God, and believing what he had "heard," acted accordingly. Moreover, the acceptance of Abel's sacrifice by a Divine testimony of approval (Gen. 4:4), which, no doubt, was given by the descent of consuming fire from heaven — Leviticus 9:24; Judges 6:21; 1 Kings 18:38 — intimate the same thing. That solemn testimony of reception would only have terrified the offerer, had he himself invented this mode of worship! "The lightning shooting round the altar, and consuming the victim, would have conveyed the impression of an angry God: how, then, could they have apprehended by this means that they were reconciled? How could they have known without a Divine revelation that this consuming fire was a token of Divine acceptance?" (G. Smeaton). The great sacrifice of Christ was foreshadowed from the beginning. He who predestinated the salvation of His elect, did also appoint the means thereto: the Lamb was "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:20). Then what memorial could be devised more opposite than that of animal sacrifices? By such a means was

exemplified the death which had been denounced upon man's disobedience, and in the shedding of the victim's blood and the violent character of its death, was portrayed something of the awfulness of that death which was the "wages of sin." At the same time a fit representation was also made of that death that was to be undergone by the Redeemer, and thus there was connected in one view the two cardinal facts in the history of men — the fall and recovery from it. The Old Testament sacrifices were a "showing forth of the Lord's death" till He came. It is both important and blessed to note that the Gospel-covenant was revealed by God immediately after the Fall. The promise that the woman's Seed should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15) and the institution of the types (Gen. 3:21), were to the very end that faith and hope might be preserved in what God had so graciously purposed. God did not leave even our first parents in ignorance of His merciful designs, but made known the nature of His eternal counsels. Soon after, a further revelation was made unto Cain and Abel, and still later to others. The infinite wisdom of God so contrived the types that they might in the most intelligible manner (that material things can describe spiritual) signify the Redeemer, and life and salvation through Him. "From the time of the Fall, there has been but one way open to Heaven, and that was through Christ; and all believers, before and under the law, hoped for pardon of sin and salvation through Him. In hopes of that pardon and salvation they observed the typical services" (W. Romaine). That the Old Testament saints perceived something at least of the mystical and spiritual meaning of the types is clear from a number of passages; that they had a much clearer and fuller apprehension of them than is commonly supposed, is the writer's firm conviction. The Lord Jesus declared that "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw, and was glad" (John 8:56) Hebrews 11:13 tells us that the patriarchs confessed themselves to be "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," which shows they knew that their true "inheritance" was in Heaven; while Hebrews 11:14, 16 expressly states they sought and desired "an heavenly" country. Job said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth" (19:25), and the Hebrew word there for "Redeemer" signifies one who is a redeemer by right of affinity or kinship — not only a Redeemer in act, but in office. So also David acknowledged, "my flesh longeth for thee. . . to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary" (Ps. 63:2), that is, by means of the figures and shadows of the vessels of the tabernacle and the Levitical services and sacrifices. "First the blade, then the ear and then the full corn in the ear" enunciates one of the principles of Divine work in everything, the types not excepted. The further we proceed, the profounder their meaning, and the fuller their detail. In the Divine clothing of our first parents with "coats of skins" (Gen. 3:21), there were illustrated the facts that: fallen man needed an external covering to fit him to stand before God; that he could not produce this by his own labors; that the life of an innocent victim must be taken, in order to provide a suitable covering for him; that God Himself must provide it. In the offering of Abel and God's acceptance of the same (Gen. 4:4), we learn that God can only regard any sinner with favor by virtue of his acceptance in Christ. The Divine origin of sacrifices is again intimated in that before flesh was eaten by man, the distinction between clean and unclean animals was quite familiar (Gen. 8:20). The power of an accepted sacrifice to remove the Divine curse was plainly signified in Genesis 8:21. The principle of substitution was strikingly manifested in Genesis 22:13. What may be termed the first great sacrifice was the "Passover," recorded in Exodus 12. There we behold the efficacy of the Lamb's precious blood to deliver those sheltering beneath it from that judgment of God which their sins deserved. What virtue, an infidel might ask, had the blood of a poor animal to secure the life of Israel's first-born from the sword of a mighty and invisible angel? Was the blood on the door a necessary mark for the angel, because he had not understanding enough to distinguish between the houses of Egyptians and Israelites? Could not God have signified His pleasure to the angel without such a mark as that? The answer to these, and all such questions is, God's design was to furnish a type of Christ, and instruct the faith of His people in things to come. The following is a bare outline of the point in the Passover-type which may be profitably

