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obvious or even clear—when the relationship is one of co-operation in a common purpose.

‘So far I have made no mention of God.’ That is, says Professor MACMURRAY, because he wished to lay the foundation securely. But in his concluding pages he makes the omission good, indicating how essential to the view he has outlined is the idea of God. All experience, he says, at any level is the experience of the finite in the infinite. Even a triangle, as Spinoza pointed out, can be seen, or imagined, only as a limitation of infinite space. At the material level we apprehend all material objects as finite and dependent upon the material infinite. This is not a matter of reflection, but of immediate common experience. Similarly, we apprehend all organisms as finite dependents of infinite life.

And when we come to the personal field it is no different. It has been already insisted that our apprehension of ourselves as persons is at the same time an apprehension of our dependence upon what is not ourselves. We can now see that it is an apprehension of our own dependence, and the dependence of all other finite persons, upon infinite personality. God as infinite personality is the

primary natural experience of all persons. ‘That, then, is my philosophy of religion.’ We could have wished a little more about the concluding stage of the argument, particularly about the apprehension of anything being an apprehension of the finite in the infinite.

Instead, Professor MACMURRAY points out the concrete, practical meaning of his philosophy. It is not so much a reflective formulation of religion, as we know it, as a demand for a new step in the creation of human society. The field of the personal, which is the field of religion, is one where we grope in the dark and in which our civilization is perilously unskilled. In that field the modern world remains a world of individualism. It is, therefore, anti-religious. Our religious life remains primitive and undeveloped. The religious task remains unfulfilled. Its goal is the creation of a human society, universal in its extent, based upon the community of persons. We have to address ourselves to the task of creating the life of truly personal relationship between men, and of destroying those elements in modern society which frustrate and deny it. Whatever works for this end is religious. Whatever opposes it is the enemy of religion.

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## Recent Thoughts on the Doctrine of the Atonement.

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IN February 1926 an article by the Rev. Robert Mackintosh, D.D., under this title, was published in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. It reviewed the literature on the doctrine of Atonement published during the previous decade—in the years following Dean Rashdall’s famous Bampton Lectures of 1915<sup>1</sup>—and found in it, apart from purely historical contributions and certain re-interpretations of the writings of Dr. Denney and Dr. Forsyth, a predominantly Abelardian outlook<sup>2</sup> which seemed to

<sup>1</sup> *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (Macmillan, 1925).

<sup>2</sup> xxxvii. 200.

the writer lacking in objectivity and unwisely intolerant of any penal element in atonement. There were, moreover, other tendencies discernible in the theology of these years which aroused misgiving and led to a protest against the blotting out of justice from the moral ideal and the degrading of God’s love into an unethical softness, which was described as ‘the master error of our day, and the form in which the contemporary mind becomes guilty of apostasy from God.’<sup>3</sup>

Ten years have passed and two notable changes at least have taken place in the theological situation

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, 203.

as regards the doctrine of Atonement. On the one hand, a greater diversity of outlook is reflected in the thought of the last ten years, set forth in books varying alike in technicality and size from the popular statement of Dr. Waterhouse's *What is Salvation?*<sup>1</sup> to the lengthy treatment of Brunner in the 'spiral movement' of *The Mediator*<sup>2</sup> and its argument. For the subjective and objective theories, which Dr. Mackintosh found to be almost exclusive alternatives, there has been substituted quite a variety of approaches to the central problem. Canon Green uses a suggestive analogy<sup>3</sup> when he compares the doctrine of Atonement to 'some vast cathedral which we must view from without and within, looking east and looking west, indeed from a hundred points of view, before any true idea of it can be gained.' It is as though different observers were each telling us something of the beauty and wonder of the great cathedral within which all of them are standing and which they are seeking, in their own ways, to describe. The analogy, moreover, illustrates another feature also of recent theological thought. Just as the cathedral is full of reminders to us of the wisdom and skill of those who designed and built it to the glory of God in bygone days, so in our thinking about the Atonement we find ourselves constantly recalling doctrines first formulated many centuries ago. Both in the variety of the standpoints which have been adopted, and in their indebtedness to the great doctrines of the past, the contributions to the theory of Atonement in recent years are noteworthy.

