

SERMON XIII.

ON THE SACRIFICES AS MEMORIALS OF CHRIST'S
OBLATION AND THE BURNT-OFFERING PAR-
TICULARLY TREATED OF.

LEVITICUS i. 7, 8, 9.

“ And the sons of Aaron, the priest, shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire. And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order, upon the wood that is upon the fire which is upon the altar. But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord.”

THE tabernacle being erected and consecrated by the Lord's dwelling between the cherubim in the holy of holies, in a cloud of glory, and resting on it in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, it pleased him to de-

liver out sundry commands to his servant Moses, who was to make them known to the church and people of Israel.

As Jehovah Jesus appeared to Moses at Horeb in a flame of fire in a bramble bush, and spake out of it to him, and who went before him and the people of Israel in a pillar of cloud and of fire, and spake out of it to him when he gave forth his divine commands; so in the same cloud he descended on mount Horeb, and pronounced the moral law; and when the tabernacle was erected, he descended in the same cloud, and rested on or over the tabernacle, and dwelt in a resplendent part of it, in the holy of holies, between the cherubim, and out of it the Lord spake and delivered to Moses, by an audible voice, what is recorded in this and the following chapters.

The cherubims were the most sacred pieces of furniture in the tabernacle and temple. These sacred emblems were, without dispute, a sensible exhibition of divine glory, which Ezekiel saw in vision, and which he knew to be the cherubims. In, or between them, was the throne of God, the throne of grace, the symbolical representation of his dwelling with men. From thence he gave his oracles and responses to those who consulted him.

No doubt, the cherubims set up at the east of the garden of Eden, were of the same kind with

those that the prophet Ezekiel saw, and were designed to answer the same purpose with the model of them in the tabernacle and temple, which appears to have been so well known in Moses's time, that the workmen made them without any direction, except that they were to be beaten out of the same piece of gold whereof the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, was made.

How long the exhibition of the divine glory in the cherubims set up at the east of Eden was continued, one cannot say, but it is most probable the copies of them were made, and kept by the ancient believers, hence their figure and uses were so well known, that Moses only receives a command to make them,

As the tabernacle represented Christ's body, so the sacrifices were memorials of his bloodshedding and death.

Out of the tabernacle, from the mercy-seat between the cherubims, in the holy of holies, the Lord spake to Moses, concerning the ordinances of sacrifices and services, which it was his will and good pleasure that his church, under the old testament dispensation, should attend unto. This chapter informs us, that the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle, saying, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, if any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall offer your offering of the cattle, even of the herd and

of the flock." It was the Lord alone who could prescribe the offerings he would be pleased with; as they were wholly of his appointment, so they were most exactly suited to express and answer the particular end designed. The lambs and sheep, the bulls and goats, the doves and pigeons, the meat and drink-offerings, the burnt-offerings, the sin-offerings, the peace-offerings, the trespass-offerings, the anniversary-offerings, the free-will-offerings, the consecrations, the sacrifices and services on the great day of atonement, were all most divinely and properly significant and expressive of Christ, and his complete and all-sufficient sacrifice.

It was Jehovah Jesus who spake to Moses out of the tabernacle. The voice came from the holy of holies, from between the cherubims, who covered the mercy-seat. This pointed out God as reconciled upon the view and consideration of the propitiation Christ was to make by the offering of himself in the fulness of time. God speaks to his church by his Son; he, as Mediator, is the Father's way to us, and our way of access to him.

Moses was a type of Christ. He received all God's commands concerning divine ordinances; and Christ received the whole of his office, and the commands and ordinances he was to deliver to his church, as the great Head and

Mediator thereof, from his Father. The Lord speaking to Moses, verse 3, says, "If his offering be a burnt-offering of the herd, let him offer it a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord." The burnt-offering was so called because it was wholly consumed by fire. It was very expressive of the wrath of God, comparable to fire falling on Christ, our surety, who was made a curse for us. The sacrifices were all of them to be without blemish, to point out the purity of our Lord's person and oblation. The sacrifice mentioned in the text before us was to be a male, pointing out Messiah's sex; it was to be a voluntary offering. The will of the offerer was to be in it. This shewed how the will of Christ would be in the whole of his mediatorial and sacrificial work; it was the good pleasure of his will; his very heart and soul were in it, to become a sin-offering for his people; it was to be offered before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to shew that Christ's sacrifice was of the Lord's ordaining, the one public atonement for the whole church of God.

