

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL
BELIEVERS:
A RE-STATEMENT

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PREFACE

In this age of ecumenical discussion it has become necessary for all Christian communions to examine afresh their traditional beliefs. This has frequently led to restatement and reformulation of such traditional beliefs. It has also driven us back to seek new light from the Biblical sources. It seemed that such a re-examination of the traditional doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was necessary so that those who claim to hold it know what they hold, and so that those who do not may know what it is that their fellow-Christians believe, and why. This was the first reason for this study.

The second reason for this subject being chosen was its relevance to the everyday pastoral work, worship and witness of the Church. This aspect is of deep concern to those who undertake further studies whilst engaged in the work of the Christian ministry and for whom some of the more academic subjects sometimes undertaken by those within a university seem remote and distant. If the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers were understood both by ministers and people alike we might be spared the incessant complaints from ministers that their 'people pay their parson a pittance and leave him to get on with it' and the pathetic cry from laymen that 'the Church has nothing for them'.

A third reason for choosing this subject was its topicality, since, recognised or not, it lays behind two of the modern movements in the Church. These are the 'Laymen's Movement' and the 'Liturgical Movement', both of which are part of the rediscovery of the nature of the Church which is taking place in our time. It is important to undergird these movements with sound theological principles, and the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is one way of achieving this.

Biblical quotations are from the Revised Standard Version (except where stated and where I have used my translation from the Greek). I have taken the liberty to use one or two abbreviations in the footnotes, viz.,

- MAXWELL, W.D. "Outline" for "An Outline of Christian Worship"
MAXWELL, W.D. "The Eucharist" for "The Eucharist in the Light
of our Lord's Resurrection"

E.C.T. for "Expositor's Greek Testament"

B.C.P. for "Book of Common Prayer" (of the Church of the
Province of South Africa).

I have followed the R.S.V. and B.C.P. practice of using the small letter for the personal pronoun indicating the divine name, thus 'him' and not 'Hin'. Nevertheless I have allowed the capital to remain in quotations where it appears.

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S U M M A R YChapter One : Priesthood in the Old Testament

In very ancient times the head of the household acted as priest. Primary duty of priest to represent God to men as interpreter of Word, will, and law of God. Priest became the representative of men before God in presenting the sacrifices and interceding for men. The ritual of the sacrificial system shows the priest as having special privilege of access to God who is too holy to be approached by ordinary men. The priest also pronounces the blessing of God. Israel was to be a corporate priesthood and was charged to be a light to the Gentiles. She shirked this responsibility. The inner experience of priesthood is in suffering, an inner tension caused by being divinely appointed from within the human situation. The way forward is seen in the Suffering Servant of Isaiah.

Chapter Two : The Priesthood of Christ

The Priesthood of our Lord begins in his earthly ministry and is characterised in five dramatic acts: his baptism, teaching ministry, cleansing of the temple, institution of the New Covenant at the Last Supper and his prayers of intercession. His sacrifice is not confined to his death but is seen as including his incarnation, baptism, death, resurrection, ascension and heavenly offering. The final stage of this sacrifice is fulfilled in the gift of the Holy Spirit and in the Eucharist. It fulfils the three types of sacrifice of the old system. His sacrifice is constitutive of His Heavenly High Priesthood. He is priest and victim in one. His priesthood supersedes the Levitical order and consists of his offering, intercession, and blessing.

Chapter Three : The Priesthood of Believers

There is no order of priests in the New Testament in the sense of ministers. Christian priesthood consists in being united with Christ in his priesthood. Christians are united with our Lord in his sacrifice by virtue of his sacrifice including us, because we offer ourselves in him, and because in him we are ready to suffer as he suffered. We are also solidarily one with him in his priesthood since he opens the way and we enter into the presence of God. Our priesthood is thus dependent on his sacrifice. There are also ecclesiological ways of arriving at a doctrine of the priesthood of believers. The Church as the New Israel inherits the promises made to the old Israel and becomes the royal priesthood. This priesthood is primarily corporate but a serantic study shows that universal individual responsibility is not excluded. The Church as the body of Christ enters into his priesthood. Luther's highly individual experience led him to rediscover the Pauline doctrine of justification which gave rise to his anti-clerical theology of universal priesthood. He consequently had an unscriptural view of the ministry which is given by God through divine calling and institution. The whole priesthood has a responsibility in authorising people to the office of the ministry. The doctrine of the universal priesthood declined in the second century and in Cyprian gives way to a sacerdotal order of the ministry. The priesthood of the whole Church is exercised in witness, mission, service, healing and suffering.

Chapter Four : The Worship of the Priesthood

An examination of New Testament texts reveals Christian worship to consist of the sacrifice of self-presentation. This is made in dependence on and conjunction with the eternal offering of our Lord who joins us in ontological union with the worship of heaven. Hence we enter into his worship. This offering of ourselves actualises our priesthood. Baptism is participation in the sacrifice of Christ and hence constitutes entry and consecration to the priesthood. In baptism Christians make a sacrifice of themselves through submission to Christ. Baptism is seen as in some ways parallel to the consecration of the priesthood in Israel. In the Eucharist the universal priesthood participates in the final stage of the sacrifice of our Lord, since he is sacramentally present as High Priest and victim. In participating thus our Lord takes up our sacrifice of self-presentation into his eternal offering and we are thus granted access to God in heaven. The priesthood also exists to make intercession in and with Christ's, and mediates his blessing to the world.

Appendix : The Universal Priesthood in Liturgical Forms

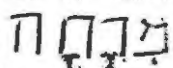
The universal priesthood is expressed in liturgies early, historic and modern as well as in Methodist Eucharistic hymns and worship. This is seen in the recurring ideas of the presence of the Heavenly High Priest, participation in his sacrifice, the offering and the offering of ourselves, union with the heavenly worship, the corporate nature of the Eucharistic offering and the prayers of intercession.

CHAPTER ONE

PRIESTHOOD IN THE OLD

TESTAMENT

Archaeology, written records, and the practice of known primitive people alike point back to the early establishment of varying forms of priesthood. Created with the faculty for knowing God and enjoying fellowship with him, men have reached for him, sought after him, longed for him. They have tried to gain access to his presence and have felt the need of some go-between or mediator to help them. This they have found in a person of special authority such as the father or the king of a race, or of special and usually secretly guarded knowledge such as the 'medicine-man', the sorcerer, or the guardian of an oracular shrine (1). The priest stands in both these lines. He is, moreover, a two-way mediator. As a representative of his fellow men he approaches God on their behalf. As a representative of God he speaks to his fellow-men for God; in this the priest, though in time he precedes him, has often embraced the functions of the prophet.

When priesthood is thus reduced to these elemental functions it is not difficult to understand that there was a time before it was institutionalised when the head of the Hebrew household, for example, carried out the duties later reserved for the consecrated priests. Even individuals offered gifts on their own behalf. So Cain and Abel each offer a  (later used for a meal-offering) to God (Gen.4:3-4). In Gen.8:20 we read that Noah 'offered burnt-offerings on the altar' which he had built. Abraham built

(1) WESTCOTT, B.F., "The Epistle to the Hebrews". p.138.

altars at Shechem and Bethel (Gen.12:6-8) and 'cuts' a covenant during the theophany recorded in Gen.15. Abraham also interceded with God for Sodom and offered a ram as a burnt-offering instead of Isaac (Gen.22:13). Isaac built an altar at Beersheba (Gen.26:25) and Jacob offered a sacrifice at Mizpah. Clearly, before there was any established order of priests the patriarchs acted in the ways which were to become peculiar to the later priests.

However, priests were not the only ministers in ancient times among the Hebrew people. The duties of the king, the prophet, and the wise man were all designed to assure God's presence among his people, and there was no clear demarcation between the separate functions. In some people two of the ministries are combined, whilst in Moses all four offices are brought together. 'Moses as chief of the people exercises royal functions before the fact, the title prophet is expressly given to him by the tradition (Hos.12:13), the priests trace back to him the main body of the priestly organisation and Yahweh's revelation takes nothing away from the wisdom he had acquired through contact with Egypt. And so Moses, among all those who exercised ministries, is alone in fully meriting the title of mediator par excellence'. (1)

I. THE PRIEST AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD TO THE PEOPLE

In Moses we see the primary functions of the priest emerging. He goes to God on behalf of the people, and to the people on behalf of God.

'And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him out of the mountain saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians ... Now therefore if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant ... you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation'". So Moses set before (the people) all these words which the Lord had commanded him ... and Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord'. (Ex.19:3-8)

The God of Moses is a speaking God. This is the God of the Bible - the God of Abraham, the God of Moses, the God of Elijah. This is the God of creation ('And God said "Let there be light" and there was light'). This is the

(1) E. JACOB "Theology of the Old Testament" p.254.

God of the old covenant and of the New. This is the God of the incarnation ('The word became flesh'). The prophet's message was 'Thus saith the Lord', but the priest was the messenger of God before the prophet. He was, in fact a servant of the Word. It was for this reason that God originally appointed Aaron, when he said to Moses :-

'He shall speak for you to the people; and he shall be a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God'. (Ex.4:16)

A priest was the mouthpiece of God to the people. In Deut.20:2ff the command comes for the priest to speak to the people for God :-

"And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people, and shall say to them 'Hear, O Israel, you draw near this day to battle against your enemies; let not your heart faint; do not fear, or tremble, or be in dread of them; for the Lord your God is he that goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory'".

At that time this duty of speaking for God was the primary duty of the priest. T.F. Torrance (1) traces this primary duty philologically. The inner sanctuary, or Holy of Holies was the ר' אֱתֵר from the same root as אֱתֵר (word). In the Authorised and Revised Versions this is translated 'oracle', as in I Kings 6:19. These probably derive from a Semitic root ר' אֱתֵר meaning 'Recess' or 'hinterground'. So the Holy of Holies was situated in the innermost recesses at the back of the temple. In the very back of the ר' אֱתֵר are lodged the אֱתֵר אֱתֵר , or the ten words which 'form the innermost secret of Israel's history' (2). It was here then, at the centre of the cult that the speaking God encountered Israel, and it was here that the priest officiated. Eventually it was reserved for the High Priest on the Day of Atonement in the post-exilic sacrificial system. The priests were the guardians of this אֱתֵר אֱתֵר enshrining the אֱתֵר אֱתֵר of the speaking God.

1. If the priest is the mouthpiece of God, the interpreter of God to the people it follows that he has a teaching ministry to carry out. 'The Priesthood of the Old

(1) "Royal Priesthood" pp 1 ff.
(2) T.F. TORRANCE, op.cit. p.2.

Testament is understood as functioning only within the Covenant and the saving relation with the mighty Word of God which that covenant brought to Israel'.(1) If Israel stands pledged to observe the law as their part of the covenant then the function of the priest emerges as a teacher of the law - speaking for God to the people. In the Deuteronomic account Moses states that the Levites 'Shall teach Jacob thy ordinances, and Israel thy law' (Deut.33:10). This relationship of the priest to the law and the covenant is stated very plainly in Malachi 2:4-7 :-

"So shall you know that I have sent this command to you, that my covenant with Levi may hold", says the Lord of hosts. "My covenant with him was a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him, that he might fear; and he feared me, he stood in awe of my name. True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned away from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts".

The people listening to Jeremiah's denunciations and plotting against him say :-

"The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet". (Jer.18:18)

But in Ezekiel's time the awful truth has come :-

' Disaster comes upon disaster ... the law perishes from the priest, and counsel from the elders'. (Ez.7:26)

Whilst in II Chronicles 15:3 the complaint is made that :-

' For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law'.

Clearly the priest faithfully teaching the torah is regarded as an indispensable part of true religion, in the same way as the preaching of the word is regarded as a sign of the true church in the Christian dispensation. The torah faithfully taught ensures a knowledge of God. So the continual complaint of the

(1) ibid.

prophets is that this knowledge has ceased because the priests are corrupt :-

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will forget your children". (Hos.4:6)

The root of the trouble is not difficult to find. Micah says :-

' Jerusalem ... its heads give judgement for a bribe,
its priests teach for hire,
its prophets divine for money'. (Micah 3:11)

2. Through this ministry of teaching the law the priests came to be regarded as diviners of the will of God. In common with pupils in all subjects, the Israelites came to regard their teachers as experts who could give advice, and they consequently sought advice from them in religious matters. In early times the man Micah (not the prophet) appoints a Levite to be his personal priest (Judges 17:5). This Levite then performs the duties of a household priest. When a group of five Danites found him they charged him :-

"Inquire of God, we pray thee, that we may know whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed". And the priest said to them "Go in peace. The journey on which you go is under the eye of the Lord". (Judges 18:5-6)

When the Philistines had captured the ark of the Lord they

' called for the priests and the diviners and said "What shall we do with the ark of the Lord?"' (ISam.6:2)

This implies quite clearly a parallel function performed by priests and diviners, although the priests here are Philistine officers. Similarly when David wanted to discover what was going to happen to him at the hands of Saul, he went to Abiathar the priest, asked him to bring the ephod (of the sacred lot or divination), and then asked God whether Saul was going to come. As priest, Abiathar was the guardian of this ephod. When David enquired of God, he also wanted to know if the men of Keilah would betray him. The answer of God was that

both of these things were going to happen. Although here it was David and not Abiathar who used the ephod, it is clear that such divination was regarded as a priestly function. (I Sam.23:9-12) An even more interesting example of this (since it is post-exilic in origin) is when Haggai asked the priests to decide a question :-

"If one carries holy flesh in the skirt of his garment and touches with his skirt bread ... does it become holy?" The priests answered "No". (Haggai 2:12)

3. But the advice of the priest was sought also in legal disputes, and the Deuteronomic law assigns him a place alongside the judge, and with powers equal to the judge. Anyone disobeying the decision of 'the priest who stands to minister there before the Lord your God, or the judge, that man shall die' (Deut.17:12). This applies to homicide. Likewise disputants where a false witness is involved are to 'come before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days'. (Deut.19:17).

It is plain therefore, that the priest had more to do in these early stages of the evolution of Israelite religion than is usually assumed. He was not merely the minister at the altar, officiating at the sacrifices. As the guardian of the covenant and the torah he represents God to men, he speaks to men in his primary relationship of mediator (as in Moses and Aaron), he teaches them the torah, he divines the will of God for men, and answers their questions on specific occasions. For this he uses both the ephod and the Urim and Thummim. 'In this threefold sense, therefore, the priest was the servant of God: he was the servant of the Word of God, the Law of God, and the Will of God'.(1)

II. THE PRIEST AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE BEFORE GOD

If the primary rôle of the priest was to be a representative of God to the people, he is commonly known and thought of in his other capacity - that of representative of the people before God. He is an ambassador of his fellow-men to a court which, if not completely foreign to them is

(1) EASTWOOD, C; "The Royal Priesthood of the Faithful" p.21.

priest (Moses) enters the Holy of Holies (ascends Mount Sinai) where the very presence of God was (shrouded in cloud and divine glory) and offers a sacrifice for the sins of the people (prayed for them to be forgiven) (1). Here we must notice the similarity between intercession and sacrifice. Both are pleas to God for forgiveness and reconciliation and when a priest offers a sacrifice on behalf of a worshipper then the similarity is even closer. So E. Jacob can talk of the priests carrying out 'their twofold duty of teaching and intercession' (2) at the sanctuaries. In an act of atonement at Mizpah, the Israelites ask Samuel to pray for them :-

'So Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it as a burnt offering to the Lord; and Samuel cried to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him'. (I Sam.7:9)

Here intercession (for the sins of the people) and a sacrifice (also for the sins of the people) are offered jointly. When the priest brings the sacrifice to burn it on the altar, and the smoke ascends to God, it can be seen that he is enacting a prayer of intercession for the worshipper. In a sense therefore a sacrifice is a prayer enacted. 'The intercession of the high priest was expressed typically by the incense before the mercy-seat in the Holiest on the Day of Atonement ... the daily incense was the symbol of the intercession that daily allayed the Divine displeasure; but it was on the day of atonement that this symbol had its highest meaning. "That the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not". (Lev.16:13 A.V.): these last words belonged to the type only, but the general truth remains that the incense of intercession covered the mercy seat simultaneously with the blood of atonement, and blended with the thick cloud of the Divine glory. So the mystical temple of the prophet's vocation "was filled with smoke" (Isa.6:4), the smoke of the same intercessory incense which fills the temple where Jesus the High Priest presents his eternal sacrifice'. (3) When the prophet Hosea finished his condemnation of the debased sacrificial life of the people, God said through him :-

"Return O Israel to the Lord your God, ...
Take with you words and return to the Lord;
say to him 'Take away all iniquity;
Accept that which is good
And we will render the fruit of our lips'"'. (Hos.14:1-2)

(1) TORRANCE, T.F., op.cit. p.4.

(2) op.cit. p.248.

(3) POPE, V.B., "A Compendium of Christian Theology" Vol. II
p.236-7.

Here a prayer of penitence is regarded as a substitute for a sacrifice. This, however, is an exception.

The normal way in which the priest came before God for the people was in the offering of a sacrifice. It is important to notice what the priest's part was in the sacrificial system. Bishop Hicks is our guide here (1). First the offerer draws near with his victim. Then he lays his hands on the head of the victim in identification with the victim. Thirdly the worshipper kills the victim. The only occasion on which the priest kills a victim is the day of atonement when the high priest kills it 'as himself one of the sinners for whom he is offering it' (2). Only at the fourth stage does the priest begin his specific work. He takes the blood into the presence of God by pouring it round or sprinkling it on the altar. But 'generally speaking the more important, far-reaching or effective the act of atonement desired, the nearer is it taken to the Divine presence, until, on the Day of Atonement itself it is taken by the High Priest through the veil into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled upon and before the mercy-seat' (3). Fifthly, a part of the flesh is burnt on the altar, not thereby being destroyed, but transformed, ascending in smoke to heaven the dwelling place of God. Finally, except for burnt-offerings, a certain portion was eaten. The object of the whole act was to make God and man 'at-one'. When the offerer laid his hands on the victim he was symbolically saying 'Henceforth what happens to this victim happens to me'. The life of the victim was set free (through its death) and the priest therefore symbolically brought the offerer himself into the presence of God. In this act atonement was made. But in burning the flesh the offering was further given to God. Transformed and ethercalised, it was accepted by God. He it was who transformed it, in his holy fire. The offerer therefore was symbolically brought into God's presence, transformed and accepted by God. In the meal of fellowship, the person took into himself part of the life which God had accepted, and hence there was a common sharing of life. Atonement was made, fellowship restored and communion re-established. It will be seen from this account of the sacrificial system that the function of the priest was to go where the people could not. He had an

(1) HICKS, F.C.N., "The Fullness of Sacrifice". p.11-13.
(2) ibid.
(3) ibid. p.12-13

access to the nearer presence of God denied to the ordinary worshipper. This was the supreme privilege of the priest and is basic to any understanding of the concept of priesthood.

But why should any intermediary be necessary? Why could the worshipper himself not come to the altar? It was a cultic and liturgical representation of events at Sinai :-

'And he (God) said to Moses "Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel and worship afar off. Moses alone shall come near to the Lord; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him"'. (Ex.24:1-2)

Men, at least ordinary men, were not to approach God. His holiness was too great. They were to stand afar off. Only specially - appointed representatives were to come near to the presence. God was holy and 'wholly-other'. This awareness grew throughout the Old Testament period. The eighth-century prophets encouraged and developed it. The corollary was that the more aware men become of the holiness and transcendence of God the deeper does the sense of their own sin strike them. The deeper the sense of their own sin and separation from God strikes men, the greater becomes their fear of approaching God, the sight of whose glory 'was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain' (Ex.24:17). This unapproachableness of God was symbolised in the restrictions of the temple court system. The High Priest alone could enter the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year. The priests were allowed into the Holy Place. Ordinary men were restricted to the court of the men, women to their court and Gentiles to theirs.

And yet 'The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always chide
nor will he keep his anger for ever'.
(ps.103:8-9)

For 'The holiness of God is not only a withdrawal from sin, in the sense of intrinsic and inviolable purity, but is also an outgoing purity questing to encounter sin and to slay it'.
(1). And so the priesthood of the Old Testament was a witness to the grace of God. God himself appointed it. God himself instituted it :-

"Then bring near to you Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the people of Israel to serve me as priests"'. (Ex.28:1)

The priesthood was the God-appointed means whereby sinful men who had broken the covenant could approach the God of unapproachable holiness. The system of sacrifices and oblations was God's way of bringing about reconciliation, at-onc-ment with his covenant-people. It is out of keeping with the tenor of the Old Testament to assign the Aaronic priesthood to a secondary (and therefore inferior) place, as Torrance does (1). If the $\square^{\wedge} \ddot{\gamma} \ddot{\gamma}$ were given through Moses, so was the way of atonement. That the one should be subsequent to the other does not necessarily imply inferior status. Like the torah of which it was an indispensable part the sacrificial system was a tutor to bring us to Christ, in whom we have fulfilment of the covenant, fulfilment of the law, and fulfilment of the sacrifices. 'It is always God himself who is regarded in the Old Testament as having appointed the ritual of sin-offering in his desire for reconciliation. That is highly important. Man has, of course, to provide the offering (the victim or other material) and to carry out the ritual, but it is God that has provided this means of reconciliation, taking this merciful initiative because he does not desire the death of a sinner but his restoration' (2).

The third duty of the priest was to bless :-

'The Lord said to Moses "Say to Aaron and his sons, 'Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,
The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace'" (Num.6:22-26)

The blessing was from God. The priest was to stand and give God's blessing to the people - the blessings of providential care, of grace for sin, and of peace. But the blessing was more than a mere form of words. It was a declaration of God's acceptance of them through his grace, an assurance of his never-failing care for them, and a pronouncement of his bestowal of the gift of peace.

Later in their history, the rôles of prophet, priest, and scribe become independent. As Torrance points out (3) the priestly mediation of sacrifice tried to make itself independent of the priestly mediation of the Word of God.

(1) op.cit. p.4.

(2) BAILLIE, D.H., "God was in Christ", p.187.

(3) op.cit. p.5.

First there arose the prophetic movement. Sometimes the prophets opposed the priestly cultic system, but frequently they arose from within a priestly family (e.g. Jeremiah and Ezekiel). Although the kinship of the prophets 'with the priestly functions was infinitely greater than anything that separated the two ... So it must be recognised that the antithesis, so often stated particularly among the Wellhausen school, between prophets and priests is historically highly questionable' (1) yet there was still a clear-cut distinction and separation. The priest mediated God's word from within the institutionalised order of the sanctuary, and his teaching consisted mainly in transmitting customs and traditions, and interpreting the torah. The prophet on the other hand voiced a more direct message, a more immediately inspired proclamation related to contemporary events and duties.

The second development came when, in the post-exilic era, the scribe emerged as the transmitter and interpreter of the torah, and the priest was gradually confined to serving at the altar. This whole movement undoubtedly issued in a debasement of the original concept of the function of the priest.

III. THE CORPORATE PRIESTHOOD OF ISRAEL

There remains one further consideration in the Old Testament idea of Priesthood. In the covenant at Sinai God had said :-

"And ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests".
(Ex.19:6)

That each individual was not to officiate as a priest at the altar is obvious, for then there would have been no purpose in appointing a special group of priests as we have seen above. It is clear also from the context that Israel is to be a corporate priesthood (i.e. Israel as a nation) to the Gentiles. In contrast to what he did to the Egyptians God has borne Israel 'on eagle's wings'. He established his covenant with them as a people and hence they are to be a 'peculiar treasure' (R.V.) among all peoples. They are, moreover, a 'holy nation' separate

(1) E. JACOB, op.cit. p.240.

unto God. 'Israel after the flesh was separated from the rest of the world as much as the sons of Levi were separated from the rest of Israel'. (1).

In what sense were they to perform the mediatorial duties of priesthood? As their own priests proclaimed God's truth to them in teaching the law, so they were to proclaim it to the Gentiles. As the Hebrew priest was a witness to the law of God so the Israelites were to be witnesses to God in the world. As Paul said later :-

'The Jews are entrusted with the oracles (logia) of God'. (Rom.3:2)

God chose them not merely to receive blessing but that they might be a blessing :-

'And by you all families of the earth shall bless themselves'. (Gen.12:2)

"I am the Lord. I have called you in righteousness ... I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations". I (Isa.42:6)

"You are my witnesses". (Isa.43:12)

Then again in the Messianic vision of Isaiah and Micah (4:1-4)

'Many nations shall come, and say :-
"Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths".
For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem'.

