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to its chronology the time that elapsed between the Exodus and King David must be estimated at about 600 years; while according to our theory David is only separated from the Exodus by 125 years.

I do not, however, think it necessary here to deal elaborately with the chronology of the Book of Judges. It is generally admitted among scholars that its chronology is of no historical value. Local heroes and local wars are conceived of as national heroes and national wars. So things that happened at the same time are narrated as events which took place successively. Therefore, 125 years may well be sufficient for the period of the wandering to Canaan and the occupation of the hills of that country.

B. D. EERDMANS.

*WHAT IS MEANT BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST?*

I HAVE several times of late been asked what the meaning of a phrase like "the blood of Christ" could be in such ethical terms as appeal to an age like the present.

1.

It would not have mattered a whit if no drop of blood had been spilt, if Jesus had come to His end by the hemlock or by the gallows. The imagery under which we speak of the situation would have been changed—that is all.

2.

Nor would it have mattered if, instead of losing but some of His blood, He had bled to death. Whether no blood was shed, or every drop, was immaterial. That could only concern us if the virtue was in the blood as a substance, as it might be kept and applied in a reliquary. Had that been so, the sacrifice would not have been complete if a

drop had remained in the body ; while (on the same supposition) if not a drop had been shed there would have been no sacrifice at all.

There is, indeed, very little about the theory of the matter in the Old Testament. "Theories as to the meaning of ritual," says Dr. Bennett, "only arise after the origin of the rite has been forgotten." The chief hint is in Leviticus xvii. 11, as we shall see. But nowhere in the Old Testament does the value of the sacrificial blood lie in the blood itself, or in the suffering that might go with bloodshed. Nor does the final value lie even in the life symbolized by the blood, rich as we shall see that idea to be. We go behind and above even that to God's will of grace. The value of the sacrificial rite lay wholly in the fact of its being God's will, God's appointment, what God ordained as the machinery of His grace. It is of grace that He consents to receive the proffered life and reckon the gift for righteousness. In the Old Testament the acceptance is acceptilation.

### 3.

On the other hand, blood or none, it would have mattered a whole world if Jesus had met His death naturally, by accident or disease. Everything turns, not on His life having been taken from Him, but on its having been laid down. Everything, for His purpose, turns on the will to die. But, none the less, for its purpose, it had to be a death of moral violence (inflicted, that is, by human wickedness and the wresting of the law), to give its full force to both man's sin and Christ's blood. "Men of blood," in the Old Testament, were not mere killers but murderers. So that we say it would have mattered a whole world if the death had not been violent and wicked, if Jesus had died of disease in His bed, or by accidental poison.

## 4.

It follows that the acceptable and valuable thing to God was not mere demise, in whatever form. The Lord and Giver of life can have no pleasure in life's extinction. The death, even of Christ, could not have had divine value if it had meant any acceptance of even a martyr death which involved extinction and the dissolution of His personality. His death was precious in God's sight as the conquest of death, as the negation of death, as the ironic antithesis of death, the surmounting of its accepted arrest, the capture of its captivity. It is death as transition, not extinction; yet it is transition not as mere metamorphosis, that is, not as a mere step in a large *process*, not as a new stage of even moral growth, not as a fresh stadium in the normal evolution of a personality. There is involved in it a *crisis*. Take the case of resurrection. We do not get the full import of the idea of the resurrection if it involve for us only a survival of personality, any more than if we treat it as a mere reanimation. Neither vital resuscitation nor mere personal persistence does justice to Christ's resurrection. It crowns a real crisis. It seals a decisive moral act. Now as His death and resurrection form two sides of one act, the real personal crisis in Christ's resurrection is but the obverse of the real personal crisis in His death. We have to do with one critical act. Death is redemptive only as a personal moral *act*. It is moral conquest only as it is a crucial moral achievement, in which Christ's personality was not only intact and unscathed but consummated; and not only consummated but effectual, victorious, and decisive. The shedding of blood means this finality. It means the total surrender of a personality by the one means wherein personality both receives effect and produces effect — by means of a personal *act* which requires (but also releases) the whole resources of the personality. What God seeks