Verse 4. "And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering: and it shall be accepted for him, to make an atonement for him." The offerer laying his hand on the head of the

burnt-offering, was expressive of his sin being put thereon. The acceptance of the offering, shewed how Christ would substitute himself in the room and stead of his people, and make his soul an offering for sin. Its being wholly consumed by fire, shewed how perfectly sin would be abolished by Christ.

Verse 5. "And he shall kill the bullock before the Lord: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar, that is, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." A bullock being a strong animal, served to shadow forth the strength of Christ to bear the sins of all his people, and also the fire of divine wrath. Its being killed before the Lord, was to point out the violence of Christ's death; and also that it was pre-ordained of God. The blood being sprinkled round about the altar, pointed out from whence the blood of Christ received its efficacy; namely, from his eternal Godhead, the altar which sanctified the offering of his manhood. Its being done publicly by the priest, pointed out the application of it by our Lord, who sends his Spirit with his word to reveal and make known the virtue and efficacy of it to the souls of such as are brought to feel their need thereof.

Verse 6. "And he shall slay the burnt-offering, and cut it into its pieces." Thus there was

hereby a solemn exhibition of the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. And thus being come to my text, contained in verses 7, 8, and 9, I will read it, and then proceed to preach and explain it. "And the sons of Aaron, the priest, shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire. And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood, that is, upon the fire which is upon the altar. But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord."

In discoursing on these words, I will endeavour to shew how all these services, and sacrificial actions, as also the sacrifices, were memorials of Christ, and his sufferings and salvation.

In the prosecution of my design, I will, first, speak of the burnt-offering, as a memorial of Christ's oblation.

Secondly, I will explain the services and sacrificial actions, and shew how Christ was thereby set forth as crucified.

Thirdly, that the sacrifice of the burnt-offering was a sweet savour unto the Lord.

I propose, first, to speak of the burnt-offering as a memorial of Christ's oblation.

That sacrifices were divinely appointed and commanded by the Lord, is evident from this chapter. The burnt-offering was especially so; it was substituted in the room of the person who had sinned; his sin was laid upon it; the offering was laid on the altar, where it was wholly consumed by fire. The offerer when he brought it, laid his hand on it, which was expressive that his sin, be it what it would, was laid on it.

The blood of it was sprinkled on the altar. The man stood by, and saw the beast slain, and saw clearly that without shedding of blood, there could be no remission; he saw it laid on the altar, and wholly burnt by fire: in which he was plainly taught that the wrath of God was the true and proper desert of sin, and likewise understood hereby, how his sin was to be removed from him, and the curse due unto it also; even by the substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ, who would, in the fulness of time, become incarnate, and take the sinner's law place, and have sin imputed to him, and bear all the sins of his people, in his own body and soul, and sustain and endure the whole curse and wrath of his divine Father due to sin, and by this means, "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

Thus it was a memorial of Christ's oblation; and the daily offering was a burnt-offering. You have the institution of it in the Jewish church,

Exod. xxix. 38—42. “ Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar ; two lambs of the first year, day by day, continually. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer in the evening : and with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil ; and the fourth part of an hin of wine, for a drink-offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shall do thereto, according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord. This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord ; where I will meet you to speak there unto thee.” In reference to these sacrificial lambs offered in the daily offerings, the baptist stiles Christ, the Lamb of God ; and said to the people, “ Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

The burnt-offering in the scripture of my text, was not a lamb, but a bullock ; nor was it the daily, but an occasional sacrifice. It was a free-will offering ; and as such was a shadow of the voluntary engagements of our Lord Jesus on the behalf of his church and people ; and of his will being deeply engaged in performing his covenant engagements, and becoming the sacrifice for

sin, which is clearly and fully expressed in these words, in the fortieth psalm, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire—mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offerings and sin-offerings hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo! I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O! my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his covenant engagements with his co-equal Father, became incarnate, and freely substituted himself in the room of the law sacrifices, and answered the whole end, and fulfilled the whole design of them, by purging away sin by the oblation of his body and soul, in union with his divine person, and thus he removed sin out of the sight of God, and before him, and from his people, so that they are freed from the imputation of it. The psalmist expresses the perfection of our Lord's removing sin thus; "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us," Psalm ciii. 12.