Israel had a mission, but she failed continually, hugging the prerogatives to herself, thinking only of the blessing she was to receive. She scorned the Gentiles, and by far the more typical hope of future glory is echoed in Trito-Isaiah :-

'Aliens shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall be your ploughmen and vinedressers; but you shall be called the priests of the Lord, men shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory'. (Isa.61:6)

Here the thought is of the privileges of priesthood - with others to serve and look after them.

(1) POPE, W.B., "A Compendium of Christian Theology"
Vol. III p.336.

But the true priest is a servant who represents the people before God, making intercession for them. So the true duty of Israel was to serve :- "It is no duty of a priest to seek his own end and to rule over human souls. His personal happiness is utterly secondary to his duty to stand before God in intercession for all the members of his community. So Israel is called to be a priest among mankind and only thus to a royal freedom and dominion ... As those who receive the promise and the laws of God Israel is separated from all peoples for all peoples". (1).

Priestly mediation, moreover, involves suffering and sacrifice. 'The priest accepts an essentially sacrificial task and is paid by being allowed to sacrifice everything'. (2) It means forfeiting rights and privileges. It is an experience through which to pass, not merely a privilege to enjoy. We see this experience of priesthood when Moses intercedes for Israel :-

"But now, if thou wilt forgive their sin - and if not, blot me I pray thee out of the book which thou has written". (Ex.32:32)

This priestly experience of suffering is inherent in the essential qualification of a priest - that he be a man of God and at the same time one with his fellow-men. He is always torn between the two. There is a perpetual tension in his inner being. His love for God makes him detest and abhor the sins of the people. But he is one of these very people, and has a fellow-feeling for them. Like the great High Priest of whom he is the type, the priest is able 'to sympathise with our weaknesses' having been 'in every respect tempted as we are'. Herein is the inner suffering of the true mediator. This is the experience of priesthood (3). It is hardly necessary to add that the nation who yearned for aliens to be their servants was not prepared for this experience. It would not obey the voice of God, nor would it keep his covenant which was the prerequisite for its becoming 'a kingdom of priests and a holy nation'.

The fullness of all Old Testament notions of priestly mediation comes eventually in the picture of the suffering servant. The Lord in his might reveals his arm and enacts his word of grace through the suffering of his servant.

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- (1) VISCHER, W., "The Witness of the Old Testament to Christ" p.188.
(2) SHANDS, A.R., "The Liturgical Movement and the Local Church" p.47.
(3) EASTWOOD, C., op.cit. p.24.

The Lord speaks his word of grace by laying on him the iniquity of us all. He was God's representative, revealing in his own obedience and suffering the ways of God. The servant bore the sin of many, and 'made intercession for the transgressors' thus carrying out the priestly duty in being a representative of the people. The consummation of all Old Testament priesthood is therefore to be seen in the priest who himself became the victim. It is in the victim-priest that we are henceforth to look for a 'new and living way' to God.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

All notions of priesthood are fulfilled in Christ:

ἓς γὰρ Θεός, ἓς γὰρ καὶ μεσίτης Θεοῦ καὶ
ἄνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος Πρωτός Ἰησοῦς,

(For there is one God and there is one mediator between
God and men, the man Christ Jesus'. (I Tim.2:5)

In the New Testament the doctrine of mediation is concentrated on Christ, who is God's representative to man, and who also, as perfect man (Heb.4:15) is man's representative to God'.(1) In profane Greek μεσίτης is similar to ἀρετήτης 'the arbitrator' 'forestalling the judge, whose province it is amicably to arrange matters '(2), whilst in the New Testament it is used both in the sense of arbitrator and guarantor. In the use of St. Paul it means 'one who unites parties, one who mediates for peace'(3), whilst in Hebrews our Lord is termed 'mediator' rather in the sense of 'surety, one who becomes security for something' (4). The New Testament references to Moses clearly indicate the mediatorial rôle of Christ. Of some forty-four references to Moses in the New Testament (excluding duplications in the synoptic gospels) 18% show him as a type of Christ, or a comparison is made between them, whilst a further 18% show the revelation or teaching of our Lord to supersede that of Moses. In our Lord's own mind, as in the thought of most New Testament writers, he is a mediator of the Mosaic type, and, furthermore, the new covenant he mediates supersedes the old.

I HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY

But Christ is not a priest during his earthly ministry. Of necessity he could not use the technical language of priesthood and sacrifice to explain his function and mission. 'To the Jews, and to the Jewish Christians, before the implications of His life and death, of the

(1) TAYLOR, F.J., "Theological Wordbook of the Bible" ed A.RICHARDSON p.141
(2) CREMER, H., "Biblico Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek" p.421
(3) ibid. p.422 (4) ibid.

resurrection and ascension, and of the gift of the Spirit, had been thought out, a priest could only mean an Aaronic priest in the temple, and a sacrifice one of the actual Temple sacrifices'(1). Nevertheless he does things of a mediatorial nature which prefigure his Heavenly Priesthood, and these are worthy of note (2). In Milligan's valuable work 'The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord' the debate about when our Lord began his priestly ministry is outlined. Milligan shows how some scholars have claimed that Christ is a priest on earth, others that he only enters his priesthood after his ascension(3). The evidence of the Epistle to the Hebrews is examined and appears to conflict. Westcott (4) claims that our Lord fulfils the Levitical High Priesthood before His session (as High Priest), and the High Priesthood of Melchizedek after His Session (as High Priest King)'.(5) Milligan, however, thinks that Christ begins his priesthood when he is lifted up 'out of the earth' on the cross.⁽⁶⁾ This, he claims, is the beginning of our Lord's Glorification 'and the sacrifice upon the cross falls within the sphere of a super-earthly or heavenly priesthood' (7). Of Christ's life on earth before the cross Milligan says that it was the preparation for his priestly work. Westcott agrees. This view, however, fails to do full justice to our Lord's mediatorial actions during his earthly ministry, for whilst he was not a priest in the sense of being consecrated to the priesthood yet in fact his ministry was largely mediatorial in nature.

Eastwood in 'The Royal Priesthood of the Faithful' claims in contrast to the above-named scholars that our Lord's priesthood is based on the incarnation. The incarnation reveals both his Sonship and His Priesthood since God reveals himself in Christ. Therefore God is no longer a mystery in the sense of mere 'hiddenness'. He is now both 'Deus absconditus' and 'Deus revelatus'. He has revealed not only his nature but also his purpose in Jesus.

(1) HICKS, F.C.N. op.cit. p.204

(2) infra p. 18ff.

(3) MILLIGAN, W. "The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord" p.72

(4) WESTCOTT, B.F. op.cit. p.227

(5) ibid.

(6) This is not the only interpretation of Jn.12:32. Plummer ('Cambridge Bible' p.255) comments 'we need not...confine the meaning to the Crucifixion, although the lifting up on the cross may be specially indicated. The words 'from the earth' (literally out of the earth) seem to point to the Ascension...'

(7) MILLIGAN, W. op.cit. p. 79.

Moreover, 'the Incarnation expresses the universality of the Son's Priesthood (1) and 'the whole meaning of priesthood is changed' - 'because Jesus is in Himself the revealed word and the redemptive Act'. (2) The weakness here is that insufficient account is taken of the Atonement. Whilst Eastwood does have a section on the New Covenant it is a comparatively short section, and he gives little attention to the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews which is fundamental to a full doctrine of the Priesthood of Christ. In his treatment of priesthood in the Old Testament he gives an insignificant place to sacrificial mediation, and his failure to appreciate to the full the priest's function as an agent of atonement in helping guilty men to approach the presence of God foreshadows a like failure when he comes to the sacrificial work of Christ. 'Sacrifice was their way of approach to God; its object at all times was to consummate that approach so far as might be possible'. (3) However, these preliminary remarks must not detract from the penetrating analysis of the 'Servant-Messiah-Priest' which Eastwood makes. First he shows how Jesus conceived of his rôle as that of the Servant by quoting such sayings as 'I am among you as one who serves' (Lk.22:27) and 'the Son of man has not come to be served but to serve....' (Mk.10:45 - Moffatt). Then he goes on to show that in certain dramatic acts Christ portrays 'His twofold calling of Messiahship and Servanthood'. (4) It is not necessary here to repeat these, especially since most of them do no more than illustrate Christ's priesthood in the sense that Eastwood has merged it into the category of servanthood. He has, however, pointed to the fact of the priestly ministry of Christ on earth and we can see this in some of the dramatic acts of his life .

1. First, his baptism as it prefigures his sacrificial death. Jesus submitted to baptism by John in Jordan . He submitted to the baptism of his cross and resurrection, and thus his earthly life could be described as a baptism.

(1) EASTWOOD op.cit. p.29.
(2) ibid.
(3) HICKS, op. cit. p. 213 .
(4) EASTWOOD, op.cit. p. 40.

He said to James and John

'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized'. (Mk.10:39)

As Cullmann (1) and Clark (2) both allow, in differing degrees, Jesus is referring to his death. If, as will presently be shown, Christ's death is to be thought of as a sacrifice and his resurrection as the release of life and his ascension as the burnt offering ascending to God, then his baptism is a prefiguring of the priestly atoning sacrifice. The baptism of Jesus and his death are not to be so rigidly separated as Clark tries to keep them. In our Lord's reply to James and John he uses the present indicative passive form βαπτίζομαι which can also be translated 'I am being baptized'.

His baptism in Jordan, his life which was death to himself, and an offering of obedience to God the Father, and his sacrificial death as victim and priest, are all parts of his continuous experience as the suffering-servant-priest. Hence he could say 'I am being baptized' or 'I am sacrificing myself' or 'I am laying down my life'. So as he takes upon himself the rôle of the suffering servant in Jordan he is signifying the beginning of his experience of sin-bearing which he continues up to the time of his death and exaltation until he appears as our High Priest to make intercession for us before the Father in heaven.

2. Secondly, throughout his teaching ministry Jesus stands in the line of those who from the time of Moses have spoken to men for God. As his baptism is a microcosm of his mediatorial rôle of sin-bearing, so his preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk.4:16) is a microcosm of his whole teaching ministry. In his parables and encounters he is God speaking to the people. He is able to do this as the incarnate Word of God, the utterance of grace and truth which now supersedes the law that came by Moses

(1) CULLMANN, O, "Baptism in the New Testament", p.19.

(2) CLARK, I, "An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments " p.17.

Hence the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews can characterise him as 'Apostle and High Priest of our confession' (Heb.3:1). Here God's $\gamma \lambda \gamma$ has come to live amongst men. In him God speaks. 'The Shekinah glory of God dwells in a Man..... Here where the Word of the living God is made flesh, the two aspects of priesthood are combined and fulfilled'. (1)

3. Thirdly there is the cleansing of the Temple. On this point Eastwood is helpful - 'the Temple should have been a "house of prayer for all nations". The Jewish priesthood has made it a place of profit for themselves, a house of Mammon instead of a house of God. The coming of Christ, the true and only Priest, meant that the old order of religion and false ideas of Priesthood should be swept away'. (2) 'The action of Jesus is the judgement of the true priest on the existing sacrificial system. It was the anguished outcry of the priest-victim against the 'principalities and powers in high places' for whose sinfulness he had come to atone. It is the word of God's love coming in wrath to those who were preventing his people from drawing near to the Father.

4. The fourth dramatic act is the instituting of the New Covenant at the last supper. The old covenant had consisted of the law given at Sinai, the 'cutting' of the covenant referred to in Exodus 24:6-8, and the sacrifices ordained for atonement when the law was broken. But now God, in his Son has brought in a new covenant, he has brought a new law -

μετατιθεμένης γάρ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἐξ ἀνάγκης
καὶ νόμου μετάθεσις γίνεται.

'For when there is a change in the priesthood there is necessarily a change in the law as well'. (Heb.7:12)

'Under the word "law" the whole Old Testament economy is embraced; and the statement is that, so essentially, so fundamentally, had the idea of the Aaronic priesthood entered into Israel's life that, when that priesthood was "changed", the life of the people was necessarily changed along with it'.

(3) This new law is the law of love, the ethic of Christ.

'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another;
even as I have loved you that you also love one another'. (Jn.13:34)

(1) TORRANCE, T.F. op.cit. p.7.
(2) EASTWOOD, C., op.cit. p.41.
(3) MILLIGAN, W., op.cit. p.65.

But there is more to the new law of the New Covenant. Christ took the old law and transformed and deepened it until it was a new revelation:

'You have heard that it was said to the men of old ... but I say to you' (Matt.5:21 ff)

But there is more still. The whole life of Christ, his compassion and mercy his dedication and self-offering, his redemptive friendship and long-suffering love - this is the law of the new covenant, the law that can only be written inwardly, in men's hearts. The mediator of the old covenant was Moses, the mediator of the new is Christ. When the old covenant was inaugurated (Ex.24:9-11) the young men had offered burnt-offerings and peace offerings. Then Moses took the blood and sprinkled half on the altar and half on the people. There was no sin-offering as this was not yet known. (1) 'Then they beheld God, and ate and drank'. (Ex.24:9). This latter part was the final stage in the peace-offering, the fellowship meal. Hicks sees these events as 'the traditions which our Lord was assuming.....There, in fact is the picture- the only picture- which gives the background to the essential part of our Lord's words at the Institution. Its elements are deliverance in the sacrificial surrender of life; self-dedication symbolised in the offering of the sacrificial victim, and expressed in the assent by the offerers to God's law of the dedicated life; and the vision of the presence of God in sacrificial communion'. (2) So a new law was given and a new covenant established. What provision was made for the breaking of the covenant? If the standard of the law was raised the new covenant must be that much harder to observe and keep. As the new covenant, however, was established in the sacrifice of Christ, so -

'if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world'. (I Jn.2:1-2).

The eternal offering is the ground of the heavenly intercession which our High Priest makes for us who sin. So Christ in his action of mediating the new covenant declared himself to be the anti-type of Moses, and claimed to supersede and dispense with the old covenant. Christ was in fact proclaiming himself to be the new High Priest.

(1) HICKS, F.N.C. op. cit. p.209.
(2) HICKS, F.C.M., op.cit. p. 210.

5. Then fifthly we see the Heavenly Priesthood of Christ prefigured in his prayers of intercession during his earthly ministry. He prayed for Peter:-

'Simon, Simon, behold Satan demanded to have you that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail'. (Lk.22:31-2)

In the passion narrative of Saint Luke we hear him praying:-

"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Lk.23:34)

He also prayed for Judas. There is no specific reference in the gospel records but there is a pointer in :-

'I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition'.(Jn.17:12)

James Stewart adds :- 'He prayed for Judas. How terribly He wrestled in prayer for the soul of Judas only God and Jesus knew'. (1) The supreme example of Christ interceding is in the upper room where he prayed, first for his disciples and then for all his followers of all time. Milligan exclaims :- 'How true is the instinct which has always led the church to designate this prayer the High-Priestly prayer of Christ! In heaven only is he perfect High-Priest, and the words of the prayer belong at least in spirit to that upper sanctuary'. (2) Christ prays this prayer as if he is 'no more in this world'. It is as if heaven has come down and the disciples are allowed to hear the glorified High Priest interceding at the Father's right hand.

We have now seen that Christ in his earthly ministry carries out the duties and functions of a priest without actually performing the ritual of the altar. He epitomizes all the history of priesthood short of the final sacrifice. As the word of God he represents God to men in all his teaching which includes the giving of a new law. As the ancient priest was servant of the word, servant of the will, and servant of the law of God, so Jesus is the Word, he is the law and he completely fulfils the will of God in perfect obedience. He mediates a new covenant from God for men and hence fulfils what was lacking in the covenant of Moses. He speaks God's word of judgement on the corrupt sacrificial system practised in his day. He is also the representative of men to God, and hence intercedes on their behalf.

(1) STEWART, JAMES, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ" p.110.
(2) MILLIGAN, W. op. cit. p.156.

By suffering to be baptised he entered on that course which was to culminate in the sacrifice of Calvary, the priestly experience of sin-bearing to make atonement between a holy God and sinful men. As the priest-victim his atoning action was constitutive of his priesthood, so to this atoning sacrifice we now turn.

II THE ATONING SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

The aim of sacrifice is to effect reconciliation or atonement between God and man. Canon Quick describes the Christian conception of the end of man. It 'is that God should be all in all, that his self-limitation should cease, when man has freely surrendered himself and all he has to God who has not only loved him but allowed him to share his love....And in the free surrender of all and every independence he (man) enters at last into the glorious liberty of God's children'. (1) Atonement enables this to happen. The Old Testament system had failed, mainly owing to the lack of an adequate sacrifice and an adequate priest, and also due to the abuse of the system itself. In atonement sin is not 'paid for' in the sense of an account being settled. God cannot be reduced to such a transactional level. A relationship is restored which sin has broken. It is the goal of any system of atonement to restore, heal, and make good the broken relationship; hence forgiveness is involved on the one side and penitence on the other. Any theory or doctrine of the atoning work of Christ must therefore give a sufficient place to the forgiving love of God as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. It must show God taking the initiative and atoning by his grace, for 'when we come to the main types of New Testament teaching we find the death of Jesus.... quite expressly and even confidently traced to the working of the love of God. Moreover, this is conceived as a sacrificial love... something infinitely costly, a giving up by God of His only Son in the process of dealing with our sins, so great is his love towards us...' God commendeth his own love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us". (2)

(1) QUICK, C.C., "Doctrines of the Creed", p.205
(2) BAILLIE, D.M., op.cit. p. 186

When the work of Christ is viewed in the sacrificial category this love of God is revealed in its fullness, for it is God himself who

ὄν προέθετο ὁ Θεός ἱλαστήριον διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι,

'put forward as an expiation by his blood' (Rom.3:25) Jesus Christ. In classical Greek ἱλάσσομαι means more generally to propitiate since the gods were not thought to be normally and naturally well-disposed and their favour had therefore to be earned. In Biblical Greek, where normally God is kindly disposed it usually means to 'expiate' or 'cover the sin', and as equivalent of ἱλαστήριον is properly the place of expiation, being the LXX translation of כַּפֶּרֶת. Of its use here, Cramer says 'it must be noted that, according to Ex.25:22 and Lev.16:2, the Capporath is the central seat of the saving presence and gracious revelation of God; so that it need not surprise that Christ is designated ἱλαστήριον which can be so designated, when we consider that he, as High Priest and sacrifice at the same time, comes ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ αἵματι and not as the High Priest of the O.T., ἐν αἵματι ἄλλοτρῷ which he must discharge himself of by sprinkling on the Capporath'. (1) A.C. Hobert favours the literal translation given by Manson, viz 'mercy-seat' and adds, as well, that 'we have been baptized, reconciled, united with Christ as members of His Body; thereby the root of sin, which is the pride and self-love of the ego, has been extracted, and the process of healing from the bottom initiated. Thus we share in the righteousness of Christ; and here we must banish any notion of a legal or forensic imputation of merit, for we are justified and made righteous, not in the sense of possessing a righteousness all our own (Phil.3:9) but because we belong to Christ.... Thus our sin is 'covered' in the sense of William Bright's eucharistic hymn 'Look, Father, look on his anointed face, and only look on us as found in him'. (2) In what sense then, is the atoning work of Jesus Christ to be regarded as a sacrifice?

The Jewish sacrificial system with the sin-offering, burnt-offering, and peace-offering in its developed (i.e. post-exilic) form is the background in which Jesus and his followers grew up and thought. The three types were special expressions of the general conception of sacrifice, and they symbolised

(1) CRAMER, H. op.cit. p. 306

(2) A.C. HEBERT, "Theological Word Book of the Bible" ed. A. Richardson p.26.

(a) in the sin-offering life surrendered (since the purpose of the death was to release the life which was in the blood), (b) in the burnt offering life transformed and dedicated, and (c) in the peace-offering life bestowed and shared. The whole pattern of sacrifice can be seen in the Incarnation, baptism, life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus.

1. In the Temple worship the offerer 'draws near' with his victim. In the sacrifice of Christ, God is the one who draws near. He makes the offering. His is the action: God steps forth from the hidden recesses in which he has been concealed to reveal Himself. What was formerly hidden in God is now partly revealed in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The first step in the atoning sacrifice is when God draws near to the sinners for whom the atonement is to be made by becoming a man among men. 'The God of the New Testament comes down out of heaven, and seeks man in his own world, meets him at the place where he stands, and finds him where he is at home'. (1) It is not men who offer the Lamb of God; it is God. He comes into their midst, 'tabernacles' with them, and, as one amongst them offers the sacrifice.

2. The second action in the offering of a sacrifice was when the sinner identified himself with the victim by pressing his hands on the victim's head. Henceforth what happens to the victim happens to the offerer. So in the baptism of Jesus by John God identifies himself with sinful humanity through the action of Jesus. Jesus goes down into the waters of Jordan not merely to identify himself with men in their humanity (this he did in the incarnation), but to identify himself with them in their sinfulness.

'For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God'. (II Cor 5:21)

The Lamb's vocation of sin-bearing begins. 'The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all'. (Isa. 53:6) 'At the moment of his baptism he receives the commission to undertake the rôle of the suffering Servant of God, who takes on himself the sins of his people. Other Jews come to Jordan to be baptised by John for their own sins. Jesus, ... at the very moment when he is baptized like

(1) STAUFFER, E. "New Testament Theology", p.119.

other people hears a voice which fundamentally declares :Thou art baptized not for thine own sins but for those of the whole people. For thou art he of whom Isaiah prophesied , that he must suffer representatively for the sins of the people. This means that Jesus is baptized in view of his death, which effects forgiveness of sins for all men. For this reason Jesus must unite himself in solidarity with his whole people, and go down himself to Jordan, that 'all righteousness might be fulfilled' (1). At the highest point of man's own effort to attain righteousness (i.e. in the baptism by John), in his act of being immersed to wash away his sin, or - if we might put it this way - at the place where he 'off-loads' his sin, God in his Son comes to stand alongside him and to take on himself (or assume) that sin. It is as if God were saying "This baptism by John cannot take away sin. That has to be done in the baptism which is the sacrifice of the cross". The author of the fourth gospel has pierced to the core of the truth about the baptism of Jesus. He puts into the mouth of the Baptist the words:-

Ἴδε ὁ ἀρνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου.

'Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world'.
(Jn.1:29)

αἴρων means either 'to take away' or 'to bear'. In his characteristic way the author of John's gospel has used it with double meaning, for 'a lamb can remove sin only by sacrificially bearing it'.(2) Instead of sinners identifying themselves with the lamb, the Lamb has identified himself with them. God in his grace has reversed the process of the first two stages of the sacrifice, but the effect is the same. Henceforth what happens to the Lamb happens to those with whom he has identified himself, for he is still representative as well as Messiah of men.

3. The third stage in the ritual of sacrifice was when the offerer killed the victim, except on the Day of Atonement when the High Priest did it. It would be natural to say here with Hicks that 'The sinners slay the victim',(3) but this is only part of the picture.

(1) CULLEMAN, O. op.cit. p.18

(2) DODS, M.,E.G.T. p.695 (Vol.I)

(3) HICKS, F.C.N. op.cit. p.250

If in the lamb of sacrifice, God draws near and if God in Christ Jesus identifies himself with us then it follows that God also completes the work of the offerer. Admittedly he uses human agents-Caiaphas and those who took part in the crucifixion but he was 'delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God' (Acts 2:23). In 'The Atonement in New Testament Teaching' Vincent Taylor has traced this element of the Divine purpose in the death of Christ throughout the New Testament. Jesus himself 'undoubtedly believed that his sufferings were not due to chance or human violence alone, but were events deep in the Providence of God'. (1) In Gethsemane Christ was aware of submitting to the will of God- 'not what I will but what Thou wilt' (Mk.14:26) and the primitive preaching and teaching brought this out clearly.