studied by the reader. First, Divine judgment was pronounced: "all the firstborn [the representative of the family] in [not 'of] the land of Egypt shall die" (Ex. 11:5). Second, God "put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" so that not one of His own people were hurt (Ex. 11:7). Third, not by Israel's choice or Moses recommendation, but by Divine appointment every Israelitish household was to take an unblemished lamb, kill it, and apply its blood to the outside of his house (Ex. 12:3-7). Fourth, the Divine promise was, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Ex. 12:13). Fifth, the angel entered not such houses, for death had already done its work there — a substitute had been slain. Here is redemption; deliverance from judgment. At Sinai God made known His will much more fully respecting the sacrifices which He required. A great deal of instruction therein is to be found in the first seven chapters of Leviticus, into most of which we cannot now enter: much deeply important teaching is to be found therein in a typical form. The Levitical sacrifices emphasized the enormity of sin and the punishment which must be visited upon it, as well as set forth the dependence of the forgiving grace of God on an expiatory offering. Under the Mosaic economy an elaborate system was developed to show that in many ways man offends God and is worthy of death. The sacrifices vividly evidenced the fact that the Divine punishment incurred was inevitable, yet that that punishment could be borne by a substitute, and on that ground the offender could be restored to favor. The principal thing they were designed to exhibit was the indispensable necessity of atonement by vicarious expiation: the one great truth they illustrated was that God could not sacrifice His holiness to His love. That the Mosaic sacrifices all pointed forward to Christ and had their end in Him, was evidenced by the fact that very soon after He had come and shed His blood, God caused the shadows to pass away. Within a very few years the temple was destroyed, and with it all the Jewish sacrifices ceased. And though a century or two later Julian the Apostate gave the Jews permission to rebuild their temple, and that for the very purpose of restoring the ancient rites, yet God from Heaven blasted all their attempts in a miraculous and extraordinary manner. The Levitical sacrifices made clear to men the ground on which the Divine pardon could be obtained. It was not an act of absolute mercy, nor was it bestowed on the sole condition of penitence, but on the consideration of something quite distinct from both. "And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord for his sin. . . and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. . . and it shall be forgiven him" (Lev. 5:5,6, 10). If we compare these verses with Leviticus 17:11, which informs us that "it is the blood which maketh an atonement for the soul," then the proof is conclusive that the sacrifice presented by the offender was the appointed means of obtaining forgiveness for his transgression. The burnt offering (Lev. 1) and the sin offering (Lev. 4) claim particular attention, for not only were they the most important sacrifices of the Levitical dispensation (as Psalm 40:6 intimates), but they represented the sufferings of our great High Priest under two distinct aspects. The burnt offering principally shows Christ as He was to God, the sin offering as He is to men. In both He was represented as a sin-bearer, for in both of these sacrifices transfer was made of sin by the priest laying his hand on the head of the victim (Lev. 1:4; 4:4); in both the victim's blood was shed and sprinkled (Lev. 1:5; 4:4-6); in both atonement was made for sin (1:4; 4:20); and both were burnt, either wholly or in part upon the altar (1:9; 4:9, 10). These points of union were sufficiently close to show that they corresponded in representing the sacrifice offered by our High Priest on the cross. But there were also distinctive differences between them of a character sufficiently marked to show that they represented Christ's sacrifice under different aspects. Thus, the burnt offering was voluntary (Lev. 1:2,3), the sin offering compulsory (Lev. 4:2,3). The burnt offering was flayed, cut into pieces, and the inwards and legs washed in water; but none of these three things were required of the sin offering. The blood of the burnt offering was merely sprinkled round about upon the altar (1:11), but the blood of the sin offering was put upon the horns of the altar, sprinkled seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary, and poured out