On the other hand, as regards the narrower issue of subjective or objective interpretations, there has been, in many quarters, a marked reaction from the former type of theory, which seemed to be gaining fuller acceptance in the period of which Dr. Mackintosh wrote, and a new emphasis has been laid upon the objective aspect of God's ways with men. Dr. H. R. Mackintosh, for example, in *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness*,<sup>4</sup> spoke of Atonement as 'what it cost God to forgive the sin of the world.' While repudiating the suggestion 'that God had to be induced to love men, and that what Christ did and suffered provided the inducement,' he suggested the inadequacy of any merely subjective interpretation, in the assertion that 'through the reconciling work of Christ not merely is God's love exhibited on an absolute scale, but

a new situation arises for the sinful as between God and them.'<sup>5</sup> Dr. Kenneth E. Kirk, in *Essays Catholic and Critical*,<sup>6</sup> had given an interpretation of the Atonement which followed closely the Anselmic type, while the composite volume *Atonement in History and Life*<sup>7</sup> tended for the most part to emphasize the truth of the objective theory of Atonement. The most definite protest against subjective theory has come, however, from writers of the Barthian School and is conspicuous in Emil Brunner's *The Mediator*. We may take this work as the most complete and thoroughgoing modern exposition of the Anselmic type of theory. It has, indeed, been described as an 'act of reparation to Anselm.'<sup>8</sup> Believing that the theologian has to show that 'there are not many "articles of faith" but only one,'<sup>9</sup> Brunner deals comprehensively with Revelation, with the person of the Mediator and the problems of Incarnation, before coming to his exposition of the work of Christ and his doctrine of reconciliation, in which the subjective theory, traced back in its modern form to Schleiermacher and Ritschl, is definitely set aside. 'It is suggested,' writes Brunner in criticism of it, 'that as man beholds this picture of the Man who gives Himself up so completely, with so much love and faithfulness to God, the divine love and faithfulness will be manifested to Him. . . . Here the only gulf which separates man from God is illusory, namely, it is that which human error has placed between itself and God. Reconciliation simply means the removal of a religious error.'<sup>10</sup> Brunner would have us abandon such a view, which, he asserts, does no justice to the gravity of man's sin, or to the self-consistent righteousness of God, and asks us to recognize afresh the merits which mere negative criticism has often concealed in the objective theory of Anselm and those who have followed him.

Taking what has been frequently held to be the part of Anselm's theory most open to criticism, Brunner seeks to set it in a new and more favourable light, and to show how much in harmony it is with his characteristic doctrine of divine sovereignty. 'Nothing,' he says, 'is easier than to caricature the statements of the Bible and of Christianity about the penal sufferings of Christ in such a way

<sup>5</sup> P. 210. <sup>6</sup> S.P.C.K., 1926.

<sup>7</sup> S.P.C.K., 1929 (Ed. W. L. Grensted). The essay by R. S. Cripps, a study in Isaiah 52<sup>12</sup>-53, stressing the objective value of Atonement in the sight of God, was published separately under the title *The Prophets and the Atonement* (S.P.C.K., 1931).

<sup>8</sup> G. Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 100 (S.P.C.K., 1931).

<sup>9</sup> P. 16. <sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, 439.

<sup>1</sup> Hodder & Stoughton ('The Westminster Books'), 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Eng. tr. (Lutterworth, 1934).

<sup>3</sup> *Our Lord and Saviour*, 78 (Longmans, 1928).

<sup>4</sup> P. 190 (Nisbet, 1927).