is not a religious tribute or present, costly but partial; his self-complete holiness requires a total holy self, in an act or deed of gift once for all. The essential thing was not self-sacrifice (which might be wilful, and often is wilful, as well as futile, or even mischievous), but sacrifice of the self, not sacrifice *by* self but *of* self, and of the whole self, sacrifice not merely voluntary but personal, loving, and entire. Not till then is it striving unto blood. And we end by noticing that the offering of self here was the offering of a holy self to a holy God from sin's side; and that sacrifice, therefore, involved, in some form, the idea not only of substitution but of judgment. What Nathan (so early) required from David was not only repentance and confession but satisfaction (2 Samuel xvii. 7, 13, 14).

I should like to go into more detail on these heads.

##### 5.

Jesus appeared among a people whose mode of execution was not as it is with us, but either by stoning or crucifixion—that is, with effusion of blood. That in the first place. In the second place He appeared in an age and stage when the effusion of blood formed part of the religious ritual also—and indeed its central rite. In this external respect the criminal and the religious procedure concurred as they now do not. And in the third place, for the great majority of the worshippers in Christ's day, the origin of the rite was quite forgotten; its genius, therefore, was ill-understood; and, accordingly, serious people were sure to begin speculating on such theories of it as Christianity stimulated and enriched. By almost all the rite was taken as an *opus operatum*, as if the blood in itself had an atoning value, or, at least, as if the performance of the bloody rite had this value, as mere compliance with a divine regulation instead of answer to a divine gift. The symbolic significance had gone. The

why of the prescription did not trouble the general mind. The New Testament writers, whose whole spiritual world was now lit up and reorganized by the cross, had to take the current rite, and the current language, and to restore both to the profound, moral, intelligent, and spiritual religion of the Old Testament. Just as we have still to treat many of our own ancient ideas and terms, in spite of shallow and scrupulist protests, from intellectualists rigidly righteous, against playing with words or paltering with them in a double sense.

## 6.

There is nothing that is more necessary to note in regard even to the Old Testament sacrifice, there is nothing that more differentiates it from all pagan sacrifice, than the two truths, one speculative and one positive, set out in Leviticus xvii. 11. "The life of the flesh is in the blood : and *I have given it to you* upon the altar to make atonement for your souls : for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life." The two truths fundamental to the revealed (as distinct from the popular) idea of sacrifice are, therefore :

(1) The positive truth, that the sacrifice is the result of God's grace and not its cause. It is given *by* God before it is given *to* Him. The real ground of any atonement is not God's wrath but God's grace. There can be no talk of propitiation in the sense of mollification, or of purchasing God's grace, in any religion founded on the Bible.

(2) The speculative and explanatory truth, that the pleasing thing to God, and the active element in the matter, is not death but life. The blood was shed with the direct object, not of killing the animal, but of detaching and releasing the life, isolating it, as it were, from the material base of body and flesh, and presenting it in this refined state to

God. (We allow, of course, for the current belief, in whose language the cultus was cast, that the blood was the seat of the life as no other element of the body was.) The creature had not to suffer. And it had to die only incidentally, in the course of getting away the life for a blessed purpose of God with man. The shedding of blood was certainly not a wreaking of punishment indifferently on guilty or innocent. This idea is quite foreign to the Bible. No fair critic of Christianity ought to regard it, and no informed one does. To urge it is only a piece of the intellectual levity that so often goes with much aggressive criticism, especially of the popular kind. In the Old Testament the slaying of the creature was not intended to free the offerer from the death penalty; because for the sins that meant death and exclusion from the community, there was no sacrifice. Instead, therefore, of being a gross conception, the Jewish use and speech of blood in this connexion was a refinement on all other ritual—if we will but read with the historical sense. The flesh was eaten when drained of the blood; the blood could never be thus consumed.