All the sacrifices were memorials of Christ's oblation, as well as this. The one offering of Immanuel, was the ground and foundation of them. His was the substance, these were the shadows; but his was so infinitely perfect, that the virtue and efficacy of it, could not be fully conceived by one sacrifice; therefore burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, peace-offerings, meat and

drink-offerings, were instituted to shew how our Lord's offering would be a complete remedy for the whole disease of his church and people. Sin would be removed—the curse would be abolished—peace would be made, and he would be all in salvation work—the whole glory would belong to him—the whole work would be performed by him. And, like as sin laid typically on the burnt sacrifice, was with it consumed by fire, and perfectly annihilated; so sin laid on Christ by imputation, would be abolished out of the sight of God, by the sacrifice of Christ's death. I proceed,

Secondly, To explain the services, and sacrificial actions, and shew how Christ was thereby set forth as crucified.

As the tabernacle was a figure of Christ's body, in which dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead; and the various sacrifices were memorials of the oblation of himself; so the services and sacrificial acts, were divinely prescribed, and were each and every one of them very significant and expressive.

Aaron's sons, the priests, were the persons appointed to offer them. No man could offer his own sacrifice, as no man can make atonement for his own sin; it belonged to the priest to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin. He was herein a type of Christ, the true priest of his church and people.

The bullock for the burnt-offering, being killed before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, it was to be flayed, and cut into his pieces. As the animal was a type of Christ, so the slaying it, sprinkling its blood, flaying it, and cutting it into its pieces, set forth the following particulars relative to Christ.

The bullock, a strong creature, suggested the strength of Christ, who as the man of God's right-hand, the Son of man made strong by Jehovah for himself, would display the greatness of his strength, in bearing the sins of his people in his own body on the tree.

The pouring out the blood at the bottom of the altar, shewed that Christ would pour out his soul unto death, and give his life a ransom for many.

The sprinkling it round about the altar, shewed that it is "the blood which maketh an atonement for the soul." Its being sprinkled by the priest on the offerer, and pronouncing him clean, shewed, that the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin.

The flaying the slaughtered animal, was very descriptive of the stripping Christ of his clothes, when he was given up into the hands of sinful men, and suffered death upon the cross.

The cutting the sacrifices into his pieces, pointed out how Messiah's sorrows and suffer-

ings, would reach and extend to every faculty of his soul, and to every member of his body.

Its being washed with water, was expressive of the inconceivable and immaculate purity of Christ's body and soul, which he offered for sin. It follows in the words of my text, "And the sons of Aaron, the priest, shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head and the fat in order, upon the wood that is on fire; but his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord."

The altar according to our Lord, Matt. xxiii. 19. sanctified the offering. His own essential Godhead, was the altar which sanctified the oblation of his human nature. The fire on the altar was expressive of the wrath of the Father, with which Christ was parched through and through, when it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put his soul to grief. The laying the wood in order upon the fire, and then laying the parts of the sacrifice, the head, and the fat thereon, was figurative of Christ, as laid on the cross. The inwards and legs washed in water, was expressive of the purity of Christ's heart, and the perfection of his obedience, which was without spot.

The fire consuming what was laid upon the altar, shewed how Christ would bear the curse and wrath of his Father, due to the sins of his people. The priest burning all upon the altar, shewed that Christ would be made a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the law. This being a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, shewed how completely Christ would finish the transgression, make an end of sin, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness. As what the fire consumed was reduced to dust and powder, and no longer was to be seen under the same form as it was before; so Christ, our burnt sacrifice, hath, by giving himself for our sins, and suffering the just for the unjust, washed us from our sins in his own blood. Its being of a sweet savour unto the Lord, shewed how highly acceptable and infinitely well pleasing the sacrifice of Christ would be to Jehovah the Father. The meat-offering which accompanied the daily burnt-offering, shewed that it would be Christ's meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him. The drink-offering shewed, that the love of Christ is the fountain and foundation of all his mediatory acts. So says the apostle, "Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." I come,

Thirdly, To shew, that the sacrifice of the burnt-offering was a sweet savour unto the Lord. The Lord himself expressed it to be so, on the first sacrifice which was offered unto him, after the deluge, and which was a burnt-offering. Thus it is written, Gen. viii. 20, 21. " And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar; and the Lord smelled a sweet savour;" or as it is in the margin, ' a savour of rest.'

As it was a memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, which would remove sin, and abolish it out of the sight of law and justice, obtain peace, and satisfy all the demands of law and justice, it yielded content to the divine mind, as it brought to remembrance Christ's future oblation, on which Jehovah would rest with eternal complacency: so the burnt-offerings under the law, were of a sweet savour unto the Lord, as they were types and memorials of the soul travail and sacrifice of his co-equal and co-eternal Son, which he would in our nature, offer in the fullness of time.