Taylor shows how it is emphasised in Acts and the Pastoral Epistles (2), the teaching of St. Paul (Rom.8:3 -'God has done what the law... could not do: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin-offering $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\iota\psi\tau\alpha\iota$ he condemned sin in the flesh), the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews ('But we see Jesus...crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for every one' -Heb.2:9) and in the Johannine writings ('And what shall I say? Father save me from this hour? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour'- Jn.12:27). The whole idea is further borne out because Jesus goes willingly to die. He is conscious of laying down his life himself. 'No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father'. (Jn.10:18)

Here we touch on the essential note of all Christian ideas of sacrifice- that of obedience. In the light of the sacrifice of Jesus as he interpreted it in terms of the Suffering Servant of God we have the inner meaning of sacrifice revealed. Motherspoon pointed out that sacrifice is basically an
(act of the will,

(1) SANDER, V., "The Atonement in New Testament Teaching", p.13-14

(2) TAYLOR, op. cit. p. 50.

i.e. the self in decision, and what it offers therefore is the self of the offerer: "There is no sacrifice unless in so far as the offerer is himself the victim". All pre-Christian sacrifices were in fact only symbolic offerings. "The perfect sacrifice is that in which will is completely submitted and is carried to the actuality of surrender ... of such sacrifice there is only one perfect example". (1) The writer to the Hebrews could therefore put in the mouth of our Lord the Psalmist's cry 'Lo, I have come to do Thy will, O God' (Heb. 10:7 cf Ps 40:7-8). This we shall see (2) is the meaning of sacrifice (i.e. the sacrifice of self-presentation) for the Christian. The death of Christ then is by the will of God the Father through the obedience of the Son. The human murderers are the means by which he achieves his purposes, in the same way that the knife was the instrument in Abraham's hand when he offered up Isaac. If it be objected that this minimises the weight of human guilt for the cross, then it must be pointed out that it was to bear human sin and to atone for human sin that God brought Christ to the cross. The point is that the whole movement is the action of God. It is the divine self-sacrifice doing for man what he cannot do for himself, it is the outcropping of the eternal atonement that is always in the heart of God because 'the atonement is something within the life of God, wrought by God himself and applied by him to man in every age'. (3) 'There was a cross in the heart of God before there was one planted on the green hill outside Jerusalem'. (4) The death of the victim in sacrifice however, was but the means to release the life which was in the blood. The origin of this concept was obviously very primitive- as the worshippers drank the blood they shared a common life, the common life of the clan, of which the domestic animals were a part.

(1) MAXWELL, F.D. "The Eucharist in the light of our Lord's resurrection" p.5 (quoting from WOTHERSPOON, H.J. "Religious Values in the Sacraments") cf. infra p.108

(2) infra ch 4 passim

(3) BAILLIE, D.M., cit. p.192

(4) DUNN, C.A., "Atonement in Literature and Life" p.232, quoted by Baillie, op.cit. p. 124

F.J. Taylor claims 'It is hardly likely that blood could signify life released...for early Hebrew thinking had no adequate conception of a spiritual survival after death...blood was frequently used as a word symbol for death as the end of life' (1). This would seem an inadequate description, and fails to take into account the various meanings attached to the word, and lacks insight into the meaning of sacrifice. Cremer distinguishes three uses: (i) The substantial basis of the individual life, and often in conjunction with σάρξ, giving 'flesh and blood;(ii) life passing away in bloodshed and generally by force; (iii) Life given up or offered as an atonement 'since, in the ritual of sacrifice, special emphasis is laid upon it as the material basis of the individual life. The life of the animal offered for propitiation appears in the blood separated from the flesh,... which life is, on the one hand, in the blood, presented to God; on the other, by sprinkling, appropriated to man... the same is true of the blood of Christ'. (2) In the sacrifice of Christ, however, there is also the activity of God. Is our Lord shed his blood what is released is not the life of a man only, but also the divine life which was in him hypostatically one with the human life. In the incarnation God the Son became man and the Godhead was linked in an indissoluble union with man, or as we have put it above, he identified himself with sinful man in a vocation of sin-bearing thereby doing for man that which man could not do for himself. (3) In this way humanity is gathered up also into the sacrifice of which the cross is a part. What happens to the victim happens also to those with whom he has identified himself. Through the death of our Lord on the cross, therefore, the divine life in Christ was poured out, still in hypostatic union with the human life. He goes to the cross as Son of God and as representative man.

(1) TAYLOR, F.J., "Theological Word Book of the Bible" ed. A. RICHARDSON. p.33
(2) CREMER, H., op. cit. p. 70.
(3) supra p.25.

4 & 5. In the fourth part of the movement the priest took the blood, symbolically the released life of the offerer, into the presence of God by sprinkling it on the altar or on the mercy seat, thereby effecting atonement. The fifth stage was when the priest placed the flesh (or part of it) on the altar and it was burnt. As the holy fire kindled and the smoke rose the offering (Hebrew **אֵלֶּה**, 'that which goes up') was not destroyed but transformed. The meaning of the burning appears most dramatically in the story of Elijah's sacrifice on Carmel (I Kings 18:30). It is God's acceptance of that which is offered. In accepting, he transforms it into a condition in which it can enter into his life. So the fire of the sanctuary originally "came forth from before the Lord" (Lev.9:22), and once on the altar it was to be kept burning continually (Lev.6:13)¹. (1) That Hicks has distinguished as the fourth and fifth parts of the sacrifice, because they follow one another chronologically, are really parallel actions. In the one the blood was brought into the nearer presence of God and in the other the same thing happened to the flesh in its transformed condition. Both were given to God. Symbolically then, the life and being of the offerer were offered to God and accepted by him - they 'enter into his life' to use Hicks' impressive phrase. Atonement, reconciliation is made as man is accepted and welcomed by God. So in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the divine and human life which he had embraced in his person was set free to be offered up to the Father in sacrificial obedience. Indeed there is a striking linguistic parallel between **אֵלֶּה** (that which goes up, and the regular Hebrew word for an oblation or burnt offering) and the ascension of our Lord, which would be the same word. In his ascension therefore it seems appropriate to say that he offered himself to the Father in the same (or at least a similar) way as the burnt-offering was yielded up. But this is a mighty act of God the Father, as the fire on the altar was also the fire of God. But in his ascension our Lord remains fully human as in his (earthly

(1) HICKS, F.O.F. op. cit. p.13

life. He takes the humanity he has assumed with him and bears it still in the presence of the Father. And so in this whole act, God the Father has willed and moved whilst God the Son has obediently fulfilled that will, and man and God are at-one. The Son has effected the atonement that is eternally a part of the divine nature of grace. The offering is therefore the offering of life, both human and divine. The presentation of blood at the altar symbolises life set free and surrendered to God, whilst the flesh burnt and therefore transformed also symbolised life accepted and transformed by God. Our Lord combines in his ascension and eternal offering and effects in actuality what was symbolised in the ancient system. His life, both human and divine in one is surrendered, presented, transformed and accepted by God the Father, not symbolically but really and truly.

'Paschal Lamb by God appointed,
All our sins on Thee were laid,
By almighty love anointed,
Thou hast full atonement made:
All Thy people are forgiven
Through the virtue of Thy blood,
Opened is the gate of heaven;
Peace is made twixt man and God'. (1)

Indeed, truly 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself'.
(2 Cor.5:19)

6. In the final stage of the sacrifices, except in the burnt - offerings where everything was burnt, part of the victim was eaten. In the peace-offerings the worshippers did this, whilst in the sin-offering the priests did it. In the peace-offerings, the original and most primitive of the types of sacrifice it was a fellowship meal in which communion with God was enjoyed as they ate a common meal. Thus participating together

(1) JOHN BAKERELL, Methodist Hymn Book No.226

not only do God and man, but also man and man become one. The link is obvious. In the Eucharist Christ gives himself in a fellowship meal as the life, the eternal life, of those who are waiting to receive him. But this may not necessarily be the whole of the final stage of the sacrifice. The ascended Christ prays to God the Father and the Holy Spirit is sent. The Holy Spirit $\alpha\sigma\pi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$ is the advocate who pleads God's cause within us, and hence we may say that he is that aspect of the divine life which is given to effect within our lives the redemptive purpose of God. In the faith of the Church he is confessed to be 'The Lord and giver of life who proceedeth from the Father and the Son' (Nicene Creed). Neither is this a new introduction to the sacrificial self-giving of God as the Holy Spirit was present at his conception and descended on the Son at his baptism in the form of the sacrificial dove. And furthermore 'Our Lord bore the Holy Spirit given him through every human experience of conflict and endurance, through death and the grave, by resurrection and ascension, moulding and colouring it by his own growth in the knowledge of all those things. His own perfecting in his conquest of death and entrance in the new life beyond, was the perfecting of that nature, through which the Holy Ghost should, when He was glorified, be mediated to us'. (1) The Holy Spirit is, moreover the spirit of love, bringing the agape life of God into the life of man. He is the spirit of fellowship between man and man and effects in them the reconciliation which the earlier parts of the sacrifice of Christ had wrought for them. But this is not to mean that the final stage in the great sacrifice is either the Eucharistic meal or the Holy Spirit received by man. Perhaps we can say that the Eucharist is the earthly meal in which Christ forever gives back to his own part of the human life which he took up into the divine - human existence and made eternally an offering to God - the earthly counterpart of the human nature which he for ever presents before God in the eternal offering in the heavens.

(1) MOFFERSBACH, W.J., "What Happened at Pentecost" p.17.

In the old sacrifices the worshippers had eaten part of the victim -the other part was burnt and ascended in smoke to God. The gift of the Holy Spirit to dwell in men enables them to become participators in the $\kappa\omicron\lambda\upsilon\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of the Holy Spirit (1) as in the old sacrifices they shared a common life in the communion meal.

This tentative account of the atoning sacrifice of Christ may have appeared to be a digression, but this is not so, as it is fundamental to a true understanding of the High Priesthood of Christ. The sacrifice is constitutive of the Priesthood. Before we can go on to this Priesthood, however, we must clear up an important aspect of the atoning sacrifice. So far we have described it as the act of God the Father and have shown him to be graciously and sacrificially present in each act of the drama. Apart from the self-identification of Christ with humanity - even in its sinfulness - we have given no place for any response by men. God has apparently gone on relentlessly regardless of the response - or lack of it - by men. But this is not so. The response of men is a necessary correlative to the sacrifice. Without the response of faith there is no effective atonement at all. Only a general movement would have been made by God. Whale puts it finely - 'sacrifice is two-fold in its meaning . It is the work of God throughout. But, at the same time, it is inevitably the complementary work of man. Sacrifice is both a category of divine revelation and a category of human response. Just as I cannot draw an arc of a circle without drawing it both convex and concave, so sacrifice cannot be God's revelation without being Man's response at the same time. To separate Christ from man here, the divine Victim from the believer who by faith shares in his sacrifice...is...disastrous' (2). In the temple sacrifices the second stage was when the offerer identified himself with his victim and when God received the life offered up, he received the offerer himself. Atonement was effected. So too the believer in Jesus Christ has to make a spiritual identification of himself with the sacrifice of Christ. In this identification of himself with Christ

(1) II Cor.13:13 For a semantic study of $\kappa\omicron\lambda\upsilon\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ see below p.117
(2) WHELLE, J.S. "Christian Doctrine" p.82.

he has to allow his life to be caught up with Christ in his sacrifice so that Christ brings this incorporated life into the nearer presence of God who welcomes, receives, transforms it. Only so can atonement be made actual, and only so can a person 'enter at last into the glorious liberty of God's children'. (1) But our Lord alone has made the perfect response to the Divine initiative and our part is to enter into the response which he makes. Of this we shall say more in chapter four.(2) When a person thus enters into the response made by our Lord, when he identifies himself with the sacrifice of Christ, 'takes up his cross' and follows him-then he enters into that atonement with God the Father which God the Son has made possible. He is baptized into the baptism of Christ which is his sacrificial death, and rises to newness of life with him - the life that is transformed through dying with Christ and rising with him. Thus St. Paul can exclaim:-

'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me'.(Gal.2:20)

We participate in this life 'in Christ' by 'faith-union, sacramental communion, and sacrificial living'.(3)

We must remember, however, that by interpreting the work of Christ in this sacrificial category, we are looking at the fullness and perfection of sacrifice. We are using the Old Testament system to throw light on the sacrifice of Christ, but it is the old system that is being compared and found wanting beside the 'full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world' which Christ made. Thus the old sacrifices were 'in part: But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away'. (I Cor. 13:9-10 R.V.) In the same way when we come to consider the High Priesthood of Christ, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews 'does not really ask "In what ways is Jesus like a Jewish High Priest?" but "In what ways is a Jewish High Priest like (and unlike) Jesus?". To use his own terms, when one is looking at a man's "shadow" and

(1) QUICK, O.C. op. cit. p.205 see supra p. 23
(2) infra p. 101 ff.
(3) TAYLOR, V., op. cit. p.197

the man himself, the question that one asks is not "In what ways is the man like his shadow?" but "In what ways is the shadow like (and unlike) the man?" Here too the true starting-point of a New Testament writer's thinking are the new Christian facts - Jesus and all that in his experience went with Jesus'. (1) The doctrine of the High Priesthood of Christ arises from the sacrificial view of the atonement, and so to this important doctrine we must now turn our attention.

III THE HEAVENLY HIGH PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

First a preliminary remark must be made. In speaking of the High - Priesthood of our Lord sometimes reference is made to his Priesthood, sometimes to his High-Priesthood. 'The duties of these two offices cannot be separated from each other... in their essence the two offices were one. The office of the priest simply culminated in that of the High-Priest, and all that was demanded of the latter, was a sharper and a more definite expression of what was demanded of the former'.(2) Therefore the two terms are used interchangeably with the one as being understood to include the other, except that where we speak of entering into the Holy of Holies this is a reference to the ritual of the Day of Atonement and applies only to the High Priest.

The doctrine is the main theme of the writer to the Hebrews, and it is from this Epistle that we derive our thought on the subject. One of his tasks is to point out why the old sacrificial system had failed and why a new and better way was necessary. The underlying reason was that the old way was but a shadow of the real or original. The shadow was the earthly system, the pattern or original was the heavenly. In Christ the real became the actual and there was no more need for the shadow. Hence the writer to the Hebrews can show how, point for point, the sacrifice and priesthood of the Levitical system were inadequate.

(1) SMITH, C.R., "The Bible Doctrine of Salvation" p. 226.
(2) MILLIGAN, W., op.cit. p.67.

The sacrifice of the lamb had been inadequate, because 'gifts and sacrifices were offered which cannot perfect the conscience of the worshipper, but deal only with food and drink'. (Heb. 9:9) The blood of the sacrifice did not effect cleansing, since

'if the worshippers had once been cleansed, they would no longer have any consciousness of sin. But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year'. (Heb. 10:2-3).

If they had no longer had any consciousness of sins then they would have sought no renewal of sacrifice. 'The legal victims died; their life blood ebbed away; their efficacy was only for the for the moment: the offering of them needed constantly to be renewed '. (1) In short the Levitical sacrifices were inadequate because they were repetitive, because they were the same, and because they were ineffective.

But the identification which the offerer made by placing his hands on the victim's head was also inadequate, as such an animal cannot 'carry' the offerer or his sin in anything more than a symbolic way. There can be no faith-union with a lamb as there can be with a person:- 'the physical suffering and death of an irrational creature - unwilling and unconscious- can make no atonement for man's sin. Man can have no true fellowship with such beings. Such a sacrifice cannot be more than a symbol, a sign'. (2)

Likewise the priesthood was also inadequate. First, it was of a legal requirement which is of necessity no more than an outward restraint and, furthermore the office came by virtue of heredity rather than spiritual quality. It was of the flesh and corruptible. One is needed who has 'the power of an indestructible life'. (Heb. 7:16) Secondly, it was a priesthood of weak men who were sinful. They had to offer sacrifices for their own sins of which they were guilty (Heb. 7:27).

(1) MILLIGAN, W., op. cit. p.127.
(2) WESTCOTT, B.F., op. cit. p. 307.

They were not one with God, and, since they were sinful, they could not strictly and truly approach the presence of God. Even when they were ceremonially clean they did not have the essential qualification to draw near- the qualification of ὁσιος (Heb.7:27) which denotes personal holiness, or 'oneness with God'. (1) Thirdly, the former priesthood was appointed by the law, whilst the new priesthood (of our Lord) was appointed by an oath. Dods explains that 'the significance of this mode of appointment (is) that repentance or change of plan is excluded. That is to say this priesthood is final, eternal. And the superiority of the priesthood involves the superiority of the covenant based upon it. The oath signifies therefore the transition from a provisional and temporary covenant to that which is eternal'. The oath, therefore, coming after the law was regarded as being superior to it since it 'showed that the law needed revision and supplementing'.(2)

Then fourthly, the priesthood was inadequate because it was of an inferior order. The patriarch Abraham had paid tithes to Melchizedek, and Melchizedek had blessed Abraham. The greater blesses the less and in Abraham was the seed of the Aaronic priesthood. If there is a better order, then the other is inferior, and, if inferior then inadequate. But fifthly, the inadequacy of the old priesthood was also in its transience. There were many priests -

'The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office'.(Heb.7:23)

Being an office held by many it was liable to change with changing persons. What is needed is one who can hold his priesthood inviolable, so that it is permanently effective. The sum of all these reasons is sixthly, that the former priesthood was ineffective. Insofar as the law had failed to bring men to perfection, so the priesthood had failed. 'Such a failure, not a failure, but the fulfilment of the divine purpose, was indicated by the promise of another priesthood in another line'. (3) Davidson finely points out-'Perfection is always a relative word. An institution brings perfection when it effects the purpose for which it was instituted, and produces a result which corresponds to the idea of it. The design of

(1) DOUGLAS, W., "E.G.T." Vol. IV p.318
(2) DOUGLAS, W., op. cit. pp. 314, 319.
(3) WESLEY, J., p.169

a priesthood is to bring men near to God (v.19) and this it effects by removing the obstacles in the way, viz. men's sin, which lying on their conscience impeded their free access to God'. (1)
Perfection had not been achieved and so the old priesthood had failed in its task. It had failed because it was human, earthly, and no effort of man can avail to bring him to free access to God. It had failed because it was a shadow of the real and eternal priesthood. No shadow can bring perfection.

An inadequate offering, coupled with an inadequate identification or participation on the part of the offerer and an inadequate priesthood meant that there was inadequate mediation. The mediation was effected by two things- the victim and the priest. The mediation between God and man was inadequate because, if we might use the expression, the victim could not get near enough to the offerer and the priest could not get near enough to God. Even the locus of mediation was a mere shadow. The priests of the law 'serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly sanctuary'. (Heb.8:5)
'The outer tent which did not itself contain God's presence, but rather stood barring access to it, was a parable of the entire dispensation. In other words, this tabernacle arrangement was a striking symbol of the Mosaic economy which could not of itself effect spiritual approach and abiding fellowship with God'. (2)

Hence the atonement secured was also inadequate 'for it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins' (Heb.10:4). The need was for a perfect sacrifice offered by a perfect priest in the perfect way.

οὐ γὰρ εἰς χειροποίητα εἰσῆλθεν ἅγια Χριστός, ἀντίτυπον τῶν ἀληθινῶν, ἀλλ' εἰς αὐτόν τόν οὐρανόν, νῦν ἐμφανισθῆναι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.

'For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf'. (Heb.9:24).

The result would be a better and more adequate covenant - that which Jeremiah foretold, inward, individual, and dealing with sin.

(1) DAVIDSON, A.B., quoted Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol.IV p.311
(2) DODS, R., op. cit. p.331

We have already shown in the section on 'The Atoning Sacrifice of Christ' that this is the adequate sacrifice, the fullness or fulfillment of the old system. Likewise an adequate identification is provided in the faith-union of the believer with Christ, and a complete reconciliation or atonement. It is the aim of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews to demonstrate further that Christ is an adequate priest or mediator. This he does by showing the superiority of the order of Melchizedek over the Aaronic order of priesthood, and by saying that this is a type of the Priesthood of Christ.

First, The order of Melchizedek is not dependent upon genealogical qualifications and hence is like Christ.

'He is without father or mother or genealogy and has neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest for ever'. (Heb.7:3)

Like Melchizedek Christ has become a priest 'by the power of an indestructible life'. (Heb.7:16) He is priest, not because of pedigree but because of personal power. By his resurrection he becomes a priest who can for ever present the great sacrifice before God. Yet here is a paradox. He is priest forever because he has no genealogy, yet he is priest for ever because of his Sonship.

Secondly, Christ was a priest because he was

'holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, he did this once for all when he offered up himself'. (Heb.7:26-7)

His sacrifice, as well as his Sonship, was constitutive of his Priesthood.

In the third place he was appointed as priest by an oath (Heb.7:21) Again the writer implies that the special appointment outside the Levitical line is superior. (1)

(1) supra

Fourthly, the Melchizedek order is a superior order. This is because he was appointed by God ('Priest of God Most High') and because of his human sympathies in giving help to the weary warriors (as well as blessing Abraham). These are precisely the qualifications of Christ for his priesthood:-

'Christ did not exalt himself to be made high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him "Thou art my Son, today have I begotten Thee, as he says also in another place "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"' (Heb. 5:5-6)

He is also able to 'sympathise with our weaknesses, ... one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin'. (Heb. 4:15) 'Divine appointment, human sympathy! in these are to be found two of the most important characteristics of a perfect priest'. (1)

Undoubtedly, however, the real adequacy of the Priesthood of Christ lies in the fact that it is permanent. He is not 'prevented by death from continuing in office' (Heb. 7:23) as are the Levitical priests. Like that of Melchizedek his Priesthood is one, unchangeable, continuous, and royal. There is no other in the same order of priesthood as Christ (not even Melchizedek). So it is unchangeable since succession of individuals will vary with the varying traits of character and work produced in the course of generations by the ever-changing circumstances of the world'. (2) Also it has uninterrupted continuity and is the priesthood of a king. He 'is seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven'. (Heb. 8:1) 'Yet how impossible it would have seemed that the High Priest on the Day of Atonement should have "sat down" upon the "mercy-seat" where "the glory of the Lord" dwelt'. On the contrary he hid himself behind incense lest he should even look upon God. Presently, again, he stole out of the shrine back to the waiting people...this just meant that he had failed. "Our High Priest", on the contrary by taking His seat on the throne of God, shows that He has succeeded'. (3)

(1) MELLIGAN, W., op. cit. p. 104
(2) MELLIGAN, W., op. cit. p. 93
(3) SMITH, C.R., op. cit. p. 236

This brings us to the last inadequacy of the old priesthood, its ineffectiveness, where again the priesthood is made effective by the efficacy of the sacrifice. If the sacrifice has brought atonement, the priesthood has been effective. The Epistle to the Hebrews leaves no doubt about it.

'For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified'. (Heb.10:14)

The priest and the sacrifice are fully adequate and hence there is an 'amazing contradiction of the old ritual by which Christians do not silently await the return of their high priest from the Holy of Holies, but follow in behind Him with "boldness"'. (1)

'Therefore brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water'. (Heb.10:19-22)

Hence, the two-fold mediation is complete. In Christ there is a victim who is completely identified with men and in him there is a Priest who can truly open the way to the presence of God and effect atonement. No wonder that, on the day of the crucifixion 'the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom'. (Mk.16:38, N.E.B.)

It is now possible to show further how the Priesthood of our Lord derives from his sacrificial atonement, and how it is grounded in that sacrifice. Each stage of the sacrifice declares and enables him to be the perfect priest.

1. As God draws near to men in the incarnation of his Son our Lord becomes the perfect High Priest, the supreme agent of Atonement. The priest is appointed by God from among men and his person therefore constitutes his qualification for priesthood. As God 'draws near' to sinful humanity he provides in the person of Jesus Christ not only the victim but the priest. The priest,

(1) SMITH, C.R., op.cit. p. 237

being one with the men whom he represents , is 'made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people'.(Heb.2:17) We have already shown (1) how in his incarnation Christ is God's word to man, the Apostle of our faith, thereby fulfilling the rôle of God's representative to man.

2. In the baptism of our Lord God identifies himself with sinful humanity and Christ as the victim assumes the rôle of sin-bearer. Here in this act God declared Christ to be the priest who, instead of bringing a lamb will offer his own blood, his own life, for the sins of the world. He enters on the pathway of suffering to go through what we have called 'the experience of priesthood'(2) the mingling of divine recoil from sin with human alienation from God. So now there will be one agent of atonement, a priest-victim , instead of two, priest and victim. It is as if a priest in the temple, watching a person bringing his lamb sees the insufficiency of this means and says 'I will be the offering, kill me, and let my life be offered to God'.(3)

3. So in his death on the cross Christ does what no other priest had done - he submits to death. In the eternal decree of God the only mediator between men and God was one who, being fully man yet submitted to death that his blood thus released might open up a new and living way to God. So the Priesthood of Christ derives from his sacrificial death. 'He offered up himself'(Heb.7:27). Henceforth the priest has 'somewhat to offer' - his own blood which could only be released through his own death. Through dying, and only through dying, he can set free the only life which can secure atonement with God, the life which is the life both of man in all his

(1) supra p. 19

(2) supra p. 14

(3) cf. TORrance, E.F. op.cit. p. 79(n) 'Certainly the Baptism of Jesus was regarded as His consecration to the Messianic Priesthood'.

humanity and of God in all his redeeming grace - and both joined indissolubly in one. And yet there is a sense in which this priesthood is necessary to the sacrifice, for if he were not priest as well as victim there would be no one to bring the offering of the blood into the nearer presence of God. God (in providing one who is both victim and priest), does for men what their victim and priest together cannot do.