## 7.

We go a step farther in reading the Levitical praxis when we note that the material sacrifice was, and was meant to be, but an outward symbol (as our bread and wine are) of the real inner sacrifice, which was the offerer's self-oblation. The victim, or the gift, signified the inward and hearty submission of the donor to God's prior gift and provision. It was the living symbol of a life, i.e., of an obedient will. The sacrifice as mere tribute was worthless; it must be the symbol and sacrament of the worshipper's self-surrender in the sacrificial act. It was not a gift to God, but an appropriation of God's gift in the institution itself. Thus the

ritual act was valuable only as the organ of the ethical. The sacrifices were consecrated by self-sacrifice. It was the will that lay on the altar. What was precious was not the thing, not the elements, but the act. It is thus that Protestantism truly construes each of its sacraments. The elements matter little, or their state. Fruit or water would do as well. The essential thing is the communal act. And it is here that the real sacramental issue lies between the Churches. Is the centre of gravity in the elements or in the act? Now the whole Hebrew system strove to keep down the place and value of the gift, and to worship in spirit (i.e. *in actu*) and in truth a seeking, acting, giving God. Hecatombs were unknown. A widow's mite could be more sacramental than a nation's mint. The act was the precious thing. And the act treated not as a mere function, but as a deliberate exercise of will and self-disposal—always responding in kind to the act of God's will and grace which ordained it.

## 8.

What is offered, therefore, is life in its most intimate, spiritual, and moral form. This does away with several notions. It does away with the notion that the pleasing, satisfying, atoning thing to God is suffering. It destroys the idea of Atonement as consisting in equivalent pain. Suffering then becomes a mere condition, and not a *factor*, in the sacrificial act. And, as we have just seen, we get rid of the idea that the essence of the sacrifice, the *donum*, was any *thing*, any piece of property. It must be life. Blood means essential, central, personal life. Human sacrifice was so far right. Where it was wrong was in the concomitant idea that any person could have sacrificial property in another person—as slave, child, or wife. The tacit and false assumption in the immolation of these were (1) that they could be the



offerer's property (and therefore religious means instead of ends), and (2) that the highest sacrifice was a payment of property, even property so prized as human chattels. It was true that sacrifice by blood meant sacrifice of precious life. But our will is our dearest thing, the thing we cling to most and give up last. Our will alone is our ownest own, the only dear thing we can really sacrifice. The blood means the will, the self-will, the whole will, in loving oblation. The cross does not in the New Testament exhibit God as accepting sacrifice but as making it. And it is never in the New Testament represented as the extremity of suffering, but as the superlative of death; and that again is represented as the triumph of eternal life. It is the absolute active death of self-will *into* the holy will of God, but also *by* that will; the complete, central, vital obedience of the holy to the holy in a necessary act on the Eternal scale. It was in an act, and not in a mere mood of resignation. And in an act not gratuitously done, (however voluntarily,) but made necessary by the organic pragmatism and moral unity of a whole life; and a whole life imbedded in the organic context of a national history; which again was integrated into God's holy purpose for the whole race and its redemption. Christ must die not simply of the blindness and blunders of men, but because He was the incarnation of that holiness which makes sin so sinful and wickedness so furiously to rage. The *must* was not merely in the Jews, but in the nature of holiness, as soon as it came to close quarters with human sin. The real nature of the Incarnation lies in the moral polarity and therefore identity of Christ's holiness with the holiness of God. The holy God alone could answer Himself and meet the demand of His own holiness. "Not I, but Christ living in me."

## 9.

We live in a stage when sacrifice, in the ritual sense, in the sanguinary sense, has long had no real place in our religion or worship. The language of sacrifice, therefore, has no meaning for us, except as it covers acts or requirements which are at heart ethical. But in passing to this stage we are not simply repudiating Hebraism. We are interpreting it. We are not casting its old clothes.<sup>1</sup> We are liberating the moral soul of Hebraism. We are setting free the idea it carries, and disengaging its true genius. We are not making a construction. We are not reading a later thing into Hebraism. We are seizing on an element which the great Hebraism always had at its core and foundation, and which only the popular religion and its debasements submerged,<sup>2</sup>—the element of initial and proffering grace on the one hand, and of obedience answering by offering on the other. God made the first sacrifice to which man's sacrifices were but response. And we can never come to a depth of sacrifice where God has not been before us and undone us. If we make our bed in hell He is there.