that behind these "theories" we seem to perceive the figure of some bloodthirsty Oriental monarch, or of some primitive Eastern divinity, with his whims and caprices. But in reality the absolute sovereignty of God is the presupposition of this revelation, and, wherever the idea of a "democratic God" is entertained, there will be no intelligent understanding of the meaning of the Cross.<sup>1</sup> None the less, Brunner points out, it is not, as Anselm held, merely because of God's glory—still less because He so chose—but because only thus could sin as we know it be met, that Atonement is necessary, and it is wrought out not from the human but from the divine side.<sup>2</sup> Naturally following from this thought of the divine sovereignty, Brunner welcomes Anselmic teaching regarding man's utter sinfulness and helplessness. Forgiveness is never easy, and the measure of guilt is only to be found in that which is needed to remove it. 'The more real guilt is to us, the more real also is the gulf between us and God, the more real is the wrath of God, and the inviolable character of the law of penalty; the more real also the obstacle between God and man becomes, the more necessary becomes the particular transaction, by means of which the obstacle, in all its reality, is removed. The more serious our view of guilt, the more clearly we perceive the necessity for an objective—and not merely subjective—Atonement. To deny this necessity means the *nondum consideravisse pondus peccati*.'<sup>3</sup> Only in Christ has humanity been able to perceive its separation from God—and in characteristic words Brunner goes on to assert that 'in this one event, question and answer, need and the knowledge of need are present simultaneously. Only at the Cross of Christ does man see fully what it is that separates him from God; yet it is here alone that he perceives that he is no longer separated from God.'<sup>4</sup> One other quotation may be given to show Brunner's close alignment with the Latin doctrine of Atonement. The work of the Mediator, by whom the gulf separating man from God is bridged, is described in terms of guilt and penalty: 'The elaboration of the idea of penal satisfaction by Anselm was an act of outstanding importance,' and the rooting of theory of Atonement in the conception of divine law is welcomed, so long as law is taken seriously, not in the Kantian sense of abstract moral law, but as 'the manifested Will of the Lord God: eternally the same, self-consistent, unchangeable.'<sup>5</sup> It is true that Brunner would not have us think

exclusively in terms of satisfaction and penalty, but makes room for the idea of expiatory sacrifice as well: yet here also, and somewhat unexpectedly, he finds Anselmic authority, since, alongside predominantly forensic elements, Anselm uses the word 'satisfaction' as holding the balance evenly between the ideas of penalty and of sacrifice, and bringing out particularly clearly the idea of an equivalent.<sup>6</sup>

As an expiatory sacrifice 'intended to remove some obstacle which has come in between God and man,'<sup>7</sup> the Atonement is, for Brunner, a resolving of the dilemma between the need for sacrifice in view of the wrath of God, and the inadequacy of all sacrifice which can at best be only an 'apparent equivalent.' 'It is God Himself who expiates, who provides the sacrifice. . . . In the New Testament the Cross of Christ is conceived as the self-offering of God.'<sup>8</sup> This has a certain affinity at first sight to the treatment of the problem in Bishop Hicks' *The Fullness of Sacrifice*.<sup>9</sup> The modern recoil from the sacrificial view of Atonement, we read there, whether on the part of those who find substitutionary theories non-moral and prefer a subjective interpretation, or of others who fear merely external or magical ideas, has made it easier to forget the truth enshrined in sayings like 'cost is an essential of sacrifice': 'the goodness and severity of God.'<sup>10</sup> But Dr. Hicks writing from a 'Catholic' standpoint, which is concerned with the doctrine of the Eucharist more than with that of Atonement, has his own, very different, thesis as to the significance of sacrifice and its place in the theology of the Church. The threefold conception seen in the Old Testament practice of sin-offerings, burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings may be traced, he maintains, in the New Testament and in the Christian life still in a triple aspect. There is the Cross, the Resurrection, and the indwelling Christ—the life surrendered, the life transformed, the life shared.<sup>11</sup> Christian doctrine remained, on the whole, true to this view of sacrifice till the time of Augustine and perhaps later, but in the teaching of the Schoolmen and in Reformation doctrine there was substituted the mistaken notion (still almost everywhere accepted) of atoning sacrifice as equivalent only to the death of Christ. This 'Essay in Reconciliation' is a plea for the recognition afresh of what its author holds to be the true doctrine of sacrifice—that while the work of our redemption was accomplished by death, death

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, 470.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, 472 n.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, 481.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, 477.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, 451.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, 451 f.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, 482.

<sup>9</sup> Macmillan, 1930.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, 461.

<sup>10</sup> P. 126.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. p. 224.

is never to be 'regarded as an end in itself.'<sup>1</sup> 'Not the Atonement only, however we may define that, but the Incarnation also, in the fulness of its meaning, belong to Christ's sacrifice in all its stages.'<sup>2</sup> His Resurrection, the Ascension and Session, the giving of His new manhood to His own—these also are part of His sacrifice. 'The fatal identification between sacrifice and death,'<sup>3</sup> we read, has been the source not only of Eucharistic controversy but of many difficulties about the doctrine of Atonement, and in a return to the teaching of the Bible and of the early centuries regarding sacrifice there is to be found fresh hope of unity within the Christendom of to-day.