4 & 5. The Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord represent the presentation of the blood at the altar and the burning of flesh in the sacrifice, life thus being transformed and accepted by God. But these are actions of the priest and hence our High Priest with the life that has come through death

'has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf'. (Heb.9:24)

So Christ brings the blood of the victim (his own) and makes the perfect offering. Through the perfect offering made by the perfect priest men and God are at one. What we have to note is that as priest he bears in heaven the humanity he had assumed on earth -

'Where high the heavenly temple stands
The house of God not made with hands,
A great High Priest our nature wears,
The guardian of mankind appears.
He who for man their surety stood,
And poured on earth his precious blood,
Pursues in heaven his mighty plan
The Saviour and the friend of man'.(1)

The blood he offers is the divine life transformed through the experience of sin-bearing and death, and the life of man caught up in that same experience and also transformed. And this is the eternal offering which he pleads, on which he bases his intercession.

St. John has put it:-

'If any one does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world'. (I Jn.2:1-2)

And God accepts this offering-intercession of the Advocate-High Priest because it is the life released through his death, the life which is both divine and human.

(1) Scottish Paraphrase, quoted MAXWELL, V.D. "The Resurrection, its Significance and Relevance" p.21

6. In the sixth and final stage of his sacrifice-priesthood (when in the old sacrifice a portion of the victim was given back for the worshippers to eat) Christ 'gave gifts to men' (Eph, 4:8). His gift is the life of God to dwell in men and the life of a redeemed humanity given back to redeem humanity. In the gift of the Holy Spirit he speaks (as a priest on behalf of God) to the Church and in the Church. In the Eucharist he gives himself in the blood as the divine life released and to redeem humanity and in the bread he gives himself to feed the Church, so that it might be incorporated in the body-life of God. As men are filled with the Holy Spirit they have the unifying life of God within them which enables them to be reconciled to one another as the ancient worshippers were in the sacrificial meal. When they participate together in the eucharistic meal by feeding on the body and drinking the blood of Christ they partake of a common life which binds them one to another in reconciliation and love. The Heavenly Priest makes actual therefore, not only the reconciliation between man and God, but also the bonds of love which his new covenant had declared and brought - the law of love.

The work of the Heavenly High Priest consists of his offering, intercession, and blessing.

We have assumed in all the above descriptions of priesthood and sacrifice that the blood is the life, and this is fundamental to a sacrificial understanding of the work of Christ as lamb of sacrifice and as Heavenly High Priest. Not only is the blood the life but 'the blood always includes the thought of life preserved and active beyond death'. (1) This is his offering then- the offering of living, active life. It does not consist of his death, necessary as that was for the release of the blood. His death on Calvary was 'once for all'. 'Death is an act accomplished in a moment. If any claim

(1) WESTCOTT, E.F. on I Jn.1:7, quoted MILLIGAN, W, op.cit. p.132.

is to be founded upon it, it must be recalled as a past act in order that the claim may be allowed. Life is a condition or a state'.(1) What our Lord offers therefore to God the Father is not his death but 'Himself as living in death' and this life never ends. It is the life of eternity returning to eternity, though with a new character since it has passed through death. Hence the offering is for ever. If the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks repeatedly of the 'once-for-all' nature of the sacrifice it just as clearly speaks of the eternal nature of the priesthood of Christ. He is a priest for ever 'after the order of Melchizedek'(Heb.5:6, 6:20, 7:3, 7:21). Hence the offering is for ever. The death was that which took place once for all, but the offering of the blood remains as does the High Priest who offers it. He

'has become a priest ...by the power of an indestructible life'.
(Heb.7:16)

'But he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them'.(Heb.7:24-5)

'he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking... his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption'.(Heb.9:12)

'For Christ has entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf'.(Heb.9:24)

Moreover the offering which the Heavenly High Priest makes is one. It is a single offering. It cannot be repeated. By its very nature it is unrepeatable, since only that which comes to an end can be repeated over again. There is no need for it to be repeated since 'His one offering gathers up into itself both the sacrifice that inaugurates the covenant, and all the many sacrifices offered year by year to maintain it and realise it; it reaches the idea which they strove towards in vain, and by reaching it forever sets them aside'.(2)

Since the offering which Christ the High Priest presents is eternal it is an ever-present one. It is present and effective now. It is not merely something done in the past to which we look back.

(1) MILLIGAN, W. *op.cit.* p.134.

(2) DAVIDSON, A.B. quoted in E.G.T. Vol IV p.344

Charles Wesley put it well in his verse :-

Thou standest in the holy place,
As now for guilty sinners slain:
The blood of sprinkling speaks, and prays,
All prevalent for helpless man;
Thy blood is still our ransom found,
And speaks salvation all around'.(1)

'The blood of sprinkling speaks and prays' . The intercession of the Heavenly High Priest is based on his offering. The scriptural basis for this doctrine is in Heb.7:25 -

'He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them'.

in Rom.8:34 -

'Christ Jesus who died...who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us'.

and in I Jn.2:1-2 -

'If any one does sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous'.

It is clear that this intercession is not reducible to prayers alone, at least not in the normally accepted sense of the word. It consists both of his person and his prayers. There is now no protecting cloud of incense (2) as the great High Priest presents himself and not so much words but 'the blood of sprinkling speaks and prays'. 'Words imply both distance and duality of a kind incongruous with the identity of life subsisting between Christ and the Father. There is a unity that needs no language. On the other hand it would be not less erroneous to empty that intercession of all personal significance. Apparently we do right to image it as involving at least His mediator-ial presence before God, with knowledge of each of us and with pity for each - His glorified person being, as it were, a ceaselessly prevailing appeal to the reconciling work accomplished on the earth, and also a fact which recalls intensely the perpetual needs of men still tried and tempted as Christ had been'. (3) In looking at the

(1) WESLEY, C., Methodist Hymn Book No 771 v.2 (my emphasis)
(2) supra p.8
(3) MACKINTOSH, H.R. "The Person of Jesus Christ" p.377

Old Testament priesthood we saw how intercession and sacrifice almost merge (1). In the eternal offering and perpetual intercession of the ascended High Priest we see this merge completed and fulfilled. He has not only fulfilled and changed the idea of sacrifice and the idea of priesthood, but also the concept of intercession. The offering, being the basis on which the intercession is made, enlarges and transforms the concept of the intercession until it becomes 'every act by which the Son, in dependence on the Father, in the Father's name, and with the perfect concurrence of the Father, takes His own with Him into the Father's presence, in order that whatever He Himself enjoys in the communications of His Father's love may become also theirs'.(2)

But, if his intercession as prayer is transcended it is not excluded and the prototype of his prayers is heard in the High Priestly prayer in the upper room. The prayer of the Heavenly High Priest is not the prayer of the creature dependent on the creator, but rather the prayer of the communion of love. So he bears before the Father 'who is both able and willing to supply them'(3) the wants of his people. So that, having established a new covenant by his sacrifice he now perpetually offers himself in intercession that his own might remain in that covenant relationship. Again we take leave to quote I Jn. 2:1 to show how the writer has seen the significance of the High Priesthood of Christ in his intercession and offering for the day-to-day life of the believer:- 'we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the ἱλαστήριον for our sins'(4). He is the means by which these sins are cancelled or annulled.(5)

(1) supra p. 8

(2) MILLIGAN, W., op.cit. p.152

(3) ibid p.156

(4) For a semantic study of ἱλαστήριον cf. supra p. 24. Thus ἱλαστήριον comes to signify 'actions which have expiation for their object such as sacrifices and prayers...Christ is called ἱλαστήριον as it is He by whom, as a sacrifice, sin is covered, i.e. expiated. This is in accordance with the usage of the LXX...' (CREMER, H. op.cit. p.304)

(5) TAYLOR, V., op.cit. p. 151-2

This intercession is made on behalf of the world, the Church and individuals. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself'(II Cor.5:19). As nothing less is the object of the Father's redeeming grace, so nothing less is the object of his Son's sacrificial intercession. As in his sacrifice 'he bore the sins of many' so 'he made intercession for the transgressors' (Isa. 53:12). Perhaps his eternal prayer for the world is 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do'(Lk.24:34). He intercedes also for his Church that they may be kept 'from the evil one', that they might be sanctified, made one, and that they might be with him 'to behold my glory'(Jn.17:15,17,21,24). And he prays also for individuals - 'If any one does sin we have an advocate...'(I.Jn.2:1)

The third and final part of the work of the Heavenly High Priest is his blessing. He is not the minister of a blessing that comes from someone else. He is himself the blessing. 'The benediction of Jesus is the benediction of God Incarnate, and it is no less than the administration of all the benefits of the evangelical covenant: the promise of eternal inheritance'(1). As his Priesthood is grounded in his sacrifice, and his offering and intercession are based on it so also is his blessing. His providential care comes in his eternal self-giving; his acceptance in grace through the reconciliation he has made in his blood whereby we are 'accepted in the beloved' (Eph.1:6) and his bestowal of peace comes in the final act of the sacrifice, his giving of himself in the Holy Spirit, the fruit of whose work is 'love, joy, peace...'(Gal.5:22) and in the eucharistic fellowship meal where (in Methodism) a frequent dismissal is 'Go in peace, and the God of peace go with you' after we have received the body and blood of 'Christ, who is our peace'(Eph.2:14).

(1) POPE, W.B. op.cit. Vol.II. p.243.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PRIESTHOOD OF BELIEVERS

One of the many aspects of the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews is that the old priesthood is done away with, having been superseded by the High Priesthood of Christ :-

'But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises ... In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away'. (Heb.8:6-13)

Indeed the whole argument of the Epistle shows the superiority of the new covenant (with its new sacrifice and new priesthood) in Christ over the Mosaic covenant. Whatever else Christianity took over from Judaism the New Testament is clear that it did not include the old priesthood and sacrificial system. The Bishop of Woolwich has forcefully described what happened :- 'Yet surely one of the most remarkable facts in the history of religion is the astonishing and well-nigh total eclipse in the New Testament of the priestly side of the Old Testament religion. The great exception is, of course, the Epistle to the Hebrews As is well known, nowhere in the New Testament or in the early period of the Church is the word hiereus, priest, used of the Christian ministry, though all the other offices - bishop, presbyter and deacon - were evidently adapted from Jewish models. The whole elaborate liturgy of the Temple and the sacrificial system which lay at the very centre of Jewish religion was given up with

extraordinarily little heart-searching; the ritual requirement of circumcision was officially waived within twenty years; and the still more pervasive provision for ceremonial cleansing was abandoned almost at the drop of a hat. The unpriestly character of early Christianity must surely have been one of the first things to strike an outsider, whether he were Jew or pagan'. (1) But, as the bishop goes on to point out (2) the priestly element had not disappeared. It had been transmuted in the priesthood of the church which derived from the High Priesthood of our Lord. The church is priestly because it is 'in Christ' who is our High Priest. It is 'in Christ' because he unites us with himself in his sacrifice, because we offer ourselves in him and by virtue of being in him we are ready to suffer as he suffered. Christians are also solidarily one with Christ in priesthood. He opens the way and they go into the Holy of Holies (which is the presence of God the Father) with him. Some of the traditional ecclesiological formulae also imply the union of the church with our Lord and therefore its derived priesthood. Martin Luther, driving his doctrine of justification by faith to its logical conclusions developed an individualistic aspect of the doctrine. The priesthood of Christians is, however, not merely a status but a function and involves them in worship and witness, both of which include mission, service, healing, and suffering. These are for Christ and in the world.

I. UNION WITH CHRIST

The sacrifice which our Lord makes and his High Priesthood which that sacrifice institutes are dependent for their efficacy and fullness on the participation of men in their response to and union with him. We have already introduced this idea in the quotation from Hale above (3) and must now

(1) ROBINSON, J.A.T., "On being the Church in the World" p.72.
(2) ibid p.73.
(3) supra p.33

develop the thought further. Believers are united with Christ in his sacrifice and in his priesthood. Indeed his sacrifice and his priesthood involve and imply believing participation by Christians.

1. Union with Christ in His Sacrifice.

(i) First, his sacrifice in itself involves the union of men with him. What he offers is not only himself but those who are 'in him'.

St. Paul can write to the Colossians :-

'If then you have been raised with Christ seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God'.(Col.3:1-3)

Their life is in union with him and his life is offering, a part of his sacrifice. His sacrifice, not to be limited to his death but present and effective now (1), therefore includes those whose lives are 'hid with him'. The same idea is present in Ephesians :-

'Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish'.(Eph.5:25-7) (2)

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him'. (Eph.1:3-4)

In both of these passages the words $\alpha\gamma\iota\omicron\varsigma$ and $\alpha\mu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$, used to describe the church as her Lord presents her, are words with sacrificial connotations. They are used to describe the

(1) supra p. 45-6
(2) infra p. 110



technical ceremonial purity of a victim brought for sacrifice. The same words are used in Col.1:22, and the idea is repeated in the doxological conclusion to the Epistle of Jude (v.24). Again Paul expresses the thought when in Romans he talks of himself as being

'a minister (Λειτουργόν) of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering (προσφορά) of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit'. (Rom.15:16) (1)

The Gentile converts are part of the offering which is included in the sacrifice.

Christian theologians have also taken up the theme. St. Augustine can say :- 'truly it follows that all the whole and holy society of the redeemed and sanctified city, be offered unto God by that great Priest who gave up his life for us to become members of so great a head in so mean a form: this form he offered, and herein was he offered, in this is he our Priest or Mediator and our sacrifice, all in this'. (2) Milligan stresses the point by saying :- 'As, too, Christ retains His humanity for ever, so His people are for ever in Him. As they were identified with Him in the earlier they are also identified with Him in the later steps of His offering. In no part of His work does the Redeemer stand alone ... Even in heaven He presents Himself to the Father saying, "Behold, I, and the children which God hath given Me". "In the midst of the congregation will I sing Thy praise". (Heb.2:12-13) When all this is done our Lord's offering is complete'. (3) This solidarity of our Lord and his people in

(1) infra p. 74

(2) AUGUSTINE De Civitate Dei X.6 Quoted ELLSFORD, C., "The Royal Priesthood of the Faithful" p.98.

(3) MILLIGAN, W., op.cit p.140

his offering is inherent in the solidarity of the priest, people, and sacrifice in the Old Testament ritual. Describing this ritual and the action of the priest Milligan says :- 'he had to lay his people upon God's altar that they might thenceforward be a holy nation in union with Him who claimed them for Himself. And all this was a part of the offering'.(1) The High Priest who ascended as the head of the new humanity could not offer less than the priest of the old order. Indeed, the identification and solidarity are even closer. The union of Christ's people with him in his sacrifice is not confined to the offering in its present eternal form (i.e. in heaven) but at every stage of our Lord's sacrifice we are united with him as he draws us into his experience. The whole Christian experience follows the katabasis and anabasis of Christ, his descent and his ascent. (2)

- a) He unites us with himself in his incarnation. He draws near and assumes our mortal humanity. He 'emptied himself taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men'. (Phil. 2:7) Henceforth he is the head of the new humanity.
- b) He identifies himself with us in crucifixion 'in prolepsis' at Jordan and henceforth those who are baptized in him are buried with him in baptism, being raised with him 'through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead'.(Col.2:12)
- c) He calls men to follow him to the cross.
'If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me' (Mk. 8:34) . When Christ

(1) ibid., p.122.

(2) cf. TORRANCE, T.F. op.cit., pp.38-9.

calls a man he bids him come and die ... at his call'.(1) An earlier soldier of the cross could say 'I am crucified with Christ' (Gal.2:20).

d) and e) Buried with him in his death we are raised with him, 'For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his' (Rom.6:5). Raised with him he has made us 'sit with him in the heavenly places' (Eph.2:6) since, with the offering he makes we are 'accepted in the beloved' (Eph.1:6 -A.V.)

Soar we now where Christ hath led,
Following our exalted Head:
Made like Him, like Him we rise;
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies:
Hallelujah! ' (2)

f) As he completes his sacrifice in giving himself in the Eucharist, so it is as the Church gives herself to be broken for the world that she becomes most truly the Church of the suffering servant, and his followers, filled with the Spirit exhibit in the world 'the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace...'(Gal.5:22)

We can conclude this section in no better way than by quoting H.J.Wotherspoon on the union of Christians with their Lord :- 'The gospel cannot be divided. We cannot be in Christ in some respects and for certain purposes and out of Him in other relations and for other ends. If we are in Him to be justified and accepted of God we are also in Him for His holiness, and in Him for our part in His activity. Our unity with Him is not in figure, true in some aspects but failing if pushed to its logical conclusions. It is true all along the line... For it is a substantive actuality, as real as the bond of kindred or the tie of marriage, or the coherence of the flesh with the spirit that wears it; and, like each of these bonds, is rooted in the physical as well as the spiritual, in the flesh of the Son of Man as well as in the communication of His Spirit'.(3)

(1) BONHOEFFER, D., "The Cost of Discipleship" p.79.

(2) WESLEY, Charles, Methodist Hymn Book No 204.

(3) WOTHERSPOON, H.J., op.cit. p.94-5.

(ii) Secondly, the offering of ourselves which we make is only made in and with our Lord's sacrifice. Not only does he unite us with himself in his sacrifice, but we join ourselves with him in it. We are not passive in being united but active in participating. The scriptures bear this out :-

'I appeal to you, therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship'. (Rom.12:1) (1)

'For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too'. (II Cor.1:5).

'And you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead'. (Col.2:12).

'But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed'. (I Peter 4:13)

St. Paul can further describe the faith of the Philippians as a sacrificial offering upon which he is to be 'poured out as a libation' (Phil.2:17) (2), whilst St. Peter exhorts his readers to :-

'be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ'. (I Peter 2:5). (3)

These spiritual sacrifices are to be offered and to be 'acceptable to God through Jesus Christ'. Clearly too, as our Lord made the perfect offering of his obedience so we are to follow his example. Calvin, commenting on Heb 5:8 ('he learned obedience through what he suffered') says, 'it is an illustrious proof of perfect obedience when we choose the death to which God may call us, though we dread it, rather than the life which we naturally desire ... If then we desire that Christ's obedience should be profitable to us, we must imitate him'. (4) Torrance, expounding the use of $\theta\upsilon\sigma\alpha$ in the New Testament, brings out this participation by declaring 'That sacrificial act of Christ once and for all performed and enduring in His endless life in the presence of God, is realised in the life of His people, not by repetition of His

(1) infra p. 103

(2) infra p. 74

(3) infra p.101-2

(4) CALVIN - "Commentaries on the Epistle to the Hebrews"
p.124-5

substitutionary sacrifice, but by their dying and rising with Christ in faith and life, and by the worship of self-presentation to God (Rom.12:1; I Pet.2:5)' (1). The offering which Christ makes in heaven must include not only the offering which he makes of those who are in him but the offering which they make :- 'His life in heaven must therefore embrace in it that idea of a continuous offering in which alone the members of His body can offer themselves continually, and experience all the blessings of an accepted sacrifice'. (2). Whatever Christians offer to God the Father is linked with and finds its meaning and significance in the sacrifice of our Lord. In the Apocalypse the seer envisages the prayers of the saints as sacrifices to God :-

'And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne'. (Rev.8:3).

Similarly the angel who appeared to Cornelius declared, 'Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God'. (Acts 10:31). So every act of self-dedication derives from and is channelled into the great offering. 'And all sacrifice at our hand is His extension into us of that mind which is in Him as so He stands before the Father. It is Christ in us, effecting in our will and act also His own self-surrender'. (3).

- (iii) Then, thirdly, Christians are 'in Christ' through their suffering, persecution and death. Christ is in them as they share his sufferings. If suffering is the experience through and in which they participate in the experience of the sacrifice of Christ it is not all. They are constantly reminded that those who suffer with him will also reign with him, and this, as we have seen is part of his sacrifice. One of the most striking examples of the union between Christ and his Church in persecution was when Saul had his Damascus road experience. The voice said to him :-

(1) TORRANCE, T.F., op.cit. p.17
(2) MILLIGAN, W., op.cit. p.161
(3) WOTHERSPOON, H.J. op.cit. p.93

"Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"
and he said "Who are you, Lord?" And
he said "I am Jesus whom you are
persecuting". (Acts 9:4).

He is truly and literally in the sufferings and
persecutions of his Church. Then, later, St. Paul
can say to the Colossians :-

Ἐὼν χάριτος ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, καὶ
ἀντιπαλαῖσά τέ ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ
Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος
αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκκλησία,

'Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your
sake, and in my flesh I complete what is
lacking in Christ's afflictions for the
sake of His body, that is, the church'.
(Col. 1:24)

A.S. Peake outlines five different interpretations
given by various scholars and favours the following :-

'The sufferings are the sufferings of Christ, not,
however, those which He endured on earth, but those
which He endures in Paul through their mystical union.
The defect is not in the sufferings of the Church, but
in Christ's sufferings in Paul'. (1) Paul is in
Christ and Christ is in Paul and hence they are
united in the suffering which Paul endures in his
flesh. He sees this as in some way a participation
in Christ's sufferings - i.e. in his sacrifice of
which his sufferings are a part. Commenting on
this verse, Moule says it is a 'more mystical conception
of sharing Christ's Cross', and goes on to quote
A.R. George who in his admirable book "Communion with
God" (p.184) says :- "Paul does not mean merely that
the Christian experiences the sufferings of Christ
after Him in thought, imagination, or sympathy, nor
merely that his own actual sufferings are endured
with Christ or for the sake of Christ (though all
these ideas are present), but that his own actual
sufferings are a real participation in Christ's
sufferings, suffered by virtue of his communion with
Christ". (2). So also in II Cor.4:9-10 St. Paul
writes :-

'We are ... persecuted, but not forsaken;
struck down but not destroyed; always
carrying in the body the death of Jesus
so that the life of Jesus may also be
manifested in our mortal flesh'.

(1) A.S. PEAKE, "E.G.T." Vol. III p.514-5

(2) MOULE, C.F.D. "The Sacrifice of Christ" p.35 (the
emphasis is Moule's)

In the persecution which they suffer they carry the death of Jesus and his (resurrected) life.

As might be expected of an exhortation to persecuted Christians the Apocalypse has this theme clearly in mind. The people around the throne of God are those 'who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb'. (Rev.7:14). James Moffatt comments on such a martyrdom :- 'And this is possible, not to man's unaided effort, but to the sacrificial power of Christ, the experience of which forms the last line of defence in the struggle. The confessors and martyrs owed their moral purity to what they obtained through the sacrifice of Jesus ... in their martyrdom these saints were able to make the redeeming power of Jesus peculiarly their own; the nature of their cruel sufferings identified them especially with their Lord. It is noticeable that the mystic union of the individual Christian with Christ mainly comes forward in the Apocalypse when the martyrs and confessors are mentioned ... it is to the blood of the lamb, not to their own blood, that they owe their bliss and triumph'. (1) The writer of the Apocalypse again strikes this note in 1:5 and 2:13. In the first of these there is the phrase 'Jesus Christ the faithful witness' Ἰησοῦς Χριστοῦ ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός whilst the second speaks of 'Antipas, my witness, my faithful one'. Ἀντίπαρος ὁ μάρτυς σου ὁ πιστός. The word for witness is μάρτυς which also means 'martyr'. Thus Antipas is identified with his Lord in suffering and faithfulness. (2)

The early Church, entering into this experience of her Lord could see this truth clearly. E. Schweitzer has noted this and repeatedly emphasises it as when he says 'no one in the New Testament knows as clearly as Paul that the Church shares in Jesus Christ precisely as it allows itself to be drawn, in the enduring of persecution, not into material greatness, but into submersion and death - for the world (Rom 8:36; I Cor.15:30f; II Cor.4:8-12; II Cor. 1:4-7; Phil.1:12-14; I Thess.2:14)' (3) and 'It

(1) MOFFATT, J. "E.C.T." Vol. 5, p.399-400.

(2) cf. Jn.12:25-6; I Peter 2:21-3; II Tim.2:11-12.

(3) SCHWEIZER, E, "Church Order in the New Testament" p.96-7

is in suffering that the Church is most intensively the Church and gives its testimony most unequivocally. To it everyone is called. When Jesus calls his disciples to follow him, he has them share his own way into lowliness'.(1) In further elaboration of this central New Testament theme we quote Milligan :- 'Christ's people must offer themselves in Him with a real and personal appropriation of such a sacrifice as He made, of such labours and sufferings as He endured, of such a death as that through which He passed'.(2) So the people of Christ are in him as he unites them with himself in his sacrifice, as they offer themselves (in self-surrender, prayer, service and obedience) in him, and as they are united in the bond of suffering which is the central act of the sacrifice.