This is the meeting point of the priestly and prophetic

<sup>1</sup> What infatuation, what overweening is it drives literary and scientific people to set up in a business so severe and so delicate as theology? How thin culture is, as Nietzsche says. Why is their negative dogmatism better than dogmatism capable and positive? Carlyle is still an ethical force, but we have outgrown his religion. Yet men who find they have to give a whole life to physics still have levity enough, not only to admonish, but to rival those who treat theology with the same seriousness. What would be said if one of the theologians who made chemistry a hobby lectured the Royal Society on their antiquated views of the constitution of matter? Theology seems regarded by many brisk spirits as if it were an empty old canister with which any exuberant stripling can alarm the neighbourhood by kicking it along the street.

<sup>2</sup> The whole secret of treating the Old Testament is the art of disentangling the divine revelation from the popular religion, even within the prophet's own mind, and marking how the one gradually emerged through the other, and shed its shell. There are many fragments of the shell still adhering, even in the revelation of the New Testament, which it is the business of modern criticism to detach.

streams in the old Testament. Obedience everywhere is better than sacrifice. The priest would have said that as honestly as the prophet. The ritual was but an act of obedience. That was its real worth. It was only obedience, and not mere compliance, that gave sacrifice any divine value, and raised it above mere subsidy from us, or mere exaction by God. The sin-offering becomes in its nature a thank-offering. Here Christ consummated the priest no less than the prophet. It is onesided to see in Him only the victory of the prophetic line. His offering of Himself was the Eternal Spirit returning, in complete satisfaction, to God who gave it. It was a case of ethical obedience with the true priest no less than with the true prophet. It was the genuine surrender of the loving, trusting will. Only in the one case it took the form of worship, and in the other of conduct. And for life the one is quite as needful as the other. The obedience of the whole man and the fulness of his life demand both—but each has its own place, and neither can be substituted for the other.

## 10.

While we can never cease to speak or think of the blood of Christ we must take much pains to interpret its true idea to our modern conditions. If we speak of the sacrifice of Christ we must construe it in the ethical terms demanded by the modern passion for righteousness and presented by its own dominant holiness; and we must for this end avoid such a use of the inevitable imagery as discourages that effort—like the first verse of Cowper's fine hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood." It is not a mere matter of taste that moves our protest against it.

But do we succeed in this attempt to ethicize when we regard the death, or the cross, of Christ as the supreme glorification of heroic self-sacrifice, moving, and exalting, and

purifying us, as the genius of tragedy is ? Or do we succeed even when we regard the cross simply as the *manifestation*, the great object lesson, of God's love under the arduous conditions of sacrifice ? Or do we succeed when we regard its first and sole object as being to move mankind to repentance, and thus supply the condition of forgiveness, instead of being itself God's act of forgiveness ? Is there anything conveyed by the extreme phrase "the blood of Christ" which is not conveyed by the idea of sacrifice, or the idea of revelation, or the idea of a *Busspredigt* ? Yes. There is one whole side—the side indicated by the words, judgment, expiation, or atonement ; the side which ever since Anselm in theology has magnified the weight and sinfulness of sin, as the sense of God's holiness rose. And this is a side which it is absolutely impossible to drop from Christianity without giving the Gospel quite away in due time. Individuals, of course, can remain Christian while they discard it, but the Church cannot.