On Christ, the antitype of the burnt-offering, and all the sacrifices under the law, all the iniquities of his church and people were to meet. The Father had covenanted to lay them all on him: he was to bear them in his own body on the

tree, and to be made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. He was to sustain the full curse and punishment due to the sins of all his people, as their surety; and thus to redeem them from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for them. He, by the sacrifice of his whole person, God-man, offered up in the flames of everlasting love and willing obedience to the will of his divine Father, was to purge away the sins of his people, make an effectual atonement, with the savour, perfume, and fragrancy, of which all heaven was to be filled, and the whole church of God cleansed, redeemed, justified, pardoned, and sanctified.

The dignity of Christ's person, stamps worth and efficacy on all he hath done and suffered. The worth of his sacrifice is inestimable; its virtue and efficacy is infinite. His blood hath God-like virtue; it cleanseth from all sin; it heals every wound brought into the mind; is a complete antidote for the whole of its disease; there is eternal redemption obtained by it; it puts eternal purity on the soul sprinkled with it, and it will continue it to all eternity.

On all these accounts, the instituted sacrifices, the burnt-offerings, and all others, as memorials and emblems of the one perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ Jesus, could not fail of being acceptable unto God. They were to him as such a sweet perfume: they yielded an odour and fragrancy to his mind, as bringing

to remembrance that offering of Immanuel's, which would perfect for ever; by which reconciliation would be effected, pardon obtained, peace made, sin removed, satan and all his principalities conquered, death abolished, hell vanquished, heaven opened, and all the blessings of everlasting life bestowed by the Father, through the medium and channel of his Son's most precious blood-shedding. All which were shadowed out, and set forth to the church of God, under the levitical dispensation, by the sacrifices, sprinklings of blood, costly perfumes, and odoriferous sweets, made use of in the Lord's worship.

As Christ's death is our burnt-offering, which has been accepted by the Father, and which is set forth by him in the everlasting gospel, as a propitiation, so any poor sinner made willing by the Holy Ghost, may come before the Lord, and take the benefit of it. And the subject before us, plainly shews how a poor convinced sinner may do this: it is the most important question which can be asked, 'How shall I know myself, that I am interested in the one everlastingly efficacious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ?' In answer to which, I would say, view what the Lord commanded in this chapter; if a person had sinned, he was to bring his sacrifice to the priest; the sinner was to lay his hand upon the head of the sacrifice, and the sacrifice was to be

accepted for him, to make atonement for him: go, and do thou likewise. If the man had been without sin, he would have had no need of having recourse to a priest; he could not come to him without a sacrifice: when he brought it he laid his hand on the head of it, as much as to say, **There I lay my sin.** Then the priest took the offering under his care, and the man was discharged. The man stood by, and saw his sacrifice slain, its blood sprinkled, its parts put on the altar, and wholly consumed by fire, and his sin with it. Herein he saw what his sin deserved; and how he was delivered by the substitution of the sacrifice, which bore his sin. Then the priest sprinkling the man with the blood, he went away with the peace of God in his conscience, and the love of God in his heart. Thus thou mayest see and understand how thou art to take the benefit of Christ's atonement.

The sacrifice of Christ hath all the worth and efficacy of eternal Godhead in it. The sins of all the elect are removed out of God's sight by it: the virtue of it is fully proclaimed in the gospel. It is therein declared that it cleanseth from all sin.

Thy believing this testimony of God concerning it, is thy discharge and acquittance from all thy sin. In believing the virtue of the blood of the Lamb, thou wilt have an inward sense of it on thy soul: and hereby thou wilt know that thou

hast redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Let me then ask, dost thou feel thy sin, and want of Christ? Art thou brought to know the everlasting sufficiency of the blood and sacrifice, the obedience and death of the God-man, Christ Jesus, to save thee from all thy sins and miseries, and to present thee before God as perfectly righteous and spotless, as though thou hadst never sinned? Art thou trusting on the blood of the Lamb of God, for thy everlasting discharge and acquittance from all sin; and upon the obedience of Christ to death, even the death of the cross, for thy perfect justification before the throne? If thou canst call God to witness, saying, I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I believe the blood of Christ to be everlastingly sufficient to cleanse me from all sin, thou art a believer, and hast everlasting life. The Lord bless what I have set before thee. Amen.