as the mixing of blood or tasting of each other’s blood by which in ancient times two men or two clans created a sacred covenant bond. In all the forms of blood-covenant, whether a sacrifice is offered or the veins of the parties opened and their own blood used, the idea is the same : the bond created is a bond of kindred, because one blood is now in the veins of all who have shared the ceremony. The details in which this kind of symbolism may be carried out are of course very various, but where there is a covenant sacrifice wo usually find that the parties eat and drink together (Gen. xxxi. 54), and that the sacrificial blood, if not actually tasted, is at least touched by both parties (Xen., *Anab.,* ii. 2, 9), or sprinkled on both and on the altar or image of the deity who presides over the con­tract (Exod., xxiv. 6, 7).@@1 A peculiar form which meets us in various places is to cut the animal in twain and make those who swear pass between the parts (Gen. xiii. 9 *sq.;* Jer. xxxiv. 18 *sq.;* Plut., *Qu. Rom.,* iii., &c.). This is generally taken as a formula of imprecation, as if the parties prayed that he who proved unfaithful might be similarly cut in twain ; but, as the case cited from Plutarch shows that the victim chosen was a mystic one, it is more likely that the original sense was that the worshippers were taken within the mystic life.

Even the highest forms of sacrificial worship present much that is repulsive to modern ideas, and in particular it requires an effort to reconcile our imagination to the bloody ritual which is prominent in almost every religion which has a strong sense of sin. But we must not forget that from the beginning this ritual expressed, however crudely, certain ideas which lie at the very root of true religion, the fellowship of the worshippers with one another in their fellowship with the deity, and the consecration of the bonds of kinship as the type of all right ethical relation between man and man. And the piacular forms, though these were particularly liable to distortions disgraceful to man and dishonouring to the godhead, yet contained from the first germs of eternal truths, not only expressing the idea of divine justice, but mingling it with a feeling of divine and human pity. The dreadful sacrifice is per­formed not with savage joy but with awful sorrow, and in the mystic sacrifices the deity himself suffers with and for the sins of his people and lives again in their new life. (w. r. s.)

*The Idea of Sacrifice in the Christian Church.*

There can be no doubt that the idea of sacrifice occupied an important place in early Christianity. It had been a fundamental element of both Jewish and Gentile religions, and Christianity tended rather to absorb and modify such elements than to abolish them. To a great extent the idea had been modified already. Among the Jews the preaching of the prophets had been a constant protest against the grosser forms of sacrifice, and there are indica­tions that when Christianity arose bloody sacrifices were already beginning to fall into disuse; a saying which was attributed by the Ebionites to our Lord repeats this protest in a strong form, “ I have come to abolish the sacrifices; and if ye do not cease from sacrificing the wrath of God will not cease from you” (Epiph., xxx. 16). Among the Greeks the philosophers had come to use both argument and ridicule against the idea that the offering of material things could be needed by or acceptable to the Maker of them all. Among both Jews and Greeks the earlier forms of the idea had been rationalized into the belief that the most appropriate offering to God is that of a pure and penitent heart, and among them both was the idea that

the vocal expression of contrition in prayer or of gratitude in praise is also acceptable. The best instances of these ideas in the Old Testament are in Psalms 1. and li., and in Greek literature the striking words which Porphyry quotes from an earlier writer, “ We ought, then, having been united and made like to God, to offer our own conduct as a holy sacrifice to Him, the same being also a hymn and our sal­vation in passionless excellence of soul” (Euseb., *Dem. Ev.,* 3). The ideas are also found both in the New Testa­ment and in early Christian literature : “ Let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name” (Heb. xiii. 15); “That prayers and thanksgivings, made by worthy persons, are the only perfect and acceptable sacrifices I also admit” (Just. Mart., *Trypho,* c. 117); “We honour God in prayer, and offer this as the best and holiest sacrifice with righteousness to the righteous Word ” (Clem. Alex., *Strom.,* vii. 6).

But among the Jews two other forms of the idea ex­pressed themselves in usages which have been perpetuated in Christianity, and one of which has had a singular im­portance for the Christian world. The one form, which probably arose from the conception of Jehovah as in an especial sense the protector of the poor, was that gifts to God may properly be bestowod on the needy, and that consequently alms have the virtue of a sacrifice. Biblical instances of this idea are—“ He who doeth alms is offering a sacrifice of praise ” (Ecclus. xxxii. 2); “ To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Heb. xiii. 16); so the offerings sent by the Philippians to Paul when a prisoner at Rome are “an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God ” (Phil. iv. 18). The other form, which was prob­ably a relic of the conception of Jehovah as the author of natural fertility, was that part of the fruits of the earth should be offered to God in acknowledgment of His bounty, and that what was so offered was especially blessed and brought a blessing upon both those who offered it and those who afterwards partook of it. The persistence of this form of the idea of sacrifice constitutes so marked a feature of the history of Christianity as to require a detailed account of it.

In the first instance it is probable that among Christians, as among Jews, every meal, and especially every social meal, was regarded as being in some sense a thank-offering. Thanksgiving, blessing, and offering were co-ordinate terms. Hence the Talmudic rule, “A man shall not taste anything before blessing it” *(Tosephta Berachoth,* c. 4), and hence St Paul’s words, “ He that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks ” (Rom. xiv. 6; comp. 1 Tim. iv. 4). But the most important offering was the solemn obla­tion in the assembly on the Lord’s day. A precedent for making such oblations elsewhere than in the temple had been afforded by the Essenes, who had endeavoured in that way to avoid the contact with unclean persons and things which a resort to the temple might have involved (Jos., *Antiq.,* xviii. 1, 5), and a justification for it was found in the prophecy of Malachi, “ In every place incense is offered unto My name and a pure offering; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts ” (Mal. i. 11, repeatedly quoted in early Christian writings, *e.g., Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,* c. 14; Just. Mart., *Trypho,* c. 28, 41, 116; Irenaeus, iv. 17, 5).

The points in relation to this offering which are clearly demonstrable from the Christian writers of the first two centuries, but which subsequent theories have tended to confuse, are these. (1) It was regarded as a true offering or sacrifice ; for in the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,* in Justin Martyr, and in Irenaeus it is designated by each of the terms which are used to designate sacrifices in the

@@@1 In Greek ritual the identity of the covenant sacrifice with mysticopiacular rites is clearly brought out by the animals chosen and by other features in the ritual. See Schoemann, *Or. Alt.,* p. 248 *sq.*