at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering (4:6,7). Other differences we now pass over, desiring to direct attention merely to the first one mentioned. The voluntariness of Christ's death is clearly brought out in Psalm 40:7,8 and Ephesians 5:25; John 10:17,18 also shows He freely laid down His life for His sheep. But, when in the councils of eternity, ratified by the everlasting covenant "ordered in all things and sure," Christ had undertaken to be our Surety, then what was before purely free and voluntary became in a sense compulsory. Just as when God binds Himself by oath, He is obliged to fulfill His word, so Christ once He had bound Himself to stand in His peoples' place and stead, was no longer free — though, not that He wished to be free. Just as the type was bound with cords "unto the horns of the altar" (Ps. 118:27), so Christ was held fast to the Cross not only by love to His people, which floods could not quench, but by His own eternal covenant-engagement. The substitution of Christ in the sinner's place was most distinctly shown in the types, particularly in the sin offering. Before the animal was slaughtered, the sacrificing priest laid his hand upon its head (Lev. 4:3,4). That act represented the transferring of sin from the transgressor to the victim (Lev. 16:21): it identified the one with the other. It showed the substitution of the victim for the offender, and declared by a visible sign that it bore his sins and endured his death-penalty. In this way was the solemn yet blessed truth of imputation foreshadowed. It was because God transferred to Christ the guilt of His elect, constituting Him "sin for us," that the sword of Divine justice smote Him as He bore our sins in His own body on (or "to") the tree. The most important of all the types is that which is found in Leviticus 16: the appointed ritual for the great day of atonement. The type of Leviticus 16 goes much farther than does the one in Exodus 12: the Passover illustrated the redemptive character of Christ's sacrifice; that of Leviticus 16 its propitiatory nature. In Exodus 12 we see the blood sheltering from judgment those who are under it; in the early chapters of Leviticus, we see the power of the blood restoring to communion the penitent transgressor; but in Leviticus 16 we behold the blood opening a way into the very presence of God, entitling the penitent and believing worshipper to come with boldness unto His very throne. By a careful comparison of Deuteronomy 27 and Leviticus 16 we may discover how the law was, and still is, a "schoolmaster" unto Christ (Gal. 3:24). In the former chapter, we see that the law demanded implicit and complete obedience to its demands (v. 10); and how that the Levites pronounced with "a loud voice" a curse on the transgressor of it (vv. 14, 15). That curse was repeated twelve times, according to the number of Israel's tribes, and on each pronouncement thereof "all the people" were required to say "Amen": the final word being "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them" (v. 26)— cf. Galatians 3:10. The law required sinless perfection under the penalty of eternal damnation, and thus it revealed the imperative need of an atonement. While in Leviticus 16 we see how that law by its great sin-offering, with its blood of atonement, pointed forward to Christ. The sacrificial system of Judaism reached its climax on the great day of atonement. As the ark was the chief object in the tabernacle, so the annual Day of propitiation was the chief one in Israel's religious calendar. On that auspicious occasion the high priest divested himself of his robes of "glory and beauty" (Exodus 28), and put on "the holy linen" garments (Lev. 16:4). The spotless white in which he was clothed spoke of the perfect righteousness of Christ, which, tested as it was both by man (John 8:46) and Satan (John 14:30), and then passing through the infinitely searching scrutiny of God under the fiery trial of the cross, insured the Divine acceptance of that satisfaction which He made to God on behalf of His people. Two young goats were selected "for a sin-offering;" though there were two animals, it was but one offering. Two goats were selected in order that a fuller representation might be given: the one being designed more expressly to exhibit the means, the other the effect of the atonement. They were brought and presented together before the Lord (v. 7), the Lord determining by lot which of them was to be slain. The other animal stood by and was atoned for (Hebrew of verse 10) by the dying victim, and then bore away the sins laid upon it into the land of eternal forgetfulness (vv. 21,22): a blessed figure of that remission of our sins when we

believe on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation. Passing by what was done with the bullock, we confine our attention unto the two goats. After the one had been killed, the high priest took its blood within the veil and sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat not once, but seven times "before" Him to provide a perfect standing ground for His people. The antitype of this is seen in Hebrews 9:12, "But by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12). The consequence of this is that "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us" (Heb. 10:19, 20). After the high priest had finished his work inside the sanctuary, we are told, "he shall bring the live goat, and Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel... and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited" (vv. 20-22). That was a continuation and completion of the ceremony concerning the sin-offering, so that this symbolic transfer of their sins to the head of the scapegoat, which bore them away, plainly signified that the atonement effected by the sacrifice of the first goat was the complete removal of all their transgressions from before the face of God. "And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there" (Lev. 16:23). Why? To denote that his work was finished. The blessed antitype of this we see in Luke 24:12: on the resurrection morning, those who came to Christ's empty sepulcher "beheld the linen clothes" lying there, a token that He was risen from the dead, and so of atonement completed, and accepted by God. One other important feature in the types, often overlooked, claims our notice, namely, the burning of the victim's body on the altar (Lev. 1:10 etc.). The animal was first slain as a just judgment for the sin which had been transferred to it by the laying on its head of the hand of the offerer; and then, after guilt had been borne, its flesh was laid on the altar and burned, and went up with acceptance unto God, a "sweet-smelling savor." In this was represented the glorious truth that, not only was Christ our sin-bearer, but that He is also our righteousness before God (Jer. 23:6; 2 Cor. 5:21). We are identified with Him not only in His death for us, but also in the fragrance of it before God. In Numbers 19 there is yet another most important type upon which we can only now say a few words. In it we see how the death of Christ has made full provision for those defilements which His people contract while passing through this evil world. In it too we behold again the steady progress in the types, and the deeper instruction which God gave to Israel from time to time. They were yet in the land of Pharaoh when the passover was instituted: the doom of Egypt and their own deliverance therefrom were the thoughts then presented to their souls. Later, they were brought nigh to God, Himself tabernacling in their midst, and in Leviticus 16 they are shown the high demands of His holiness. Now in Numbers 19, they are taught that even the unavoidable contact with death (the world lying in the Wicked one) defiles. But God has provided cleansing from it. In closing, we call attention to one other deeply important value of the types and the use to which they may be put: they furnish an infallible rule by which can be tested any man's (our own included) interpretation of the New Testament Scriptures concerning the Atonement! He who denies the penal and vicarious nature of Christ's death, repudiates the clear testimony of the types; he who sets aside the efficacy of His sacrifice by reducing it to a merely "making possible" the salvation of men does likewise, for the types know nothing of an ineffectual sacrifice. So too in them we see plainly the limitation of God's love to His elect people, for no lamb was provided for the Egyptians, nor did Aaron make any atonement for the sins of the Midianites and Ammonites!

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