We make sacrifices, and costly ones, which yet do not draw blood from us. They do not come home. They do not go to the very centre of our life. They do not touch the nerve or strain the heart. A man may devote the toil of a self-denying life to a book of stupendous research on the gravest subjects, which yet makes no call on his inmost self, and is not written with his blood but only with a sweating brow. We get the toiler in calm research, the genius of scholarly combination perhaps, but not the man. But when we speak of the blood of Christ we mean that what He did drew upon the very citadel of His personality and involved His total self. His whole personality was put into His work and identified with it ; not merely His whole interest or ambition. The saving work of God drew blood from Christ as it drew Christ from God. Christ's work touched the quick of His divinest life, and stirred up all that was

within Him to bless and magnify God's holy name. He poured out His soul unto death. God, in his insatiable holy love, was exigent even on Him, and spared not His own son. Man's sin drew upon all God's Son, and taxed the Holiest to the uttermost. It made call upon what is most deep in Christ and dear to God—Himself, His person, His vital soul, His blood. The love of God is only shed into our hearts in the shedding of that most precious blood.

And, on the other line, we may and we do show love and kindness to those around us with a divine ingenuity and assiduity. But it is not redeeming love. The genius of all philanthropy is not redemption but amelioration. It has not the element of judgment and new creation. It is not the holy, searching, sanctifying love which made the cross of Christ. Indeed there is no weaker feature in much current kindness or affection than its impatience of real criticism, and its lack of courage to bear, or to exercise, it in a helpful and saving way. Very few, for instance, of those who love the people nor would see them wronged, love in such a way as implies courage to tell their clients to their face of the things in them which are more fatal to their progress than all disabilities. And the deadly effects of parental weakness in this way have long formed a moral commonplace—now more common and more in place than ever. The appetite for praise is much more keen than for perfection (which is another name for holiness, Matt. v. 48), and love doubts love which ventures on rebuke. So religion takes, in this respect, the colour of the time; and in preaching a love without judgment swamps conscience in heart, and laps the sin in the warm mist of sympathy for the sinner. Much more is here involved than any orthodoxy. One only cares to deal with a false theology because it is the fatal source of false religion, false ethic, and a false public note. And a true theology is of such

moment because it embodies those ethical powers and acts which sit at the centre of human life and mould the whole course of human history to its destiny. A true theology is the moral philosophy of the Eternal, the ethic of the Eternal, and at the present bewildered hour it is more needed than religion, for the sake of religion.

## 11.

When we speak of the blood of Christ, then, we mean that what He did involved not simply the *effort* of His whole self (as it might be with any hero taxed to his utmost), but the *exhaustive obedience, submission and surrender* of His total self. But, on the line of judgment just named, we have to go farther in a direction indicated in a passing way already (p. 210). We have to say that it involved obedience of no gratuitous and arbitrary kind, no "voluntary humility," no self-willed, self-chosen obedience, as the manner of some great devotees is. It represents, moreover, no mere historic necessity, rising from Christ's relation to Israel and its past. But there is a divine must. It was complete obedience to the moral requirements of grace, i.e. to a holy grace. The sacrifice of Christ was inevitable by His holiness in such a world; and it was made to the Holy. It was not offered *to* man but *for* man, even when we magnify to the utmost its immense effect *on* man. It was offered to God.

But in saying this what do we say? We have passed upward from the idea of *sacrifice* to the graver idea of *judgment*. We recall the fact that the effusion of blood was a mark not merely of temple ritual but of criminal execution. It was involved not merely in the cultus but in the civil code and social order based on God's righteousness. And full self-sacrifice to a holy God involves by analogy the submission of self to the moral order and judgment of God. Holiness and judgment are for ever inseparable.

The note of judgment runs through the whole genius of Israel's history as surely as do sanctity, submission, salvation and the Kingdom—and especially on its prophetic side. God must either punish sin or expiate it, for the sake of His infrangibly holy nature. Do let us take the holiness of God centrally and seriously, not as an attribute isolated and magnified, but as His very essence, changeless and inexorable. He must inflict punishment or assume it. And He chose the latter course as honouring the law while saving the guilty. It was a course that produced more than all the effect of punishment, and in a better, holier, and more productive way. Expiation, therefore, is the opposite of exacting punishment; it is assuming it. Nor is it exacting the last farthing in any quantitative sense. That is not required in a full, true, and sufficient oblation. The holy law is satisfied by an adequacy short of equivalency, by practical confession and not by exaction; by practical confession which fully gauges the whole moral situation; and by practical confession of the holiness far more than the guilt.<sup>1</sup>