This theory may be compared not only with that of Brunner, but, as is pointed out below, with the views of other modern writers on the Atonement. Meanwhile, returning to *The Mediator*, let us note that its teaching is not Anselmic only, but goes back also to still earlier thinking. Thus Ritschl is criticised for suggesting two exclusive alternatives, 'either Anselm or the subjective interpretation.'<sup>4</sup> Brunner finds in this 'mistaken view that the Patristic doctrine of Redemption through Incarnation has been supposed to be a (Hellenistic) substitute for the doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation'<sup>5</sup> the source of much confusion. Instead of a sharp distinction between Patristic and Latin theories, Brunner would claim an identity of purpose and meaning illustrated in his interpretation of Irenæus as gathering up in his writings 'the whole wealth of the New Testament witness to Christ,'<sup>6</sup> and of Athanasius, whose Logos doctrine suggests that man, fallen away from the Word, can only be restored by the Word coming to him again.<sup>7</sup> The Greek doctrine of Incarnation and the Latin theory of Atonement are here treated not as rivals, but as necessary each to the other. Both reflect New Testament teaching on the one hand, and on the other anticipate true elements in Reformation doctrine.

While this return to a definitely objective theory has been widely influential, criticism of Anselmic views and defence of the moral influence theory have not been wanting. A new emphasis on the humanity of Jesus, a fuller study of the Gospels, and a less ready recognition of the authority of the Pauline Epistles have to be taken into account in this connexion. *Papers in Modern Churchmanship*<sup>8</sup> included a study of the Atonement by Douglas White, M.A., M.D., which pled for the acceptance

<sup>1</sup> P. 242.                      <sup>2</sup> P. 250 f.                      <sup>3</sup> P. 243.

<sup>4</sup> P. 440.                      <sup>5</sup> P. 440 n.                      <sup>6</sup> P. 249.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, 229 n.                      <sup>8</sup> Longmans, 1926.

of a view of Christ's death not as satisfying God's justice, but as revealing His loving Fatherhood. Dr. John Baillie, in *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*,<sup>9</sup> dealt with the ethical and religious difficulties presented to the modern mind by Anselm's account of Christian Redemption, and set forth also the 'real and unchanging elements of truth that lie behind this whole conception of atonement with God through Jesus Christ,'<sup>10</sup> returning constantly for guidance to the gospel story of Christ's redemptive activity, its impression on His contemporaries and its influence in the Christian Church, and 'the new thought of God as Redeeming Love to which it leads and . . . the crowning Christian conviction that the advent and the life and the death of Jesus were themselves the supreme manifestation of God's redemptive activity towards the human race.'<sup>11</sup>

The importance of Anselm is recognized by another critic, who, like Dr. Baillie, begins his interpretation of the Atonement with an account of the 'Cur Deus Homo' and an estimate of its importance. Principal Franks, in his *History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ*,<sup>12</sup> remained 'reticent regarding the details of his personal belief,'<sup>13</sup> but in the Dale Lectures for 1933<sup>14</sup> he has given to us a candid statement of his own convictions. He offers an altogether different theory of the Atonement from that set out in *The Fulness of Sacrifice*,<sup>15</sup> and, while taking the 'Cur Deus Homo' as a guide, seeks to use the Anselmic method 'in the service of the Abelardian theory,'<sup>16</sup> thus finding himself in direct opposition to *The Mediator*. 'The rationality that Anselm valued in his theory of satisfaction,' he asserts, 'is what the Barthians most hate.'<sup>17</sup> The idea of divine sovereignty is said to be no true guide to the doctrine of Atonement, since the merely sovereign element in God is less than the highest that we know, namely, His love, and to use it to explain everything is really to abandon what is most distinctive to our Christian faith.<sup>18</sup> Further, the conception has been used in *The Mediator* to present successively Patristic and Anselmic views which are not only mutually incompatible,

<sup>9</sup> T. & T. Clark, 1929.                      <sup>10</sup> P. 160.

<sup>11</sup> P. 160 f.                      <sup>12</sup> Hodder & Stoughton, 1915.

<sup>13</sup> R. Mackintosh, *loc. cit.*, 200.