2. Union With Christ in His Priesthood

When we dealt with the Priesthood of Christ in chapter 2 we showed how his sacrifice was constitutive of his Priesthood.(3) As it was with the Head, so it is with the body. But it is his sacrifice, and theirs only as it is in his, which constitutes their priesthood. United with him in his sacrifice they are united with him in his priesthood. Since he has opened up the way to God the Father Christians have 'confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus' (Heb.10:19). Eastwood(4) also shows how firmly the writer of the Apocalypse grounds Christian priesthood in the sacrifice of our Lord:- In Rev. 1:5-6 he says:-

Ἰησοῦ Ἐπιστοῦ, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός, ὁ πρωτότοκος τῶν νεκρῶν καὶ ὁ ἄρχων τῶν βασιλείων τῆς γῆς. Τῷ ἀγαπῶντι ἡμᾶς καὶ λύσαντι ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ αὐτοῦ, αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων. ἀμήν.

('Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen'.)

(1) ibid. p.191 (also pp. 21, 32, 42, 55, 60, 69, 111, 114 etc.)
(2) MILLIGAN, W. op.cit. p.267 (c.f. TORRANCE, T.F. op.cit. p.86)
(3) supra pp. 41 ff. (4) EASTWOOD, C., op.cit. p.47-8

There are three possible allusions to the sacrifice of Jesus. *μάρτυς* (as we have seen) can mean not only witness but martyr (1), - one who makes the great sacrifice. Then comes the phrase 'the first born of the dead' referring to the resurrection of Jesus, which as we have seen is part of his sacrifice. In the third place the sacrificial idea is in 'freed us from our sins by his blood'. In the same breath, and parallel in his thought he asserts that Christ has made us 'a kingdom, priests to his God and Father'. The same succession of ideas comes again in Rev.5:9-10 where the twenty-four elders sing a 'new song' :-

"Ἅγιος εἶ λαβεῖν τό βιβλίον καί ἀνοῦξαι
τάς σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ, ὅτι ἐσθλήνη καί ἡγόρῃσας
τῷ θεῷ ἐν τῷ αἵματι σου ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς
καί γένεσσος καί λαοῦ καί ἔθνους, καί
ἐποίησας αὐτούς τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλεύσιν καί
θεραῖς, καί βασίλευσουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

'Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open
its seals,
for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst
ransom man for God
from every tribe and tongue and people and
nation,
and hast made them a kingdom and priests to
our God,
and they shall reign on earth'.

The Apocalypse describes the exalted Christ speaking to John and he promises to him who conquers 'I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my father on his throne'. (Rev.3:21). Conquering is suffering unto death (at least in this context), and the outcome will be a triumphant sharing in the priestly life of the exalted Christ.

The Pauline reference in Ephesians 2:6 to being 'raised up with him' and sitting 'with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus' is in the same strain. 'To modern readers it may seem that here priests are confused with kings, but it must be remembered ... that in the Eastern mind they often went together, and that the Holy of Holies was sometimes called "the place of (God's) throne (e.g. Ez.43:7)'. (2) Bearing in mind our outline of the sacrifice of Christ and our contention that this was constitutive of his Priesthood (3) we can further interpret the following verses as meaning that through dying with him in sacrifice we shall share in

(1) supra. p. 58
(2) SWITH, C.R. op.cit p. 236
(3) supra p. 41ff

his priestly ministry through this :-

'If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
If we endure we shall also reign with him;' (II Tim.2:11-12)

'If then you have been raised with Christ seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory' (Co.3:1-4)

'always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh' (II Cor. 4:10-11).

Origen also pointed out the significance of our Lord's sacrifice for the priesthood of Christians when he said 'And at the same time we rejoice that as the high priest Jesus the Christ has offered the sacrifice of himself, the priests of whom he is high priest offer the sacrifice of themselves ... and therefore appear by the altar in their proper place' (1). But there is a distinction between his Priesthood and ours :- 'He is Priest by nature; we are priests by faith-union with His sacrifice. His priesthood consists in His offering His life for the sins of the world, ours in sharing the inestimable benefits of His offering'. (2)

Not only are Christians priests because they derive their priesthood from Christ's sacrifice, but also because they are one with him in his Priesthood. In expounding what he has chosen to call the 'societary' nature of the atonement C.R. Smith has shown how the High Priest carried with him (so to speak) the people whom he represented. 'On his first entry into the Holy of Holies he stood for all the priesthood, on his second for all Israel. When he entered with the blood of the goat, it was as if all Israel entered ... The High Priest acts instead of all Israel, for he and it are one ... he was far more than a "representative" of others in the modern sense of the term; he was Israel. When ... Jesus entered into the true Holy of Holies in

(1) EASTWOOD, C., op.cit. p. 78-9 (quoted)
(2) ibid p.46

'heaven', it was as if a new Israel entered'. (1)
Christians are priests having access to God by virtue of their solidarity with him who became one of them. 'For the high priest entered the holy of holies not in his own name only, but also in that of the people inasmuch as he bare in a manner the twelve tribes on his breast and on his shoulders; for as a memorial for them twelve stones were wrought on the breast plate, and on the two onyx stones on his shoulders were engraved their names, so that in the person of one man all entered into the sanctuary together. Rightly then does the Apostle speak when he reminds them that our high priest has entered into heaven; for he has not entered only for himself, but also for us. There is therefore no reason to fear that access to heaven will be closed up against our faith, as it is never disjoined from Christ. And as it becomes us to follow Christ who is gone before he is therefore called our Forerunner, or precursor'. (2)
It must further be remembered that this solidarity exists because of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and not through any virtue of ours. It results from his gracious condescension and accommodation not our striving for God. And so 'we must dare to believe that our Lord does more than obtain for us some third place in relation to the Father, that it is his own place of which he makes us sharers' (3). We are priests because he is our High Priest, and because as he enters into the presence of the Father we enter in his and by virtue of his entering. Torrence gives some interesting detail about this concept of the solidarity of the High Priest with those who are the sons of his house (4) and we shall have occasion to return to this subject later for it has bearing on our later examination of the priesthood of Christians as seen in the Christian sacraments. Here however, it is sufficient to say that 'in the Old Testament rite of consecration the High Priest alone was anointed as the ἱερωτόν (Lev.4:3f; 6:12f) though the sons of his house were sprinkled with his anointing oil. They were consecrated in and through his self-consecration and were given participation in it, in offering together with

(1) SMITH, C.R. op.cit. pp.74, 227.
(2) CALVIN, J., op.cit. p. 154
(3) WOTHERSPOON, H.J., op.cit. p.94
(4) op.cit p.79-80

him portions of the sacrifice and the bread of consecration, and in sharing with him the meal of consecration. The conception finds a place in our Lord's high - priestly prayer Similarly in the Epistle to the Hebrews the high - priestly consecration of Christ in his self - oblation consecrates all who come to God by him. Christ has once and for all consecrated us as priests, so that we may draw near to God ...' (1).

We now come to the central concept in any doctrine of the priesthood of Christians. This is that Christians are priests because they have access to God the Father. Priesthood involves access to God so that some offering may be presented. In the Old Testament sacrificial system we saw that the priest's duty was to take the blood of the slain animal to the nearer presence of God on behalf of the worshipper who was forbidden to enter the Holy Place. The priest alone has access to the inaccessible presence of God and there he offered the blood and burnt the flesh of the victim. This privilege of access to God came to a burning focus on the Day of Atonement when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies. The teaching of the New Testament is that all who believe in Jesus Christ and are united with him in the way described above have access to God the Father by virtue of the entrance which his sacrifice secures. All enter the presence of God in him who is their High Priest. This is the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews :-

1. 'Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession ... Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need'. (4:14-16)
2. 'We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek'. (6:19-20)
3. 'a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God'. (7:19)
4. 'Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them'. (7:25)

(1) ibid. p.80.

5. 'Therefore brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is through his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water'. (10:19-22)

Speaking of this group of passages Milligan says 'That they may in like manner draw nigh is the "better hope" of Christians and the most essential characteristic of their privileges. Realising it their ideal state is reached. Then most impressed with the Majesty of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting, they can approach Him in the spirit of adoption crying, Abba, Father. There is no veil, there is no separation of apartments in the heavenly tabernacle; and raised to an even higher dignity than Israel's greatest functionary, who could enter into the Most Holy Place only once a year, the humblest follower of Christ may dwell there, beholding the glory of God, and resting beneath the shadow of His wings'. (1) On the last of the passages quoted above (Hob.10:19-22) Calvin says 'the blood of Christ, which is subject to no corruption, but flows as a pure stream, is sufficient for us even to the end of the world ... but Christ who arose from the dead to bestow life on us, communicates his own life to us. It is a perpetual consecration of the way, because the blood of Christ is always in a manner distilling before the presence of the Father in order to irrigate heaven and earth ... As the veil covered the recesses of the sanctuary yet afforded an entrance there, so the divinity, though hid in the flesh of Christ, yet leads us even into heaven; nor can anyone find God except he to whom the man Christ becomes the door and the way'. (2)

This doctrine is found also in the Apocalypse. In the first chapter the risen Christ speaks to the seer and he is described as 'clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast' (Rev.1:13). This long robe reached to the feet and was 'an oriental mark of dignity denoting high rank such as that of

(1) MILLIGAN, F. op.cit. p.111-112.

(2) CALVIN, J. op.cit. p.235.

Parthian kings or the Jewish high priest who wore a purple one. High girding (with a belt) was another mark of lofty position, usually reserved for Jewish priests, though the Iranians frequently appealed to their deities as "high-girt"... The golden buckle was part of the insignia of royalty ... The author thus mixes royal and sacerdotal colours on his palette to heighten the majesty of Christ's appearance'. (1) Similarly all his people in him are also priests. They have been made 'a kingdom, priests to his God and Father' (Rev.1:6) and Milligan adds, 'and the white robes which they wear throughout the book are the robes of priests. The idea of priestly function cannot be separated from the Christian Church. All the Lord's people are priests'. (2)

The idea is present also in St. Paul when in Ephesians 2:18 addressing the Gentile Christians and referring to our Lord he says :-

ὅτι οἱ αὐτοῦ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν οἱ ἀμφοτέρωθεν
ἐν ἑνὶ Πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα.
'for through him we both have access in one Spirit
to the Father'

In the first Epistle of John there is a further allusion to this in chapter 2

καὶ ὑμεῖς χρῖσμα ἔχετε ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἁγίου, ...
καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ χρῖσμα ὃ ἐλάβετε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ μένει ἐν
ὑμῖν, καὶ οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχετε ἵνα τις διδάσκη ὑμᾶς. ἀλλ'
ὡς τὸ αὐτοῦ χρῖσμα διδάσκει ὑμᾶς περὶ πάντων,

'But you have been anointed by the Holy One ...
but the anointing which you received from him
abides in you, and you have no need that anyone
should teach you; as his anointing teaches you
about everything ...' (vv 20,27).

F. Schweizer describes this as 'the most radical statement ... Here is no longer any kind of special ministry, but only the direct union with God through the Spirit who comes to every individual'. (3)

From these passages and comments we can now sum up the position arrived at. Jesus Christ by his sacrifice understood in its full

(1) MOWATT, J., op.cit. p.344.

(2) ibid. p.246.

(3) SCHWEIZER, F., op.cit. p.127.

significance has become our great High Priest, and by that sacrifice has opened the way to God the Father. Christians are involved in this whole act for they are one with Christ in the sacrifice which he makes, the sacrifice which they make in him, and by the suffering, persecution, and martyrdom which they suffer for and in him. Solidarily one with him in the sacrifice which is his and theirs, they are solidarily one with him in the priesthood which that sacrifice institutes. They derive their priesthood from his sacrifice, since that sacrifice involves an ever-living offering to God the Father exhibited in our Lord's resurrection and exaltation. One with him in the sacrifice which is both theirs and his they have access to God and 'now relying on Christ the Mediator we enter by faith into heaven, for there is no longer any veil intervening, but God appears to us openly, and lovingly invites us to a familiar access'. (1) We therefore close this section by quoting the fitting words of Hanson :- 'We conserve the uniqueness of the high-priesthood of Christ, not by shutting it away in splendid isolation, but by declaring and demonstrating its power to create and comprehend in itself a true priesthood of believers, whose priestly service is taken up into and made part of his supreme sacrifice'. (2)

II. ECCLESIOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The description given above of the doctrine of the priesthood of believers has taken a somewhat different line from that taken by most writers on the theme. This is usually dealt with by first developing a doctrine of the Church and then deriving a doctrine of Christian priesthood from that. The result of this is the doctrine becomes a derivative from instead of a constituent of an ecclesiology. It is now necessary to look at the doctrine

(1) CALVIN, J., op.cit. p.175.

(2) HANSON, T.W., "Ministry and Priesthood : Christ's and Ours" p.63.

from this ecclesiological point of view. From this it will be seen that the doctrine as outlined above is more firmly grounded in a sacrificial soteriology, and is less an incidental consequence of an ecclesiology than the two approaches outlined below.

In a penetrating chapter of his book "Church Order in the New Testament" E. Schweizer has drawn attention to a twofold view of the Church which is to be found in the New Testament writers. (1) On the one hand there is the view which could well be symbolised by a horizontal line. This is the line of historical continuity and the writers who look at things in this way see the Church and salvation-history in terms of continuity, progress, and consummation in time. On the other hand those who see things from the other viewpoint emphasize the discontinuity or newness of the Church and tend to think in a way which would be better expressed by a vertical line. So the first group (particularly represented in Luke and the Pastorals) emphasize the parousia as a future event, and see the Church as a continuation of Israel, the People of God; whilst the second (typically represented by John) alone take account of the eternal heavenly existence of Jesus before he took human form. On this view 'the Church's newness is emphasized. It is the company belonging to the risen Lord, in its faith and life necessarily taken out of time and history; by its oneness with its heavenly Lord it already shares in the world of eternity, and thereby it is a witness in the world like a light in darkness. Thus the testimony of this fundamental newness, of this otherness over against the world here becomes especially prominent'. (2) In his ecclesiological teaching St. Paul does not fall clearly into either of the two

(1) p.163ff
(2) ibid. p.166-7.

categories since in his comprehensiveness he states both viewpoints. The value of such a classification for our purposes is that it shows us the two trends in ecclesiological thinking which give rise to the doctrines of the priesthood of believers mentioned above. The first, or 'horizontal' line leads to the view which sees the Church as the New Israel, taking over from the old Israel. Hence the Church becomes 'a kingdom of priests' (Ex.19:6).. This line is followed by Eastwood in the opening two chapters of his work 'The Royal Priesthood of the Faithful' (1). The second, or 'vertical' line is followed by Torrance in 'Royal Priesthood' and leads to a doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ. Those who are members of that body share in a corporate ministry or diakonia derived from the head. In other words, since the head is a priest, the body has a priesthood, but it is subordinate to that of the head.

1. The Priesthood of the New Israel

The concept of the Church as the New Israel lies deep in Biblical thought. R.N. Flew has shown that the religion of Israel already held the roots of the idea of the ecclesia. For one thing 'Yahweh, the God of Israel is a redeeming God, whose activity is manifested on the plane of history. Second, there is the conception of Israel as the People of God ... third, the idea that Israel will be saved through the remnant. Fourth, an attempt is made to form this Remnant by the calling and instruction of disciples Fifth, the conception of the universal mission of Israel especially as expressed through the figure of the Servant of Yahweh in the oracles of Deutero-Isaiah. Last in point of time comes

(1) p.1-55.

the apocalyptic vision of the saints of the Most High ... symbolised by the figure of "one like unto a son of man"'. (1). The early Christians were sure that they were the New Israel, the true Israel. The teaching and the actions of Jesus showed that he intended his disciples to think in this way. He is the redeeming activity of God on the plane of history; they are the people of God who belong to God; he gathers a small band of disciples to be the saving Remnant; he commissions them to fulfil a universal mission, prefigured in the mission of the seventy and the mission of the twelve; he calls himself the Son of Man and they are obviously the saints of the Most High sent out to conquer the world. Furthermore the New Testament writers continually use phrases which were applied to the old Israel. So the Church is the 'Israel of God' (Gal.6:16); they are 'a kingdom, priests to his God and Father' (Rev.1:6); the passage in Ephesians 2:4-10 tells of Ezekiel's vision of the New Israel risen from the dead; they are the 'bride of Christ' (Rev.21:9) as Israel had been the wife of Yahweh in the thought of Hosea (2). One of the fullest and most obvious allusions to this 'New Israel' ecclesiology is in I Peter 2:9-10 :-

ὅμοις ἐστέ γένος ἐκλεκτῶν, βασιλείου ἱεράτευμα,
ἔθνος ἁγίον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν, ὅπως
τῶ ἁγίῳ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ ἐν σκοτίῳ ὑμῶν
καλέσαντος εἰς τὸ θαυμαστὸν αὐτοῦ χάριτος. οἱ
ποτε οὐ λαός, νῦν δὲ λαὸς θεοῦ, οἱ οὖν
ἀληθεύοντες, νῦν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες.

'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy'.

Here 'the Church is represented as Israel ... because,

(1) FLEW, R.W. "Jesus and His Church" p.35ff
(2) EASTWOOD, C. (op.cit. p.32) also shows that the Church is the liberated people of the Second Isaiah (Rom.3:24) and Daniel's people of the Saints of the Most High (I Cor.1:2).

in contrast to Judaism, it has made the right decision in relation to the stone that was chosen by God and rejected by men, and so it represents the true historical development of Israel'. (1) This passage shows the ecclesiological route followed to arrive at a doctrine of the priesthood of believers: the Church is the New Israel, and hence is a royal priesthood. Moreover, as Eastwood points out (2), this designation was given as a promise to the old Israel :-

'Now therefore if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' (Ex.19:5-6)

The tense is future. To the New Israel, however, it is applied in the present tense, indicating an accomplished fact 'You are ... a royal priesthood'. The New Israel is the people of the New Covenant. They become this through God's grace, since the origin of the Church is in the purpose of God. The old Israel was the people of God through his election. The New Israel is the new people of God also by his grace. Consequently the New Israel inherits the mission given to the old Israel. By their divine election they are commissioned to be the royal priesthood and to proclaim the good news that the Messiah had come in the form of the suffering servant, Jesus Christ. They are to worship God on earth, offering spiritual sacrifices until this is consummated in the New Jerusalem around the throne of God (Rev.7:15). This ecclesiology and its subsequent doctrine of priesthood can be described as a racial ecclesiology. It must be taken into consideration in any doctrine of the priesthood of believers as it is thoroughly scriptural and represents one of the main strands of New Testament thought on the Church. The ecclesiology is worked out fully by Flew and the consequent doctrine of priesthood by Eastwood in the works referred to. It will be seen that at one important point it coincides with the scheme we have set out in section I, above. Our Lord, as the High Priest of the New Israel bears the people with him as he enters

(1) SCHWEIZER, E., op.cit. p.110
(2) op.cit. p.25

the Holy of Holies which is the presence of God the Father.

Before moving on to the second ecclesiological thought, that of the Body of Christ, we must look a little closer at the New Testament references to the priesthood of believers. The most striking thing about this New Testament usage is that nowhere is any individual Christian referred to as a priest. The word ἱερεύς, the regular LXX translation of the Hebrew קֹהֵן does not appear as a designation for a minister in the New Testament. This can only mean that the Apostolic writers avoided using the word for the office of a Christian minister. It also means that this priesthood is corporate rather than individual, and, in biblical thought this is understood as corporate as against the sum total of individuals. All the references are to priesthood as a body, or to priests in the plural :-

- (i) ἱερόταγμα ἁγίων (a holy priesthood) (I Pet.2:5)
- (ii) βασιλείου ἱερόταγμα (a royal priesthood) (I Pet.2:9)

In this whole passage, as we have seen above (1) the thought is of the Church as a community, the New Israel. The second verse is a series of phrases, each one describing what the old Israel was to have been and what the New Israel is. The phrase λαός εἰς περιποίησιν (a peculiar people) especially deserves notice in this context. λαός is used in the LXX to translate 'a people blended together in a commonwealth' (2), and of the usage here Cremer explains 'How fully the thought of unity and affinity, or compactness under one head, penetrates the word, is manifest from I Pet. 2:10' (3). Nothing could bring out more clearly the corporate nature of the βασιλείου ἱερόταγμα than this parallel description. Similarly there is :-

- (iii) βασιλείαν, ἱερεῖς τῷ Θεῷ. (a kingdom, priests to ... God) (Rev.1:6)
- (iv) τῷ Θεῷ ἡμῶν βασιλείαν καὶ ἱερεῖς (a kingdom and priests to our God) (Rev.5:10)
- (v) ἱερεῖς τοῦ Θεοῦ ... (priests of God) (Rev.20:6)

This New Testament usage denoting the corporate nature of the priesthood of believers must be regarded as primary in any formulation of a theology of priest-

(1) supra p. 69
(2) CREMER, H. op.cit. p. 760
(3) ibid. p.761

hood in the New Testament. Nevertheless, such a corporate priesthood can never be the whole story. Some individual has to accept personal responsibility on behalf of the whole body and to be its representative and spokesman. And herein lies a danger. It is the danger that if the corporate priestly nature only of the Church is stressed, the tendency will be, and indeed has been and still is, for the majority of members of the corporate priesthood to allow the one who is their representative to act, not merely representatively but vicariously. So Meberly can assert 'the notion has been widespread that a priest, as compared with a layman, had in his own personal life a more intimate relation with God, a deeper intensity of spiritual privilege, a higher standard and necessity of holiness. In proportion as it became a familiar conception that the priest was altogether on a different level of holiness, the idea of priesthood as representative of all in the corporate service of God, acquired (not unnaturally) a further and very perilous development, - small at first in appearance but ultimately revolutionizing the whole idea; and the priesthood was conceived of as working with God vicariously on behalf of all. That the priest was holy, while the layman was not; that the priest performed God's service in the layman's stead; that the priest propitiated God on the layman's behalf; that, when the layman's time came, the priest could come in and make right his relation with God - here was indeed a distorted development ...' (1). In other words there is the danger that most of the priesthood will be so only by proxy, that they will be quite content to pay someone else to do it for them.

Inherent therefore in the conception of the priesthood of believers there is the note of individual and personal responsibility of all. In our concern to emphasize the corporate nature of this New Testament concept of priesthood as over against a false individualism we must not be trapped into thinking that no individual Christian can be thought of as having a priesthood. When we discuss the views of Luther we

(1) WEBERLY, R.C. "Ministerial Priesthood", p.93.

shall again have occasion to emphasize the necessity for an individual priesthood (1) but here it will be useful to examine the New Testament evidence for such an individual priesthood, and there are indeed traces of this individual reference in the New Testament, these being revealed in the usage of the word λειτουργέω and its derivatives λειτουργός and λειτουργία . In classical Greek this was used to signify the carrying out of state or public affairs by an individual citizen. The λειτουργίαι were 'certain regular services of State (especially in Athens) resting upon every Phyle in turn, to which every citizen possessing three or more talents was bound, duties which might be undertaken voluntarily by others (Passow), but were always performed at their own cost' (2). So, rather than meaning 'the work ἔργον of the λαός ' as Torrance claims (3), they were in fact the work of an individual for, or on behalf of, the λαός . In the LXX this group of words is used specifically for the services of the priests and Levites in the sanctuary and 'there seems to have been in profane Greek no term more appropriate than this to designate the cultus and the ministers thereof in the organism of Israel, since it bore the impress of service rendered for the common weal' (4). It is reserved for the service of the priests, and is never used of the worship of the whole congregation which is denoted by λατρεία . In the New Testament it is used no more than 15 times, of which three refer to the Old Testament cultus, two to angels, twice of our Lord and once of the civil authorities. Of the remaining seven instances three refer to the material help given by Christians for others (two are of the collection for the Jerusalem poor, and the other the help given by the Philippians to St. Paul), one refers to the corporate worship and is connected with fasting. The remaining three uses are related to the missionary witness of the Apostolic Church, and each of these three reveals the work of individual Christians fulfilling their responsibility 'to declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light' which is the task assigned to the royal priest-

(1) infra p.93
(2) CREMER, H., op.cit p.761-2
(3) TORRANCE, T.F., op.cit. p.15.
(4) CREMER, H., ibid. p.762.

hood in I Pet.2:9. We will look at each one in turn.