And this is the only sense in which Christ from His inmost experience could confess, could confess with His blood. His practical and entire confession of holiness from the midst of sin is the divine significance of His blood. No obedience to a holy God is complete which does not recognize His judgment, and recognize it in the practical way of action, by accepting it—not necessarily in amount but in principle; not equivalently, as to amount of suffering, but adequately, as to confession of sanctity; and confession of it in act and suffering. And who but God could adequately confess in action the holiness of God?

Love in sacrifice means pain. But for holy love it means

<sup>1</sup> Here McLeod Campbell and Moberly seem to me to come short. They do not get their eye sufficiently away from the confession of sin.

moral pain. And moral pain is something more than passive; it is active. It is not the pain of a sting merely, but of wrath; the pain not of a wrong but of rectifying it; not of grief but of judgment. Holiness must in very love set judgment in the earth. We have here to do then especially with the pain that sin gives to God, in reacting against it, in judging and destroying it. The blood of Christ stands not simply for the sting of sin on God but the scourge of God on sin, not simply for God's sorrow over sin but for God's wrath on sin. It expresses not simply the bleeding of the feet that seek the sinner but the bloodshed of the battle that destroys the prince of this world, that destroys in us the guilty entail, and establishes the holy kingdom. The total self-oblation of man to God means that dread recognition of holiness which from sin's side must be felt as God's wrath; its recognition in experience as judgment; and its recognition on a scale adequate to both God and man in their greatness. Christ's submission to judgment was not simply His experience of doom and suffering as incidents of life, but His submission to them as God's purpose, and His confession of them as asserting the holiness of God and making man's wrath praise Him. It was not merely a collision with historic forces and social powers in Israel, but the recognition, within these, of the holy wrath of God. The necessity of Christ's death was created more deeply by God's holiness in Him than by the perversity of the men it exasperated. No one could reveal a holy God by any amount of suffering or sacrifice which did not recognize this element of judgment,—did not atone. *No real revelation is possible except as Atonement and Redemption—*not with Atonement as a preliminary, but in the form of atonement.

It is this element of judgment, of Atonement, of dealing with a doom, not to say a curse, that is conserved in the



historic and symbolic word blood. The word transcends the mere idea of self-sacrifice by keeping to the front the idea of judgment. It is not death that atones, but that supreme act and expression of holy, obedient life in it which does such justice to God's holiness as the Son alone could, and which is possible only under the conditions of death, do, and of such death as Christ died. The death of Christ was an experience in His life, yet it was the dominant, and at last the crowning one, which gave meaning to all the rest even for Himself, as He came to learn. It was a function of His total life, that function of it which at once faced and effected the saving, the last, judgment of God. His blood was shed in Gethsemane as truly as on Calvary; but it was on Calvary that it rose to found for ever our peace with God. It was there that it rose to establish our evangelical faith in us not as an affection simply but as life-confidence, and self-disposal turning not upon the filling of the hungry heart but upon the stilling of the roused conscience by a complete forgiveness once for all.

## 12.

We associate blood with ultra-realism. A morbid phase of the tendency is found in the crowds that gather to see the stain of an accident, still more of a murder. That is a case where the blood is treated as a thing, for its own sake, and not significantly as a symbol. But as a symbol it stands for moral realism the most poignant and central. In our religion it means that Christ touches us more nearly and deeply than our pain does, or our guilt. What in us harrows the heart in Him harrowed hell. "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming." He revolutionizes the eternal foundations of our moral world. But it means also that He came from a region in the moral reality of God deeper than sin or grief could