<sup>14</sup> *The Atonement* (Oxford University Press, 1934).

<sup>15</sup> P. xiv. On the ground that no such complete rationale of sacrifice can be established, that the 'Catholic' and Protestant positions differ fundamentally and that a biological instead of a moral conception is used to explain the Atonement.

<sup>16</sup> P. 6 f.                      <sup>17</sup> P. 20.                      <sup>18</sup> P. 95.

but neither of which is acceptable to the Abelardian theory set forth in *The Atonement*. With theories of satisfaction, it is maintained, there is at best only the possibility of forgiveness. For assurance of salvation it was necessary for Anselm himself to supplement his own teaching 'with the thoughts of Christ's example and merit.'<sup>1</sup> 'The great protagonist of a purely objective doctrine . . . has to move to a completely different point of view before he can show how Christ really saves any man.'<sup>2</sup>

Whether we can follow Principal Franks in this argument, and in his trenchant criticism of *The Mediator*, or not, he has given us an attractive statement of the Abelardian theory. Sin, he declares, is to be defined as the rejection of divine

<sup>1</sup> P. 24.<sup>2</sup> P. 25.

love. God's free forgiveness is made known through the manifestation of His love in Christ's Cross. For the preaching of the gospel we need no satisfaction theory, for we are to believe, not in an objective transaction, in which Jesus paid in full the price of sin, but rather in the sheer love that pursues man to the hill of Calvary. By such love alone 'the hard and impenitent heart is softened and melted. Deep calls unto deep. Love answers love; and the Atonement is accomplished.'<sup>3</sup> This is the true doctrine of reconciliation—the only doctrine which the modern preacher can set forth not merely 'to garden cities, or house-parties, or conferences of earnest and well-meaning people'<sup>4</sup>—but to sinners, and to those who have no sense of sin.

<sup>3</sup> P. 196.<sup>4</sup> P. 195.

(To be continued.)

## Some Outstanding Old Testament Problems.

### V. Sacrifice in the Old Testament.

BY THE REVEREND PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER R. NORTH, M.A., HANDSWORTH COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM.

THE main emphasis in modern study of the Old Testament has been upon the prophetic, rather than upon the priestly, elements in the religion. There has even been a disposition to set the two elements, the prophetic and the priestly, over against one another as contraries, and to regard the sacrificial religion of post-exilic times as a declension from the prophetic ideal, and even, in some measure, a reversion to primitive, non-moral conceptions. This is not to say that the study of the priestly literature has been neglected. But the majority of readers of this journal may have felt that such study has been off the main highway of religious development, a subject of antiquarian rather than of present-day religious interest.

Nevertheless, as we attempt to face the religious issues of our own time, we are finding it increasingly difficult to rest content with the antithesis between ethical and evangelical conceptions of religion on the one hand, and sacrificial and sacramental on the other. To set the two in permanent opposition is to reach an impasse. May there not be some higher synthesis in which the seeming opposites are reconciled? Sacramentalism may be evangelical, while it is not impossible for obedience to the prophetic exhortation to 'do justly' to degenerate into severe and unlovely work-righteousness.

The sacrificial worship of post-exilic times was not devoid of spirituality, and Principal Wheeler Robinson has reminded us that 'no just view of Jewish religion can be gained by any one who does not see the Psalter written, so to speak, in parallel columns with the Book of Leviticus' (*Religious Ideas of the Old Testament*, 150). Accordingly, there is a growing feeling that we cannot simply dismiss the large sacrificial element in Old Testament religion as a degenerate 'throw-back' to primitive ideas, irrelevant to true religion.

The problem before us would seem to be three-fold: (1) What was the purpose of sacrifice? (2) (a) Did the prophets condemn sacrifice *as such*, or did they only condemn the abuse of it? And (b) if they condemned it as such, are we to accept theirs as the last word on the subject? (3) If the idea at the heart of sacrifice has any validity, has it any contribution to make to the Christian doctrine of the Atonement?

(1) *What was the Purpose of Sacrifice?*—We must recognize at the outset that the Old Testament nowhere gives any direct statement about the meaning of sacrifice, still less does it give any clear-cut theory of how sacrifice operated. The offering of sacrifices goes back, of course, to immemorial antiquity, and it is quite certain that