(i) (Rom.15:16)

εἰς τὸ εἶναί με λειτουργὸν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ
εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, λειτουργοῦντα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ
Θεοῦ, ἵνα γένηται ἡ προσφορά τῶν ἐθνῶν
εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἁγιασμένη ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ.
(that I might be a λειτουργὸς of Christ Jesus
to the Gentiles, the priestly service of the
gospel of God, so that the offering of the
Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by
the Holy Spirit).

Here St. Paul designates himself with the sacrificial connotation of a λειτουργὸν which can only be translated 'minister'. Clearly the apostle sees his missionary witness for the gospel in unmistakably priestly and sacrificial terms. His work is an offering or sacrifice to God, and it is the offering of an individual λειτουργὸν.

(ii) (Phil.2:17)

Ἀλλὰ εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ
λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν, χαίρω
καὶ συχαίρω πᾶσιν ὑμῖν.

(And if I am to be poured out as a libation
on the sacrifice and offering of your faith,
I am glad and rejoice with you all).

Here St. Paul thinks of the faith of the Philippians as a sacrificial offering upon which he personally will be poured out as a libation. They are the fruit of his witness, and his offering to God, since 'he regards their faith ... on the one hand as a θυσία an offering presented to God (cf Rom.12:1), and, on the other, as a λειτουργία, a sacred service, the presenting of that offering' (1). Again we have an individual reference in the thought of a priestly offering, and again it is the missionary witness, or fruit of it that is so conceived.

(iii) (Phil.2:25)

Ἐραφρόδιτον... ὑμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον καὶ
λειτουργὸν τῆς χρείας μου, ..

(Eraphreditus ... your messenger and minister
to my need).

'Evidently the technical, ritual use of this word and its cognates which prevailed in the post-classical age and is found in LXX ... and Egyptian Papyri ... suggests the idea of their gift as being a sacrifice, an oblation to God. In ch 4:18 he calls it expressly a θυσία' (2).

(1) KENNEDY, H.A.A., "Expositor's Greek Testament" Vol. 3 p.443.
(2) KENNEDY, H.A.A., op.cit. p.466.

Although nearly all commentators see in ἀπόστολον no more than a general usage, indicating "delegate" rather than "apostle", the whole verse almost puts Epaphroditus on a level with St. Paul himself. It is therefore not stretching the sense too far when we note the missionary associations of the word ἀπόστολον used here with λειτουργόν . If this is a legitimate interpretation then we have an echo of the usage in Rom. 15:16, and again we note the use of the word with priestly connotations to designate an individual Christian, whatever his precise status was in the ministry (1).

Taken together these three usages show that St. Paul could think of an individual within the corporate priesthood witnessing to the grace of God, that he could use cultic terms to denote such individual witness, and that the priestly responsibility of witnessing devolves upon individuals. Indeed this duty of witnessing must be thought of primarily in terms of individual responsibility - not the individual as opposed to or over against, but within and as a part of the corporate priesthood. It will be remembered that our study of priesthood in the Old Testament showed one of the primary duties of the priest to be that of teaching the torah, of being the mouthpiece of God to the people. What we therefore claim is that upon every member of the royal priesthood there devolves the responsibility of being, each in his own way and according to the gift given to him, a witness. He is to declare 'the wonderful deeds of him who brought' him 'out of darkness into light'. This however is not the same as being an ordained minister of the Word and sacraments. It means that 'Individually, in their lives of Christian witness and service, whatever their secular profession or trade, they perform their λειτουργία or δούλον(α : even the work of slaves (δούλοι) can be an adornment of and an advertisement for Christian doctrine (Titus 2:10, I Tim.6:1), and the Christian worker (δούλος) does his work not for earthly praise or reward but "as unto the Lord" (Eph. 6:5-7 etc.). Such patient service in the tasks and tribulations of the workaday world is χάρις παρά Θεῷ (I Pet.2:20) (2).

(1) KENNEDY, (ibid) thinks Epaphroditus was not 'in the ministry'.
(2) RICHARDSON, A., "An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament". p.302.

This, therefore is the witness of the individual within the corporate priesthood. It may well include, on occasions actually speaking in informal conversation and discussions or it may mean the sort of witness which culminates in persecution or even martyrdom. Such witness is as truly 'declaring the wonderful deeds' as is the formal preaching of those specially called and ordained. 'The problem of evangelism in the secular world would lose much of its intractability if the "lay-folk" of the churches would take seriously the biblical teaching concerning their calling and office as laymen in the Church of God' (1). This individual priesthood therefore can be exercised within, since it is dependent upon the corporate priesthood as it is upon Christ. It is inseparable from the brotherhood because Christ is all in all. We now move on to the second ecclesiological line of thought, that of the Body of Christ.

2. The Priesthood of the Body of Christ

The concept of the Church as the body of Christ is also deeply embedded in the thought of the Church through the ages. The origin of the concept is by no means certain (2) but it is undoubtedly a dominating idea in the theology of St. Paul as Robinson has conclusively shown (3). Indeed it has exerted such a fascination on some (e.g. Robinson) that they have seen in it the key to unlock nearly all theological doors (4). We must beware of succumbing to this temptation. Manson has wisely drawn attention to an article by Professor de Zwaan in "Nederlandsch Theologisch Tijdschrift" where he has classified the other figures of the Church in five groups (5). It is not necessary for us to go into these details here, but we must always remember that the category of the body is not the only figure for the Church in the New Testament, and that the truths and emphases of one have to be balanced and set against those in the others.

(1) RICHARDSON, A., op.cit. p.302.

(2) ROBINSON, J.A.T., "The Body" p.55 lists five possible sources.

(3) ibid

(4) cf ROBINSON op.cit p.9 "Here, with the exception of the doctrine of God are represented all the main tenets of the Christian Faith - the doctrines of Man, Sin, the Incarnation and Atonement, the Church, the Sacraments, Sanctification, and Eschatology".

(4) MANSON, T.F., "The Church's Ministry" p.23 n2.

The main point of the doctrine is to demonstrate the nature of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Torrance has described this relationship as follows :- (1)

(i) To use the term 'Christ's Body' is not merely to use analogical language. It is an analogy but it is also an ontological fact. There is a union between Christ and the Church by virtue of the filling and overflowing of the divine love in the Church. The Church is grounded in the divine election which is regarded as corporate. So the 'body of Christ' denotes the participation of the Church in Jesus Christ in love.

(ii) The term also expresses the distinction between Jesus Christ and the Church, and Paul uses the analogy of marriage to bring out this distinction. So the Church as the body of Christ is not an extension of the personality of Christ, nor an extension of his incarnation, nor a re-incarnation of the risen Lord.

(iii) The relation between the Church and Christ is governed by the atonement. Torrance conceives of this in substitutionary terms and not in the sacrificial category as outlined above (2). One cannot help feeling that Torrance is weak at this point, owing to his failure to appreciate to the full the significance of sacrifice. Hence he calls baptism 'the sacrament of substitution'(3). He does however point out quite rightly that the Church must also deny itself, take up its cross and follow Christ.

(iv) The fourth aspect of this relationship is the

(1) op.cit. p.29ff.
(2) supra ch.2 passim.
(3) ibid. p.33

conformity between the body and the Head. The Church is to be conformed to him in his Baptism and to grow together with him. In this way Christ becomes formed within the Church giving it conformity with him.

From this relation to its Head the Church derives its ministry which is a participation of the Church in the whole ministry of Christ conceived as triplex munus. Hence the Church's ministry is prophetic, priestly, and kingly. It is difficult to understand just what Torrance means when on one page he says the relation of the ministry of the Church to that of Christ is 'not as the less to the greater' (1) and then on the next page that it is described in the New Testament as 'between the Head and the members of the Body, between the Lord and the servant, between the Householder and the steward, between the King and the herald: from beginning to end it is a relation of subordination and obedience' (2). Torrance, however, thinks of the priesthood of the Church in terms of the Old Testament analogy (3). There was the priesthood of the whole nation, and within that royal priesthood an institutional priesthood whose duty it was to serve the royal priesthood. 'So with the Christian Church. The real priesthood is that of the whole Body, but within that Body there takes place a membering of the corporate priesthood, for the edification of the whole Body, to serve the whole Body, in order that the whole Body as Christ's own Body may fulfil his ministry of reconciliation by proclaiming the Gospel among the nations' (4). He thinks of the ministry of the Church in terms of diakonia, following the servant-ministry of our Lord.

There is value in this approach as well. The priesthood of the Church is derived from our Lord as the Head of the Church and this is similar to the doctrine which we have set out above in section I. Indeed the sacrificial-soteriological, racial-ecclesiological and

(1) ibid. p. 36

(2) ibid. p.37

(3) TORRANCE, T.F. op.cit p. 81

(4) ibid.

somatic-ecclesiological ways of developing the doctrine are not to be supposed to be mutually exclusive of each other. They each depend on the others, and hence both Eastwood and Torrance are found using the same terminology and thought in places, whilst we have quoted freely from both in our statement. The sacrificial-soteriological depends on the union of the head and the body (though not necessarily in corporate terms alone) which it is the purpose of the third to express; it involves Christ as the High Priest leading the whole congregation of the New Israel into the innermost shrine. The racial-ecclesiological involves the people of the New Covenant, the new sacrifice and the new priesthood as constituent parts of the concept. The somatic-ecclesiological evolves the concept of ministry in terms of suffering which is an integral part of the sacrificial scheme of the first, and uses the ministry of priesthood inherent in the second. The three should therefore be seen as complementary ways of approaching the same end or as lines that cross each other, and, in places, travel some distance together. At this stage, then we can say that a full account of the priesthood of believers will include each of these ways of approach.

III MARTIN LUTHER AND JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

The doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers is generally associated with the Reformation of the sixteenth century under the influence of Martin Luther. Most of what Luther teaches comes from the heat of controversy and has to be viewed in that light. It also arises from the intensely personal (and to a certain extent individualistic) religious experience which he underwent, and bears the marks of that experience.

Luther's teaching on this subject can be gathered from his treatise 'Concerning the Ministry' (1523). He begins by following the line of thought we have set out above (1) viz., that the priesthood of Christians is derived from and grounded in the High Priesthood of our

(1) supra p. 50 ff.

Lord. Furthermore, I shall also prove this conclusion to be trustworthy: Christ is a priest therefore Christians are priests, as Psalm 22(:23) states "I will tell of thy name to my brethren". Again "God, your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows" (Ps.45:8). That we are his brethren is true only because of the new birth. Therefore we are priests, as he is Priest, sons as he is Son, kings as he is King. For he makes us to sit with him in heavenly places, as companions and co-heirs with him, in whom and with whom all things are given us. And many similar indications express our oneness with Christ - one loaf, one cup, one body, members of his body, one flesh, bone of his bone, and we are told we have all things in common with him (Rom8:32; Gal.3:28; I Cor.10:17; Eph.4:4; 5:30) (1). Luther goes on to list the functions of a priest and to show how these devolve on all Christians.

1. The Ministry of the Word

He refers to I Peter 2:9 and especially to the calling to 'declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light'. Since not only those ordained to the priesthood, but all Christians have been thus called out of darkness into light it follows that all are commanded to 'declare the wonderful deeds' of God, 'which certainly is nothing else than to preach the Word of God' (2).

This universal command to preach, Luther claims, is further given by a consideration of I Cor.11:26; I Cor.14:26, 31, and he adds, 'These passages very strongly and clearly corroborate that the ministry of the Word is the highest office in the Church, that it is unique and belongs to all who are Christians, not only by right but by command' (3).

2. To Baptize

This is the greatest office in the Church for it is the proclamation of the Word of God. Since in cases of necessity even 'ordinary women' may baptize

(1) LUTHER'S WORKS (ed.C. Bergedoff) Vol. 40 p.20
(2) ibid. p. 22
(3) ibid. p. 23

it follows that this priestly function is allowed to all and therefore all are priests. 'So when women baptize they exercise the function of priesthood legitimately, and do it not as a private act, but as part of the public ministry of the church which belongs to the priesthood' (1).

3. To Consecrate or to Administer the Sacred Bread and Wine

Our Lord said 'Do this in remembrance of me' (Lk. 22:19, I Cor.11:24) and he said this to 'all then present and to those who in the future would be at the table, to eat this bread and drink this cup. So it follows that what is given here is given to all' (2). Moreover the ministry of the Word is more highly regarded in scripture and if the greater is conferred on all, then the lesser must be as well.

4. Binding and Loosing from Sin

Luther claims that the office of the keys belongs to all Christians, since in Matt.18:15 our Lord speaks to all the disciples when he says :-

'If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you you have gained your brother'.

Then further on in v.18

'If he refuses to listen even to the Church let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector. Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven'.

'For who is this "you" to whom Christ refers when he says, "Let him be to you?" ... Indeed, he refers to each and every Christian. And in saying, "Let him be to you", he gives not only the authority, but also commands its use and exercise. For what else does the phrase, "Let him be to you as a Gentile", mean than to have nothing to do with him, to have no fellowship with him. This truly is to excommunicate, to bind, and to close the door of heaven' (3).

5. To Sacrifice

This duty is enjoined on all Christians in Rom.12:1

(1) ibid. p. 23
(2) ibid. p.24
(3) ibid p. 26-7

where Paul teaches us to present our bodies as a sacrifice, just as Christ sacrificed his body for us on the cross. In this sacrifice he includes the offering of praise and thanksgiving. Peter likewise commands in I Pet.2(:5) that we offer spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, that is, ourselves, not gold or animals' (1).

6. Intercession

In giving the Lord's Prayer Christ gave the priestly duty of intercession to all Christians since 'to pray for others is to go between and make intercession of God, which is befitting Christ only and all his brethren ... But since we are commanded to pray for all certainly all are equally commanded to function as priests' (2). 'In addition we are priests, and thus greater than mere kings, the reason being that priesthood makes us worthy to stand before God, and pray for others. For to stand before God's face is the prerogative of none except priests' (3).

7. To Judge and Pass on Doctrine

Since scripture urges us to beware of false teachers each one must 'have regard for his own salvation and be sure of Him in whom he believes and whom he follows. Each is a most full judge of all who teach him, if he himself is inwardly taught of God, as John 6:45 says' (4). Since Christ has called us all brethren we all have the same rights. 'So not only do we have the right to receive this function of judging doctrines, as well as all the other functions we have mentioned, but unless we receive it we are denying Christ as a brother' (5). Luther goes on to claim that this is a command and a necessity.

Luther's attack on the priesthood of his day was inspired by his own experience. Those means designed to ensure salvation ('Pope, priest, penance..' (6)) had

(1) ibid. p. 28-9

(2) ibid. p. 30

(3) LUTHER, M. "Reformation Writings" quoted EASTWOOD, C., "The Priesthood of all Believers" p.15.

(4) LUTHER'S WORKS op.cit. p.32

(5) ibid. p. 33

(6) EASTWOOD, C., "The Priesthood of all Believers" p.10.

failed to do so. For Luther there was no access into the presence of God the Father until he came to an experimental understanding of the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith. Luther describes it: 'My situation was that, although an impeccable monk, I stood before God as a sinner troubled in conscience, and I had no confidence that my merit would assuage him. Therefore I did not love a just and angry God, but rather hated and murmured against him. Yet I clung to the dear Paul and had a great yearning to know what he meant. Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that "the just shall live by his faith". Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before the "justice of God" had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love. This passage of Paul became to me a gate to heaven ... If you have a true faith that Christ is your Saviour, then at once you have a gracious God, for faith leads you in and opens up God's heart and will, that you should see pure grace and overflowing love. This it is to behold God in faith that you should look upon his fatherly, friendly heart, in which there is no anger or ungraciousness. He who sees God as angry does not see him rightly but looks only on a curtain, as if a dark cloud had been drawn across his face' (1). The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers in Luther arises from this basic belief in justification by faith. But here it is necessary to make an adjustment in terminology. The phrase 'justification by faith' is liable to be misunderstood. The concept it is designed to describe is better called 'justification by grace through faith' since the action of justifying is performed by God. The traditional phraseology here implies that it is a person's faith that reaches up to God, so to speak, and achieves justification. Phrases like 'faith leads you in' in the above quotation imply an effort or achievement of man which is what Luther and Paul were trying to guard against. Left as it stands the phrase 'justification by faith' almost suggests that faith is a work of man rather than the 'gift of God' (Eph.2:8). After a detailed lexical and exegetical study of the doctrine V. Taylor defines justification as 'the divine activity in which God gives effect to His redeeming work in Christ by making possible that righteous mind necessary to communion with Himself' (2), and

(1) LUTHER, M. Quoted by R.H. BAINTON "Here I Stand" p.49-50.
(2) TAYLOR, V., "Forgiveness and Reconciliation" p.66.

again 'In that focal moment when this relationship obtains, the sinner is no longer a sinner in the sight of God; righteous in mind, although not yet in achievement, he is given that standing with God which makes fellowship with Him ethically possible. Not merited by works, nor created by faith alone, this relationship is established by faith dependent upon, and vitalized by, that in which it rests, the astounding grace of God in Christ'(1). E. Brunner also expresses it well in saying 'God addresses the unrighteous as though they were righteous - not because they will be righteous one day, but because they are "right" in his sight, because he wills it so... Without any complementary human effort man receives, purely as a gift, that justification which he seeks in vain to attain for himself. The meaning of the whole doctrine of justification by faith - indeed the meaning of the whole message of the Bible - is this: that it is not man's effort by way of the Law - and the human way is always the way of the Law - but that God by the way of grace gives the true relation to God and therefore the true existence ... Faith consists in the fact that henceforth man knows that his life, his very self, is a gift from God, not a life which is straining after God' (2). Therefore the phrase quoted above 'faith leads you in' and 'My faith is sufficient for me' (3) are misleading. In fact Luther had found that a standing before God was something that God in his grace alone could grant to him. Faith, openness to God, acceptance, dependence on God alone, receptivity on his part was all that he needed. It cannot be doubted either that he did recognise this faith as a gift of God whatever impression to the contrary his language may at places convey (4). In the highly individualistic experience which he has described above Luther 'short-circuited' the prescribed means of grace (Church, priesthood, and sacraments) in his approach to God and hence he was led to an over-emphasis on faith and he was no doubt driven to such excesses in the controversy which ensued. Finding himself accepted by God (or justified) Luther asserted that since he was granted this access to God unmediated by the institutionalised religion, God was equally ready to accept and justify anyone. Hence no human priest was necessary, and since the Church of his day was represented in the priesthood Luther came to despise it, not merely as being unnecessary, but as being a hindrance. Justified by grace we stand accepted by God the Father. But only priests are granted the privilege of access to the presence of God the Father, so that all who are justified are priests. There is no

(1) *ibid* p.68-9.

(2) BRUNNER, E. "The Divine Imperative" p.76-7.

(3) Quoted EASTWOOD, C., "Priesthood of all Believers" p.10.

(4) e.g. "For faith is the work, not of man, but of God alone as Paul teaches" - quoted Eastwood, *op.cit.* p.18.

need, if this be granted, therefore for the institutionalised priesthood since 'all Christians are priests and all priests are Christians' (1).

We now have a third way by which to arrive at a doctrine of the priesthood of believers. These three roads might be described as the sacrificial, ecclesiological, and forensic. Again we note the interdependence of each on the others.

Luther's bold claims for the priesthood of each individual believer are the battle cry of a revolutionary. Not the least part of the German reformation was the outburst of anti-clericalism, for which the theological justification was 'You are a royal priesthood'. Here is a passage in which Luther states his position: 'Here we take our stands: There is no other Word of God than that which is given all Christians to proclaim. There is no other baptism than the one which any Christian can bestow. There is no other remembrance of the Lord's Supper than that which any Christian can observe and which Christ has instituted. There is no other kind of sin than that which any Christian can bind or loose. There is no other sacrifice than of the body of every Christian. No one but a Christian can pray. No one but a Christian may judge of doctrine. These make the priestly and royal office. Let therefore the papists either prove other functions of the priesthood or let them resign their own'. (2)

It is unfortunate that Luther went to such extremes. But this is not the whole of the picture and any who leave it incomplete by not noting the toning-down qualifications which Luther added do him an injustice. He foresaw the danger of disorder if his words were taken too literally and therefore added "But the community rights demand that one, or as many as the community chooses, shall be chosen or approved who, in the name of all with these rights, shall perform these functions publicly. Otherwise there might be shameful confusion among the people of God, and a kind of Babylon in the church, where everything should be done in order, as the apostle teaches (I Cor.14:40). For it is one thing to exercise a right publicly; another to use it in time of emergency. Publicly one may not exercise a right without consent of the whole body or of the church. In time of emergency each may use it as he deems best' (3). Further, claiming that the Apostle Paul commends faithful men to be entrusted with the task of teaching (in II Tim.2:2) he says 'If the office of teaching be

(1) LUTHER'S WORKS op.cit. p.19.

(2) LUTHER, op.cit. p.35.

(3) ibid. p.34.

entrusted to anyone, then everything accomplished by the Lord in the Church is entrusted, that is, the office of baptizing, consecrating, binding, loosing, praying, and judging doctrine ... This procedure is forced upon us by necessity and is commended by the common understanding of faith. For since the church owes its birth to the Lord, is nourished, aided and strengthened by it, it is obvious that it cannot be without the Lord ... A Christian, thus, is born to the ministry of the Lord in baptism, and if papal bishops are unwilling to bestow the ministry of the Lord except on such as destroy the Lord of God and ruin the church, then it remains either to let the church perish without the Lord or to let those who come together cast their ballots and elect one or as many as are needed of those who are capable. By prayer and the laying on of hands let them commend and certify these to the whole assembly, and recognise and honour them as lawful bishops and ministers of the Lord, believing beyond a shadow of doubt that this is done and accomplished by God. For in this way the common agreement of the faithful, those who believe and confess the gospel, is realized and expressed' (1). From this it can be clearly seen that Luther's position is both ambiguous and unscriptural. It is ambiguous because he says 'A Christian, thus, is born to the ministry of the Lord in baptism' and then 'the community rights demand that one ... shall perform these functions publicly'. In the New Testament there is nowhere any indication that any and every Christian could, by virtue of his baptism, perform the ministry of the Lord and sacraments. Nor is there any indication that all he needed in addition to his baptism was a majority vote of Christians. The weakness of Luther's position is not that he makes all Christians priests (2) but that he makes all ministers no more than priests (i.e. in the sense that all Christians are priests). In other words he has too low a view of the Christian ministry. In the New Testament a minister (we shall look at some of the types shortly) does not perform his ministerial functions by virtue of his baptism into the royal priesthood, that is not qua priest, but by virtue of his calling, authorisation, and gift qua minister. He is a priest by virtue of being baptised. He is, in addition, a minister within the royal priesthood through his special personal inner call and commission from our Lord, through the authorisation of the Church in ordination, and through the $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ given to him for the fulfilment of his ministry. In the appointment of a minister there is therefore something far more than merely being elected by the majority vote of the

(1) LUTHER, M., op.cit. p.36-7.

(2) HANSON, T., "Ministry and Priesthood" p.38. 'In Lutheranism ... all are priests, ...'

community to be their representative. The duty of the corporate priesthood of believers in this matter is to recognise and authorise one who is specifically called to this ministry; they concur in God's appointment of a minister, and they receive him as a gift of the ascended Lord to the Church. Luther's position, therefore, was not true to the scriptural pattern of the ministry. Nor was it true to the New Testament teaching on the royal priesthood, for, as we have seen (1) this was primarily a corporate concept, and Luther's is primarily individualistic.

The valuable insights of Luther's protest, however, must not be overlooked. He re-discovered the Pauline doctrine of justification and emphasized that a person could stand justified and accepted by God the Father independently of any human intermediary. Priests, pope, and penance were not indispensable to salvation. Through the grace of God the Father and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ each and every believer in him has access to God, by 'the new and living way'. Luther's teaching further emphasized the responsibility of the individual within the corporate priesthood, an emphasis which, as we have seen (2) is necessary to guard against the dangers of 'trying to be Christians by proxy - paying the person a pittance and leaving him to do the job' (3).

The supremely significant thing about the ministry which we find in the New Testament is what we might term its 'givenness'. The New Testament teaches quite clearly that the special ministry was not something merely utilitarian - for the sake of convenience (4) - but was given by our Lord Himself. 'He called his disciples, and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles' (Lk.6:13). To these apostles he gave the commission of ministry or διακονία 'Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader (ἡ ἡγούμενος) as one who serves (ὡς ὁ διακονῶν)' (Lk.22:26) and also the commission of authority 'as my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Lk.22:29-30). The duty of service and the position of authority are commanded by our Lord. So, too, St. Paul claims to be 'called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus' (I Cor.1:1) and further asserts :-

Ἐνι δὲ ἕκαστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. οὗτος λέγει

Ἄναβας εἰς ὕψος ἠχηλάτευσεν αἰχηλασίαν ,
ἔδωκεν ὄσματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις...

καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους,

(1) supra p. 71.

(2) supra p. 72.

(3) BLATHERICK, D.P., "A Layman Speaks" p.51.

(4) c.f. ibid. p.29.

to say 'In our religion it is Jesus who is ἀπόστολος καὶ ἀρχιερεὺς not Moses'. When we remember that the original task of the priest was to be one sent from God to bring the torah (1) the connection between these two terms is apparent. The priest of ancient Israel was also an ἀπόστολος on the pattern of Moses, bringing God's word. The ἀπόστολος of the New Covenant stands in the same line. When it is truly apostolic (i.e. missionary) then the Church is truly priestly. The kingdom of priests (2) was to be 'a light to the nations' (Isa.42:6): God has made the New Israel a royal priesthood to 'declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light' (I Pet.2:9).

One of the earliest offices to appear as a newly created function is that of the διάκονος in Acts 6:1-6. Originally meaning a waiter at table the word 'represents the servant in his activity for the work, not in his relation either servile, as that of δοῦλος, or more voluntary as ... of the θεράπων to a person' (3). It came to denote not only those who gave out the alms but also those who 'were specially qualified, in the duties to which they were called, to stand side by side with the apostles, and afterwards with the bishops or presbyters as assistants, just as Stephen and Philip, chosen in the first instance as distributors of alms, soon appear side by side with the apostles, and as helpers of them as evangelists' (4). Later they become liturgical assistants to the bishop or presbyter in the celebration of the Eucharist. Again their function is integral to the priestly Church. Three of the uses of the word λειτουργέω and its derivatives (5) associate the sacrificial-priestly connotation with gifts of alms or material help, (Rom.15:27; II Cor.9:12; Phil.2:30) originally the province of the deacons. Their later association with the celebrant as assistants in the offertory (προσφορά) further demonstrates the priestly character of their office as it was conceived of in New Testament and sub-apostolic times.

A similar priestly association for the πρεσβύτερος is not easy to find. The most striking thing here, however, is what we noted above (6) that in the first epistle of Peter, where the concept of the Royal Priesthood is elaborated (in ch. 2) we find (in 5:1-5) the solemn and searching admonition to the πρεσβύτεροι to 'tend the flock of God that is your charge'. The presbyters are indispensable to the Royal Priesthood and here at the heart of the teaching of the New Testament on this topic their ministry is

(1) supra p.3ff
(2) supra p.13
(3) CREMER, H., op.cit p.177.
(4) CREMER, H., op.cit p.178
(5) supra p. 73
(6) supra p. 88

closely associated with it.

The office of the ἐπίσκοπος appears alongside that of the πρεσβύτερος and in the Pastorals the ἐπίσκοπος appears as a chief πρεσβύτερος an understandable and natural development with the passing of the apostles. With the original meaning of 'visiting' or 'inspection' it comes to mean an 'overseer' and is translated 'guardian' in R.S.V. of I Peter 2:25 when applied to our Lord who is said to be the ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν (Shepherd and Guardian of your souls). When the office comes into prominence in the sub-apostolic age it is clear that it is as the leader of the royal priesthood as they offer their 'spiritual sacrifices' together as a corporate body. Clearly too, even in New Testament times one of his chief duties is to teach, 'Now a bishop must be ... an apt teacher' (I Tim. 3:2) and 'he must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also confute those who contradict it' (Titus 1:9). Again we are back with the original duty enjoined upon the priests of ancient Israel - that of passing on the torah.

But in the New Testament no minister is ever called a ἱερεὺς. Our Lord alone is the ἀρχιερεὺς. No other ἱερεὺς is needed since the sacrifice is made which suffices for all, and he has led the whole royal priesthood into the Holy of Holies. But the priestly nature of the New Israel is strongly asserted and in those appointed to office within the new priesthood some of the functions of the old priesthood inevitably re-appear but with the significant difference that never does there now appear the slightest trace of any sacrifice being offered in a propitiatory or expiatory sense. The one ἱλασμός is the θυσία of our Lord, and when priestly words, phrases and ideas are used they do not designate an office, but rather describe (usually in a metaphorical sense) the nature and activity of the community, and of those who are called by God to perform some special duty or function within and for the community.

The process by which the holy ministry came to be regarded and referred to as 'the priesthood' and to assume sacerdotal functions is traceable in the early fathers (1). From being a High-Priestly race with bishops, presbyters and deacons always remaining in some sense representative of the corporate priesthood, we come eventually (in St. Cyprian) to a completely sacerdotalised view of the Church and its ministry. In Tertullian the tendency is already there with an order of priests

(1) c.f. EASTWOOD, C., "The Royal Priesthood of the Faithful" pp. 56-90.

alongside the universal priesthood. 'And generally he uses the words sacerdos, sacerdotium, sacerdotalis, of the Christian ministry. It seems plain, moreover, from his mode of speaking, that such language was not peculiar to himself but passed current in the churches among which he moved. Yet he himself supplies the true counterpoise to this special sacerdotalism in his strong assertion of the universal priesthood of all true believers. "We should be foolish ... to suppose that a latitude is allowed to laymen which is denied to priests. Are not we laymen also priests? It is written 'He hath made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father'. It is the authority of the Church which makes a difference between the order (the clergy) and the people - this authority and the consecration of their rank by the assignment of special benches to the clergy. Thus where there is no bench of clergy, you present the eucharistic offerings and baptize and are you own self priest. For where three are gathered together, there is a church, even though they be laymen. Therefore if you exercise the rights of a priest in cases of necessity, it is your duty also to observe the discipline enjoined on a priest, where of necessity you exercise the rights of a priest"(1). Origen interprets the priesthood spiritually but applies sacerdotal terms to the ministry, 'and in one place distinguishes the priests and Levites as representing the presbyters and deacons respectively' (2). Thus far 'the minister is regarded as a priest because he is the mouthpiece, the representative of a priestly race ... it was not a safe nomenclature which assigned the terms sacerdos, ἱερεὺς and the like to the ministry as a special designation. The appearance of this phenomenon marks the period of the transition from the universal sacerdotalism of the New Testament to the particular sacerdotalism of a later age' (3). Cyrilian, however, makes the complete change 'It is not only that he uses the terms sacerdos, sacerdotium, sacerdotalis of the ministry with a frequency hitherto without parallel. But he treats all passages in the Old Testament which refer to the privileges, the sanctions, the duties, and the responsibilities of the Aaronic priesthood as applying to the officers of the Christian Church' (4). The threefold ministry of the temple was there ready to hand in the Old Testament analogies as were the concepts of sacrifice and expiation. The main influence, Lightfoot holds, was the influx into the Church of Gentile converts familiar with the religious ceremonies, lustrations, and sacrifices depending on

(1) LIGHTFOOT, J.B., "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry" p.255.

(2) ibid p.257.

(3) LIGHTFOOT, J.B. op.cit. p.258.

(4) ibid.

the mediatorial rôle of a priesthood. So the growing tendency to use the terms of sacrifice and offering for the Eucharist and 'the offering of the eucharist, being regarded as the one special act of sacrifice and appearing externally to the eye as the act of the officiating minister, might well lead to the minister being called a priest, and then being thought a priest in some exclusive sense'(1). Whatever justification there might be for using the term 'priest' for a Christian minister - and both Lightfoot (2) and Hoberly (3) adduce reasons for this usage - we cannot but close this section without underlining the words of Lightfoot when he says 'it might have been better if the later Christian vocabulary had conformed to the silence of the Apostolic writers, so that the possibility of confusion would have been avoided' (4).

The charge has been made (5) that the phrase 'priesthood of all believers' 'carries with it a ruinous individualism' (6), and that set over against this there should be a concept of the corporate priesthood of the whole body. Luther indeed does make statements which are patently individualistic as for example when he says 'Faith ... unites the soul with Christ, like a bride with the bridegroom, and, from this marriage, Christ and the soul become one Body, as St. Paul says (Eph.5:30)' (7). Further it must be admitted that Luther's claim that each Christian can be his own judge in matters of doctrine carries a dangerous and anarchical overtone. There is little doubt that Luther made himself his own judge, but not all have the theological training that Luther had, and even if they had, that would not in itself prevent false teachings from spreading. It seems, however, to the present writer that to draw too sharply a line of demarcation between the individual and the corporate is to make a false antithesis. It is not really a question of either an individual priesthood or a corporate one, but rather (as we saw when examining the New Testament evidence (8)) of both together, and neither should be either denied or neglected. The claim that there is a priesthood of the

(1) ibid p.263.

(2) ibid p.266-268.

(3) HOBERLY, R.C. op.cit. p.91 ff

(4) op.cit. p.266-7.

(5) TOFFRANCE, op.cit p.35, KLAFFER, H., "A Theology of the Laity" p.62, KIRK, K.E., "The Apostolic Ministry" p.49.

(6) TOFFRANCE, T.F., ibid

(7) LUTHER, "Reformation Writings" Quoted Eastwood "Priesthood of all Believers" p.9.

(8) supra p. 72ff.

individual Christian is an assertion not merely of independence, but of responsibility within the corporate priesthood. This priesthood of the individual is recognised and given its place in the report on conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church: 'Within the corporate priesthood of the whole Church every individual believer has his own responsibility of worship, witness and service, and his own privilege of direct, personal access to God in Christ for pardon and grace' (1). Although we have already shown that the New Testament usage of *ἀλλελοουρέω* clearly implies an individual responsibility resting on every member of the corporate priesthood (2) it seems again necessary to stress this individual priesthood as being both a right and a duty. In an age of totalitarian collectivism, in which more and more the individual tends to become submerged in the interests of the state it seems hardly necessary to assert with Robinson 'Christians should be the last people to be found clinging to the wrecks of an atomistic individualism, which has no foundation in the Bible. For their hope does not lie in escape from collectivism' (3). There is a personal and individual element in all religion which no assertions or recognition of solidarity can deny, and it is this element which must be preserved and can be preserved, without any minimising of the solidary or corporate aspect which Dr. Robinson so ably portrays. Here again we quote from the excellent paper by F.J. Wotherspoon: 'But beyond this there is the wide field of individual consecration, the priesthood of the dedication of man in his whole life as it is lived face to face with the Father Who seeth in secret. There is no breaking down of the implicit sacerdotalism which constructs two moralities, one for the ministry, one for the laity, save in this truth, of the personal priesthood of the Christian man, his immediate access to God and unrestricted communion and direct ministry in the charge of his own life and in which the whole of its contents in those fields of which Christ has taught God's direct cognisance, his body, his soul, his possessions. It is here that the hallowing of the personal life must stand, as we learn that whatsoever a Christian man does, he must do it in the name of the Lord, and cannot put that name off and on as religion or as business engages

(1) "CONVERSATIONS" - A REPORT p.23.
(2) supra p. 72 ff.
(3) ROBINSON, J.A.T. "The Body" p.9.

him. The dying of the Lord which we show before God in the sanctuary we must also bear about always with us, manifesting Christ's life even in our dying bodies' (1). This is what the British Methodist lay leader Blatherwick has called 'living out the Christian experience in the world' - 'For the layman is anything but a sort of marginal figure on the outskirts of the Church. He is in fact the essential interpreter of the Christian message in the battlefield of the world' (2). It is not only in his devotional life and worship that the individual Christian expresses his priesthood, but supremely in his daily work. This is where he fulfils his priesthood since this is where he spends himself in toil and the expenditure of his energy. This is his daily offering to God of himself and this offering, no less than that which he makes when the prayer of oblation is said in the Eucharist, is joined with the eternal offering of the High Priest in the presence of the Father. Eastwood says, 'Perhaps rarely in the history of the Christian Church has there been a time of greater challenge, and rarely have the times so urgently demanded a vigorous application of the doctrine of vocational priesthood' (3). He goes on to quote St. Augustine, 'I would fain be a doorkeeper, or anything in Thy service and amongst Thy people, for priesthood is put here for the people, to whom Christ the Mediator is the High Priest; which people the Apostle called an holy nation and a royal priesthood' (4). Eastwood concludes 'Let every Christian fulfil his vocation, realize his priesthood, and consecrate the whole of his life, including his daily toil, as a service to God and for the glory of God, and we shall see that this dynamic formula will again become a living instrument of reform' (5).

IV. THE CORPORATE PRIESTHOOD OF THE CHURCH

The priesthood of the Church is the Priesthood of Christ in the Church. In the interpenetration of the Head and the body there is an interpenetration of the priesthood of the head and the priesthood of the Body. As the High Priest of the New Israel exercises his Priesthood not only

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- (1) WOTHERSPOON, H.J. op.cit.: p.102.
 - (2) BLATHERWICK, D.P., "A Layman Speaks" p.34.
 - (3) EASTWOOD, C., "Royal Priesthood" p.244.
 - (4) ibid p.245.
 - (5) ibid

'in the heavens' but in the people who are his Royal Priesthood, so they have their priesthood in him. Just as the ancient priests of Israel exercised their priesthood in a dual function, manwards and Godwards, so our High Priest, in whom all priesthood is fulfilled, exercises his Priesthood Godwards in offering and intercession and manwards in and through his Church. 'The true idea of the Church on earth is, therefore, not that of a Body starting from earth and reaching onwards to a heavenly condition to be perfectly attained hereafter. It is rather the idea of a body starting from heaven, and so exhibiting, amidst the inhabitants and things of time, the graces and privileges already ideally bestowed upon it, that it may lead the world either to come to the light or to condemn itself because it loves the darkness rather than the light, its deeds being evil. It will also follow that the community thus constituted must be the visible Representative of our Lord while He is Himself invisible, and that to it must be committed the work which in personal presence with us He can no longer do' (1).

H. Kraemer has drawn attention to another important point in his work "A Theology of the Laity". Here, he claims that to arrive at a theology of the laity involves re-thinking not just the theology of the ministry, but the theology of the nature of the Church. What is needed, he claims, is 'a new vision of the Church, in which the laity gets its full meaning', it 'must lead to a new view of the meaning of the ministry, or clergy as one aspect of the whole' (2). Although he shuns a theology of the Priesthood of Believers his point here is apposite. The doctrine of the priestly nature of the Church is not a doctrine derived from and subsequent to an ecclesiology. It is a constituent and indispensable part of a doctrine of the Church. If the Church is not priestly it cannot be a Church, since it cannot be 'in Christ'. Just as the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Church must be 'downwards' in direction, so must

(1) MULLIGAN, M. *op.cit.* p.229.

(2) KRAEMER, H. *op.cit.* p.83.

a doctrine of the Church itself. It is in fact in this aspect of priesthood that the Church is beginning to re-think her calling and task in this present age. In what sense then, is the Church's task a priestly task? The answer is two-fold. The Church's priestly task consists of worship and witness. In I Peter 2 this task is set forth :-

'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light ... to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (I Peter 2:9,5).

The priestly nature of the Church is seen in 'declaring the wonderful deeds of him who brought you out of darkness into light'. This is her task of witnessing.

1. It is fulfilled in mission. Again Kraemer provides a necessary and salutary reminder when he claims that the Church is mission (1). This is implicit in the New Testament usage of the word $\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\tau\omega\sigma\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\omega$ which we noted above (2), where in three places it refers to the missionary work of the Church. In his redemptive activity the Father 'so loved the world' (Jn.3:16) for the world is his purpose and he was 'in Christ reconciling the world to himself' (II Cor.5:19). As the Father was in the Son, so the High Priest is in his priestly Church. The Church is not to be inward-looking but to be 'world-centered in the image of the divine example' (3). So 'this all-pervading concern about the world in its lostness (even in its great achievements and triumphs) is basic to the true meaning of the Church' (4). Another way to describe this mission is to say that since the Church is the New Israel she inherits the mission with which the old Israel was charged. As we have seen (5) the mission of the corporate priesthood which was Israel as a people was to be 'a light to the Gentiles'. In this she failed. The Church having been constituted the New Israel inherits this same mission. All down the ages the Church has been conceived of as a divine instrument wherewith God would bring all nations into a knowledge of redemption. All their work was set in the context of salvation-history. It could not be otherwise, for, although composed of unworthy and unprofitable servants, the Church bears the marks of holiness,

(1) ibid p.131.
(2) supra p.73 ff.
(3) ibid. p.130
(4) ibid. p.128
(5) supra p.13.

apostolicity, and catholicity. She is holy unto the Lord, sent out by Him into the world in order to draw all men unto Him. Her priesthood could not be more trenchantly expressed. This obligation is at once her divinely imposed mission and her accepted task. Her priesthood consists in the consciousness and the fulfilment of her mission' (1). It is indeed significant that St. Paul (as we have seen) can speak of his missionary labours in sacrificial (and therefore priestly) terms when he says in Rom.15:16 that he is

'a minister (λατρουργός) of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles in the priestly service (ἱεραουργοῦντα) of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit' (2).

Thus the Church in her missionary task and all evangelistic enterprises is fulfilling her priestly nature.

2. Her priestly function of witness is further fulfilled in her service to the world. As he who is High Priest is seen characteristically in the rôle of suffering servant, so the priesthood is to manifest itself in service, diakonia, ministry. Again the Church is ministry rather than has a ministry (3). The Church serves the world first of all by 'building up, purifying, and adorning her own inner life that, in herself and by what she is, she may worthily represent that Redeemer who, in the combined perfection of his Divine and human natures, is ever before God, with his people in him' (4). This is expressed by St. Paul in the important passage in Ephesians 4:11-2:-

'And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ'.

If we remove the comma (which of course is not present in the Greek text) after the word 'saints' the true meaning of this passage emerges and J.B. Phillips can render it as 'His gifts were made that Christians might be properly equipped for their service, that the whole body might be built up' (5). After explaining that the Greek prepositions further support such an interpretation Mackey goes on to claim 'The meaning appears clearly to be that the

(1) EASTWOOD, C., "Royal Priesthood" p.241-2.
(2) supra p. 74
(3) KRAEMER, H. op.cit. p.143ff.
(4) MILLIGAN, ., op.cit. p.279.
(5) PHILLIPS, J.B., "Letters to Young Churches".

supreme objective of the gifted men must be to equip the "saints" that they, in their turn, may engage in ministering, that they too may be servants, and that resulting from their service the Body of Christ may be built up' (1). So all share in the diakonia of the priesthood.

The service of the priesthood which is the Church is to be service to the world as well. This service consists in humble works of kindness and charity. The New Testament picture of the servant Lord is in John 13 where he takes a towel and basin and stoops to the lowliest task. So 'aware of the fact that they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, "Christ's men and women" must be ready at all times to perform the most menial tasks in the service of Christ and of their fellow-men' (2). The priestly Church provides help for the helpless, bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. She visits those in prison, tends the sick, comforts the dying, and those who mourn. Then, in the dark ages in the midst of a world of darkness and selfishness the monks and nuns did this 'and told of One who had loved His people even unto death, and of a Church which was still His messenger on earth for works such as He had done, the hungry and the thirsty, the naked and the sick, and the prisoner, touched by the loving hand, moved by the living voice, looked up and said "We believe in the love of Him whose love is taught us by your love, whose pity by your pity". The representative of the dying, living Lord was fulfilling her commission, and the fruits appeared' (3). All such service is a witness to our Lord who 'went about doing good'.

3. Not the least part of her priestly witness to her Lord is the Church's ministry of healing. In faithfulness to her Lord wherever she has gone the work of healing has been undertaken side by side with the preaching of the gospel (4) To be fully true to her Lord, however, this diakonia should never be confined to the mission field nor to medical work. Despite all the misunderstanding of all ill-conceived attempts by so-called 'faith healers' to bear this part of

(1) MICKAY, J.A., "God's Order" p.186.

(2) ibid. p.187.

(3) MILLIGAN, V. op.cit. p.287-8.

(4) Characteristically therefore the Mount Coke Mission Hospital near Kingwilliamstown has as its motto :-
"Heal the Sick, Preach the Gospel".

the Church's witness, we are bound to conclude with the pragmatic test of our Lord that 'You will know them by their fruits' (Matt.7:16). What appears to the present writer to be far more in keeping with the priestly calling of the Church understood corporately are the attempts being made in some places by Christian communities to heal the sick through divine healing. Robinson has described one such attempt, that of the Iona community in his book "On Being the Church in the World", whilst Weatherhead has described the activities of various societies in "Psychology, Religion and Healing" (1). The weekly time of intercession for the sick which Dr. Weatherhead used to conduct in his Sunday evening services at the City Temple Church in London was an excellent example of the corporate priestly healing work of the Church. A similar example of the Church fulfilling this priestly vocation is in the Melvern Methodist Church, Johannesburg. One morning a week the minister, the Revd. Albert Coates, leads a simple healing service (if it can be called that) in a small chapel at the side of the church. Sick people kneel whilst he lays his hands on each one in turn and anoints them with oil. The usual prayer is "Heal, Lord, and purify; Cleanse, Lord, and sanctify; and glorify Thyself with the glory that was Thine with the Father before the foundation of the world". This in itself would not be unduly remarkable. What is of significance here is that a short explanation is given to the people before the minister begins - 'This does not depend on an effort of your faith. It is not faith healing. It is divine healing. It depends on a believing Church. Whilst we meet here there is a group meeting in a home praying for us. There are others at work pausing at odd moments of the morning to pray. Each week a fellowship group meets in an evening to pray for specific people'. This is truly the corporate priesthood of believers witnessing for and to their ascended Lord. Here is the life of the Head in the body.

4. There is one final point. The servant whose life is present in the life of the Church is the suffering servant. It follows that suffering for others is a feature of the priesthood of believers. This is the 'experience of priesthood' of which we spoke in chapter 1, the experience

(1) ROBINSON, J.A.T., "On Being the Church in the World" p.82.
WEATHERHEAD, L.D., "Psychology, Religion and Healing"
pp.222-235.

for which Israel was not prepared (1). 'Only as the Church lets itself be implicated in Christ's death and in His reproach can it minister in His ministry' (2). This above all determines the nature of the Church's priesthood. The supreme quality which the Church of Jesus Christ must manifest to the world is love, and love involves self-sacrifice, and, in one form or another this means suffering. The Church's witness, marturia, is most clearly to be seen in her suffering for others, 'and as long, therefore as there is sin or weakness for which to suffer - sin or weakness which can only be healed through the sufferings of those who, in the spirit of their Master, try to heal it - the offering of Christ is not "filled up" ... Her suffering for others is simply the conveyance to them, through a life penetrated by the life of Christ, of the grace which flows from Him and leads to Him' (3).

(1) supra p.14.

(2) TORRANCE, T.F., op.cit. p.87.

(3) MILLIGAN, V., op.cit. p.273-4.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WORSHIP OF THE PRIESTHOOD

I. WORSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The priestly nature of the Church is manifested in her witness and also in her worship. The 'holy priesthood' of I Pet.2:5 is to 'offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ' (ἀναπέμψαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτους θεοῦ δια Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). This leads us to consider the usage of θυσία. This is the regular LXX word for תְּבִיאָה and תְּבִיאָה. In contrast to classical Greek where it denotes a tribute to the gods in payment for favours expected or crimes committed and is accompanied by a prayer, the biblical usage always has a special reference to sin. In the New Testament however, 'Christ, as at once priest and sacrifice, is that sacrifice and that priest of whom men stood in need; with Him sacrifices as previously offered cease, and the idea of sacrifice is realized in the members of the new covenant in quite a different manner, - not by a substitutionary presentation, but by a self-presentation, - not by a surrender to death, but by life, c.f. Rom.12:1; I Pet.2:5' (1). Hence the New Testament uses θυσία five times for the sacrifice of Christ (Eph.5:2, Heb.7:27, 8:3, 9:26, 10:12), twice for acts of mercy or kindness performed by Christians (Phil.4:18, Heb.13:16), once in the sense of (missionary) work (Phil.2:17) (2) and three times for Christian worship in I Pet.2:5, Rom.12:1, and Heb.13:15. Before looking at these three texts in detail we can note that the idea of settlement, tribute, or propitiation is absent in all of them. The idea present is of self-presentation.

In I Pet.2:5 the traditional interpretation is that the πνευματικὰς θυσίας are the good works and prayers of Christians. We noted

(1) CRUMER, H. op.cit. p.291-2.