shake. It signifies the very heart of God, the holy reality of God, an eternal act of the whole God, therefore a final act in the heavenliest places in Christ. In being "made sin" Christ experienced sin as God does, while He experienced its effects as man does. He felt sin with God, and sin's judgment with men. He realized, as God, how real sin was, how radical, how malignant, how deadly to the Holy One's very being. When Christ died at sin's hands it meant that sin was death to the holiness of God, and both could not live in the same world. And, as man, Christ placed His whole self beside man under the judgment of God, beside man in court but on God's side in the issue, confessing God's holiness in the judgment, and justifying His treatment of sin. Justifying God! A missionary to the North American Indians records that having seen his wife and children killed before his eyes, and being himself harried in bonds across the prairie amid his tormentors, he "justified God in this thing." I do not know a sublimer order of experience than from the heart to bless and praise a good and holy God in situations like these. It is to this order of experience that the work, the blood, of Christ belongs. And there is no justification of men except by this justification of God. Never is man so just with God as when his broken, holy heart calls just the judgment of God which he feels but has not himself earned; and never could man be just with God but through God's justification of Himself in the blood of Christ.

We cannot in any theology which is duly ethicized dispense with the word satisfaction. It was of course not a quantitative replacement of anything God had lost, nor was it the glutting of a God's anger by an equivalent suffering on who cares whom. It was no satisfaction of a *jus talionis*. But it was the adequate confession, in act and suffering, "Thou art holy as thou

judgest." We can only understand any justification of man as it is grounded in this justification—this self-justification—of God. The sinner could only be saved by something that thus damned the sin. The Saviour was not punished, but He took the penalty of sin, the chastisement of our peace. It was in no sense as if *He felt* chastised or condemned (as even Calvin said), but because He willingly bowed, with a moral sympathy possible only to the sinless, under the divine ordinance of suffering death and judgment appointed to wait on the sin of His kin. The blood of Christ cleanseth from *all* sin. The metaphor denotes the radicality, totality, and finality of the whole action in the realism of the moral world—which even high sacrifice, not resisting unto blood, only slurs or shelves—when it does not toy with it.

It is notable that Christ speaks of His blood only at His life's end, while during life He spoke only of forgiving grace without any such expiation (except in the ransom passage). Why was this so? Was it not, first, because His grand total witness, which death but pointed, was to the grace of God's holy love; and the exposure of sin could only come by the light of that revelation? And was it not, second, because His revelation and offer of holy grace without sacrifice and judgment failed of its effect; because even the great, uplifted, and joyful *invitation*, "Come unto me," failed till it was *enacted* from the mighty gloom of the cross; because in Christ mere prophetism, stern or tender, found its greatest failure; because, as prophet, He could neither make His own cleave to Him, nor make the people see how much more than prophet He was; He could not keep them from murdering their Messiah? But, according to Old Testament ideas, this murder was the consummation of high-handed sin, of the kind of sin that had no expiation, that was unprovided for in the whole economy of grace. There was no grace for the deliberate rejection of consummate grace.

There a new expiation must come in, that would cover even this. The death of Christ expiated even the inexpressible sin that slew Him.

## 13.

Does it not follow that when we use such a word as "satisfaction" in connexion with the blood of Christ we do not think of meeting with compensation, a mere law formulated or formulable, however holy, far less a divine fury; but of meeting a God of holy love with a love equally holy from the side of sinful man?<sup>1</sup> God is met with a love equally holy—a love, therefore, not rendered by sinful man, but by his divine and sinless representative; and rendered not by way of compromising the case by some pact, judicial or ritual, but so that the Holy Father comes to rest with infinite complacency in the personal achievement of the Holy Son, evermore saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"? Father and Son dwell in each other in mutual personal satisfaction, full and joyful, evermore delighting in each other, and saying each to the other, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Heaven and earth are full of thy glory."

Surely we have the same Christian call to rescue words like "satisfaction" from their popular travesties (and the ignorance or quackery of those who denounce these travesties) as the Apostles had (with an inspired insight) to save the idea of sacrifice and blood for its true and prime significance from its mere tribal *provenance* and from the mere ceremonialism of the day.

P. T. FORSYTH.

<sup>1</sup> The holiness of God is God as holy, just as "the decrees of God are God decreeing."