(2) supra p.74

that prayer was thought of in the category of sacrifice in the Old Testament (1), and here we may further note the Westminster Shorter Catechism definition of prayer and the comments on it by D.M. Baillie "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies". Surely that is a very significant definition, and the more so, as it is found in so Reformed and Protestant a document as the Shorter Catechism. Prayer is not defined as asking for what we desire in order that we may receive it. It is the offering-up of our desires unto God. That is sacrificial language' (2). Furthermore E.C. Selwyn comments on I Pet.2:5 'his emphasis on the imitatio Christi in 2:21ff, 3:18ff, and on brotherly love as the highest expression of holiness in 1:13ff, and his exposition of the social code governing the relationships of Christians towards one another and towards their non-Christian neighbours in 2:11-3:12, suggest that the sufferings incidental to the Christian life and the duties of meekness and ἀγαθοποία were chiefly in his mind' (3). Selwyn further approvingly comments (in an additional note) on the view of E. Lohmeyer 'that this exegesis is inadequate: "for the section 2:1-10 is packed with pictures and ideas taken from the cultus, seeing that it begins with baptism and ends with the living building of a 'spiritual house' for the offering of spiritual sacrifices". "In such a context", he continues, "the Eucharist, one might almost say, has a necessary place ... Further, one can get some idea of the nature of the religious action from the phrases used: for example, people 'taste' (Ps.34:9) that the Lord is χρηστός - a well-known play on words, often connected later with the Name of Christ; people 'draw near to Him', so that here the meal is entirely a ceremonial act of divine worship; and meanwhile, in this approach and meal, 'people build themselves up into a holy priesthood'". Lohmeyer claims that, on this interpretation, the phrases give a vivid intimation - though not more than that - of "the whole design and behaviour of the believers in their religious gatherings" (4). Before passing on to the other uses of βουσία for Christian worship we must notice the close proximity of thought and expression in verses 5 and 9 of this passage where 'the final clauses in verse 5 and verse 9 ... are in the same category; in

(1) supra p.8

(2) BAILLIE, D.M. "The Theology of the Sacraments" p.113.

(3) SELWYN, E.C. "The First Epistle of St. Peter" p.161.

(4) ibid. p.295.

other words, that the offering of the spiritual sacrifices alluded to is identical with, or at least one form of, the proclamation of God's excellencies. We are thus led to the view that the sacrifices offered by the priestly body, the Church, are intimately connected with the atoning work of Christ, and also serve to shew it forth in all its rich and reconciling mercy. He is presented as the centre of a new sacrificial way of life. The sacrificial way of life is a fundamental element in the ethical teaching of (this) Epistle ...: Christians are to imitate Christ in His meekness, patience, and suffering, and they are to do it in order to win others to the faith - that is to say, to shew forth God's excellencies' (1). From this examination of its worship and our previous study of the word λειτουργός (2) we can now see that the witness and the worship of the universal priesthood are not mutually exclusive. Its witness is its λειτουργία its priestly offering, whilst its worship is a θυσία. The priesthood witnesses by worshipping; it worships by witnessing. Its whole life is therefore an offering to God.

In Rom.12:1 St. Paul echoes what we have heard in I Pet.2:5.

Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρισμῶν
τοῦ Θεοῦ, παραστήσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν
ἅγιον τῷ Θεῷ εὐάρεστον, τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν.

(I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship).

Commentators are generally agreed that this is an ethical exhortation, an ethicising of worship (3) 'For Christians, Paul says, the real worship of God is their self-dedication to Him for ethical ends. As the actual liturgy of worship gradually shaped itself in the Christian Church, with its centre in the commemoration of the sacrificial death of Christ as described in I Cor.11:23-6, it was powerfully influenced by the thought that the Church, as the Body of Christ, is associated, or identified, with Christ Himself in His sacrifice of obedience to God in life and death' (4). The Christian's θυσία is ζῶσα in contrast to the offerings of dead animals in the ancient ritual, and it is now the offering of themselves which they must make. This is the essence of sacrifice as we have seen (5) and after the pattern of Christ is the

(1) *ibid.* p.295-6.

(2) *supra* p. 73

(3) cf. SELWYN, E.G. *op.cit.* p.161-2.

(4) DODD, C.H. Moffatt New Testament Commentaries, Romans p.199-200.

(5) *supra* p. 28

only sacrifice that we have to offer. It is not in our own right that we make it, for it is by the mercies of God that the Apostle makes the exhortation, 'the mercies which God has shown in the work of redemption through Christ' (1).

In Heb.13:15 the same idea is found :-

δι' αὐτοῦ οὖν ἀναφέρωμεν θυσίαν αἰνέσεως διὰ παντός τῷ θεῷ, τοῦτ' ἔστιν καρπὸν χειλέων ὁμολογησίων τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

(Through him therefore let us offer up continually a sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of lips that confess his name)

'Going without the camp as believers in virtue of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and bearing his shame as those who seek to be identified with him, we are brought near to God and are disposed to offer him a sacrifice of praise ... "through him" and not through any Levitical device' (2). The implication of these New Testament passages is clear. Because Christ has offered the sacrifice of himself there can be no longer any θυσία of the old covenant and its ritual. The θυσία of the new covenant is the all-embracing and ever-living offering of him who is both priest and sacrifice, and this is 'realised in the life of his people, not by repetition of His ... sacrifice, but by their dying and rising with Christ in faith and life, by the worship of self-presentation to God' (3). As we have seen in the interpretation of these passages above 'All life must be an offering to God, typified by and comprehended in worship' (4). In the New Testament the θυσία has come out of the sanctuary where only the selected people could go and is the λατρεία of the whole people. Or we might reverse this and say that all now enter into the Holy of Holies (Heb.10:19) by virtue of the θυσία offered by our Lord, our λειτουργία and all may now offer their λατρεία as λειτουργία. The worship of the new priesthood is thought of in terms of the offering of the Heavenly High Priest and is subsumed in his offering. In the Old Testament λατρεία is a general term indicating the worship or service of God. It is used of sacrifice but includes 'submission to God generally, obedience and adoration rendered to God' (5). Our Lord used the term in Matt.4:10 (Lk.4:8) as a synonym for προσκυνέω (meaning 'to bow down, do homage, prostrate'). St. Paul uses the word to denote

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- (1) DENNEY, J., E.G.T. Vol. 2 p.687.
 - (2) DODS, H., E.G.T. Vol. 4 p.378.
 - (3) TORRANCE, op.cit. p.17.
 - (4) MAXWELL, W.D. "Concerning Worship" p.6.
 - (5) CREMER, H. op.cit. p.389.

his service for God (Acts 24:14, 27:23, Rom.1:9, Phil.3:13, II Tim.1:3) - all his work for, dedication to and service of God is his λατρεία. We can therefore say that it includes the whole of man's response to God in worship, service, love, praise, adoration, prayer, and offering. This is precisely what our survey of the three New Testament texts concerning worship showed. In Rom.12:1 St. Paul calls the living, holy sacrifice of our bodies our λογικὴ λατρεία - a distinct and clear connection between the new θυσία of ourselves and our worship. A similar link comes in Heb.12:28 where the writer says :-

δι' ἧς λατρεύομεν εὐαρέστως...

(Let us offer acceptable worship). Here the adjective has a distinctly sacrificial flavour and the thought is repeated a few verses later in Heb.13:15 (1). The whole passage Heb.12:18-28 leads us to the heart of the New Testament concept of worship, and we quote the salient verses :-

Οὐ γὰρ προσεληλύθατε ψηλαφωμένῳ καὶ κεκαυμένῳ πυρὶ..
ἀλλὰ προσεληλύθατε ζῶν ὄρει καὶ πόλει Θεοῦ ζῶντος,
'Ιερουσαλήμ ἐπουρανίῳ, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων,
πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων
ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ Κριτῇ Θεῷ πάντων, καὶ πνεύμασι
δικαίων τετελειωμένων, καὶ διαθήκης νέας μεσίτη
'Ιησοῦ, καὶ αἵματι ῥαντισμοῦ κρεῖττον λαλοῦντι
παρὰ τὸν Ἰβελ...

Διὸ βασιλείαν ἀσάλευτον παραλαμβάνοντες
ἔχουεν χάριν, δι' ἧς λατρεύομεν εὐαρέστως
τῷ Θεῷ, μετὰ εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους.

(For you have not come to what may be touched, and a blazing fire etc ... but you have drawn near to Mount Zion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels, and the solemn assembly of the Church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel ... Therefore let us have gratitude having received an unshakable kingdom, and thus let us offer acceptable worship with reverence and awe).

The use of προσέρχομαι in this Epistle is usually in a sacrificial sense and means 'to approach God, in order to receive his atonement and grace' (2). Whilst elsewhere (in the gospels) it means merely to 'come' or 'go to', in Hebrews it assumes the nature of a technical term for those 'who desire the blessing of the sacrifice' (3). It is the language of worship. The writer in this paragraph (which

(1) supra p. 104

(2) CRUMMER, H., op.cit. p.265.

(3) ibid. p.265.

in some senses may be regarded as the climax of the Epistle) appeals to the Hebrews to listen to God who is speaking (v.25). The Hebrews have 'come near' in worship and God is speaking, not as in the old covenant at Sinai but in the new covenant and its mediator, Jesus. In their λατρεία they have come near to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, angels, the ἐπιλησία of the first-born, to a judge, to Jesus and to the sprinkled blood (i.e. of the new covenant), therefore, they are to offer acceptable λατρεία. We worship (in all that we indicated of the meaning of that word) because we have 'drawn near to' the worship of heaven. 'The great characteristic of ^{λατρεία} this is that it envisages a relation between the worship on earth and in the body to worship in the heavenly realm' (1). In its worship the Church on earth draws near to the throne of God and all the company of heaven and participates in the worship of the heavenly throng. She is enabled to do this because her Heavenly High Priest is sacramentally present in her worship. 'It is the Ascended Christ, by His presence both on earth within His body the Church and in heaven as perpetual High Priest within the mystery of the Godhead whither He has borne our manhood, who makes this unity of worship ontological and not merely echoic' (2). In the worship of heaven which is elaborately portrayed in the Apocalypse there is in the midst of the elders 'a Lamb standing, the promised and victorious ever-living Redeemer and Mediator. We see Him in various rôles, but frequently clothed as a High Priest offering Himself before God, while round about Him stands the vast concourse of the redeemed, also clad in white priestly garments washed in the Lamb's blood and engaged in their priestly task of praise and prayer, for they have been made kings and priests unto God' (3). As the High Priest of heaven is in the midst of those whom he has made priests, so too in the worship of the earthly Church his presence as High Priest constitutes the priesthood which is the Church, and the priests on earth can join with those in heaven in praising him who is 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty'.

There is a further aspect of λατρεία at which we must now look. The usual word for which it stands in the LXX is the root meaning 'to serve, obey', and this is the word which in Isaiah denotes the Servant of Jahweh, whose part Jesus assumed. Thus 'the

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- (1) MAXWELL, W.D. "The Eucharist in the Light of our Lord's Resurrection" p.5.
(2) MAXWELL, W.D., "The Eucharist ..." p.4.
(3) NICHOLLS, W., "Jacob's Ladder" p.15.

obedience of the Son of God and the Suffering Servant of the Lord is thus precisely the offering of λατρεία or worship'. The biblical understanding of worship always sees it as the worship of those who have been redeemed. The Old Testament sacrifices were established by God as a part of the covenant which he made with them on the basis of his redemptive act in delivering them from bondage in Egypt. The sacrifices therefore were given by God (1) and offered in obedience to him. 'Even more strikingly is this true of the New Testament. The worship of the Church is offered to the God who has visited and redeemed His people in Jesus the Christ. In doing so He has made Himself known to them far more fully than under the Old Covenant, and has given them a new and better redemption. Included in that redemption is the response to it, made once for all on behalf of all humanity by Christ. All Christian worship is made "through Jesus Christ our Lord", it is a participation in His perfect worship, just as it finds its basis in the revelation that He embodied. Christian worship adds nothing to the worship of Christ, but is entirely included within it. Christ our High Priest is Himself the foundation of the worship that is offered by the Royal Priesthood of the Church' (2). And so in Jesus the Word, God speaks, and in his (i.e. our Lord's) λατρεία as Suffering Servant he makes the response. This vocation of suffering we have seen to be the inner experience of true priesthood which issues in sacrificial sin-bearing (3). Christian λατρεία begins as does our Lord's own, in the initiative of God. God's Word goes forth in proclamation, and 'Christ is the Word of God, and He is the One who is proclaimed, whether in Scripture, in preaching, in sacrament, or in the words of the liturgy' (4). Worship begins with the descent to us of the divine love which first loved us. Then can come our response, but this is given in the Word as we have just seen, and so by 'the proclamation of the mystery of His fulfilled response, through word and sacrament in the worship of the Church, that response passes into the Church and becomes her own, for it was made on her behalf, and in the humanity which is hers. And so ... Christian worship is our joining in the Latreia of Christ, offering through Him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit' (5). So our λατρεία is a participation in the response

(1) supra p.10-11
(2) NICHOLLS, W., op.cit. p.17.
(3) supra p.14-15.
(4) NICHOLLS, W., op.cit. p.27-8.
(5) ibid p.28

which Christ makes and is completed in self-presentation, the offering of our lives which is not confined to, but 'is typified by and comprehended in worship' (1). If the essence of sacrifice' is basically an act of the will, i.e. the self in decision, and 'if 'what it offers therefore is the self of the offerer' (2) so that "'There is no sacrifice unless in so far as the offerer is himself the victim"' (3) - and we have seen that this is the essence of the sacrifice of Christ - and if, furthermore the sacrifice of Christ is constitutive of his High Priesthood, then the Christian's sacrifice of self-presentation (which is his λογικὴ λατρεία and which is only possible in conjunction with and in dependence on the sacrifice of Christ the High Priest), is, in a dependent and secondary way constitutive of his priesthood. Or, to put it another way, we might say that since Christ's sacrifice consists primarily in his self-offering to God and since this self-offering to God the Father makes him both Priest and Victim, then the sacrifice of self-presentation which we make in participation with his sacrifice must make us not only (in a derivative and subsidiary way) "victims", but also (in the same way) priests. But here we must be careful to emphasise that the offering which we make of ourselves as our λατρεία is not in any way meritorious, nor is it to be understood as earning the status of priesthood for us. This priesthood is bestowed on us by virtue of the sacrifice and High Priesthood of Christ, and is given to us only in so far as we join ourselves to him by participating in his sacrifice which we do through our 'spiritual sacrifice' of self-presentation. We can therefore say that it is in λατρεία, worship, that the priesthood of believers is not only expressed but actualised, and this λατρεία is possible only as a participation in the λατρεία of the High Priest which gathers up our imperfect response into his perfect response to the Word and will of the Father.

From time to time we have spoken of the response which men make to the outgoing love of God. We have used phrases such as 'believing participation' (4), 'union with Christ', identification with Christ', 'participation in the λατρεία of Christ' in an attempt to indicate the relationship between our Lord and his followers. This union of believers with their Lord is the link by

(1) MAXWELL, W.D., "Concerning Worship" p.6.
(2) MAXWELL, W.D., "The Eucharist ..." p.5.
(3) "OTHEPS"CON, R.J., quoted by MAXWELL, W.D., op.cit. p.5.
(4) supra chs 2, 3, 4 passim.

which they become the Royal Priesthood, since their priesthood is dependent upon him, his sacrifice and his priesthood. It is now necessary for us to look a little closer at this relationship, and this we do by considering the relevance for our theme of the dominical sacraments.

II. BAPTISM - CONSECRATION INTO THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

In considering the baptism of our Lord by John in the Jordan we saw that this was part of his whole sacrificial pattern and analogous to the identification of the worshipper with his sacrifice in the Levitical sacrificial system. As with the baptism of our Lord, so it is too with us who are his followers. Our baptism is a baptism into him, and since his incarnation, baptism, ministry, death on the cross, resurrection, exaltation and heavenly ministry are what constitute his sacrifice we are baptized into his sacrifice. The theme of dying, being buried and rising with Christ is the central, though not the only interpretation of the rite in the New Testament. Its clearest expression is in Rom.6:3-5 :-
ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστόν
'Ιησοῦν, εἰς τόν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν;
συνετάφημεν οὖν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς
τόν θάνατον, ἵνα ὡσπερ ἠγέρθη Χριστός ἐκ
νεκρῶν διὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ Πατρὸς, οὕτως καί
ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν. εἰ
γάρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ
θανάτου αὐτοῦ, ἀλλά καί τῆς ἀναστάσεως
ἐσόμεθα.

(Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become planted together (with him) in the likeness of his death we shall be one with him in his resurrection).

'This means that our individual participation in the death and resurrection of Christ results from Baptism. Here everyone obtains participation in the forgiveness of sins which Christ has achieved once for all upon the Cross ... According to Rom.6:5 we are in the act of Baptism a single plant with Christ, inasmuch as we die and rise with him' (1). The New Testament understanding of baptism does not limit it to a merely symbolic dramatisation of something else. It is a real experience of dying and rising with Christ.

(1) CULLEMAN, O., op.cit. p.13-14.

Its whole meaning and significance are given to it in and through the sacrifice of Christ. 'Baptism is not in the last resort baptism into the death of Christ but baptism into Christ, the incarnate, crucified, risen, and ascended Redeemer. In baptism the disciple enters into the whole redemptive action of his Lord, so that what was once done representatively for him may now be done in actuality in him; he is incorporated in order that he may be crucified' (1). Thus in baptism not only does the believer participate in the crucial events of the sacrifice of Christ, but the meaning and significance for him are the same. In the death of the victim in a sacrifice the essential life which was in the blood was released. It was now, however, in a new mode of life - life with the quality or characteristic of having passed through the suffering of death. So the Christian not only dies in baptism - he rises to participate in the resurrection life of his Lord. We can now see the way in which a person can make the sacrifice of self-presentation in conjunction with the sacrifice of our Lord of which we spoke in the previous section. A Christian is able to present himself as a living sacrifice in his baptism and in the resurrection quality of life into which his baptism leads him. We further see this sacrificial character of baptism in St. Paul's exhortation to the husbands at Ephesus :-

Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας, καθὼς καὶ
ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἑαυτὸν
παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς, ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ
καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι,
ἵνα παραστήσῃ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἕνδοξον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,
μὴ ἔχουσαν σπῖλον ἢ ρυτίδα ἢ τι τῶν τοιοῦτων
ἀλλ' ἵνα ᾗ ἁγία καὶ ἄμωμος.

(Husbands love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself up for her, so that he might sanctify her having cleansed her with the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she might be holy and without blemish. (Eph.5:25-7)).

On this passage Flerington penetratingly comments 'The background of this passage is the sacrificial thought of the Old Testament, but with this difference, that here the Priest is himself the Victim and the purpose of his perfect sacrifice is that the object of his love, the Church, shall ultimately be enabled by virtue of his sacrifice to make a sacrificial offering of itself (verse 27). To this end, Christ (by his own death) "consecrated" the Church, and the means of

(1) CLARK, N., op.cit. p.31.

this consecration is the cleansing that results from the "washing of water with the word" (verse 26). The words καθαρίσεως τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι must on any natural interpretation refer to baptism. The rite which was actually administered to the individual believer is here regarded as a means whereby the whole Church is purified ... it is Christ's offering of himself that gives baptism its efficacy; thus explicit expression is given to the conviction that behind every Christian baptism is the death of Jesus. This conception that it is Christ's giving of himself that makes baptism a true sacrament lends added point to the other passages ... where St. Paul regards Christians as "baptized into Christ's death". The Christian repeats in his own experience the act of self-dedication which Christ made when he went to the cross. But baptism can mean that for the believer only because behind every Christian baptism is the love and self-offering of Jesus himself'. (1)

Every (2) has traced the sacrificial motif in the initiation rites of various religions, and comes to the conclusion that this may be the underlying significance in most of these rites. He quotes approvingly Dr. L.H. Gray who says 'It is even possible that ... all kinds of circumcision are ultimately reducible not to two causes ... but to one, sacrifice; since initiation, with its accompanying austerities, may conceivably be regarded as itself a sacrifice to obtain admission to the people whom he protects' (3). More germane to the rite of Christian initiation is the fact that the object of all ordeals of initiation is 'not the removal of some impure stain, but the burial of the dead. If this is true of circumcision and of other forms of symbolic wounding to death or burial, it is also true of Christian baptism ... In the early Christian Church baptism was indeed a bath, but a bath in running water, a dip in the Jordan, a symbolic escape from drowning in the Red Sea, a burial and resurrection with and in the crucified Christ. These forms of ritual burial are not only sacrificial, but the prototypes of every type of sacrifice' (4). Furthermore in the mystery religions there is also a symbolic dying and rising since 'Both are concerned with burying the old man and the unregenerate dead. The difference lies on the other side of death, in the kind of new life that is sought

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- (1) FLEMINGTON, W.F., "The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism" p.64-65.
(2) EVERY, G., "The Baptismal Sacrifice" p.11 *passim*.
(3) EVERY, G., *op.cit.* p.14 - quoted from "Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics" vol. III p.666.
(4) EVERY, G., *op.cit.* p.18.

and found. In most of the mystery religions those who came to be initiated sought union with the Mother of all living, desiring to be reborn in another world beyond the tomb ... But the Christian catechumen was crucified with Christ, buried with him in baptism, and risen from the dead prepared for martyrdom' (1). From whatever angle we may approach it Christian baptism is a ritual death of the personal ego and submission to God who grants a new and transformed life. The miracle by which he does this is in the same category as the miracle by which he raised Jesus Christ from the dead. In both it is a mighty act of God. As his death on the cross is for Jesus the focus of his whole sacrificial self-denial so his death in baptism is for the follower of Jesus an act of self-renunciation in which his sacrifice of himself becomes one with that great sacrifice which alone makes his possible. The conclusion to this reasoning is that since our Lord's resurrection and exaltation are the entrance to his Heavenly High Priesthood, then their baptismal resurrection is similarly the entrance into their priesthood for Christians. 'For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God' (Col.3:3) (2). The only sort of ordination to Christian priesthood known to the New Testament is therefore Christian baptism. Chrysostom said 'So also art thou thyself made king and priest and prophet in the laver (of Baptism); a king, having dashed to earth all the deeds of wickedness and slain thy sins; a priest, in that thou offerest thyself to God, and in having sacrificed thy body, and in being thyself slain also, for if we died with Him, saith he (Paul, in his second letter to Timothy, Chapter 2 verse 11), we shall also live with Him; and finally a prophet, knowing what shall be, and being inspired of God and sealed' (3).

In the consecration of the priesthood in the old Testament recorded in Leviticus there are interesting parallels with the sacrament of baptism. This consecration consisted of (a) washing with water and clothing with priestly garments (Lev.8:6-9); (b) anointing with holy oil and sprinkling with sacrificial blood (Lev.8:10-24); (c) filling the hands with the sacrificial oblations, portions of which were later eaten by the priests. The characteristic term for consecration became טַלְחָה , to fill the hand (4),

(1) ibid p.24-5.

(2) cf. supra. p.61.

(3) Quoted by BLANCHERICK, D.P. op.cit. p.24.

(4) cf. Lev.8:33.

translated in the LXX by τελειοῦν τὰς χεῖρας or πληροῦν τὰς χεῖρας. Hence the use of these verbs by themselves could even have the connotation of consecration in certain contexts. The similarity between (a) and baptism is patent - a ceremonial baptism followed by 'putting on Christ', the phrase used by St. Paul in Gal.3:27 - 'for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ'. There can be a similar connection between (b) and 'sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ' (I Pet.1:2) and the practice of being baptized into the death of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, in the ancient church the rite of baptism included receiving the oil of thanksgiving from an attendant presbyter and anointing with oil by the bishop (1). In the East it remains related to baptism and confirmation (as in the primitive pattern), and all three actions occur together making one rite. Baptism, confirmation, and anointing are done by the presbyter, but the oil of christ has been previously blessed by the bishop. In the West christ became separated from baptism and was attached specifically to confirmation no doubt chiefly because both confirmation and christ were ministered by the bishop, while baptism was normally (but not invariably, for any Christian could baptize) ministered by presbyters or deacons. Professor Torrance traces also a connection between (c) and the High Priestly consecration of Jesus (2). His argument may be briefly summarised as follows :- πληροῦν τὰς χεῖρας is bad Greek and so τελειοῦν is more commonly used. In the High Priestly prayer of our Lord recorded in John 17 the verb τελειοῦν is used in the sense of 'consecrate' when in v.23 our Lord prays for his disciples ἵνα ᾧσιν τετελειωμένοι εἰς ἓν a translation of which could be 'that they may be consecrated together in one'. Similarly the verb is used in v.4 of the same chapter. The inference Torrance wishes to draw is that this denotes the High-Priestly consecration of our Lord in which the disciples also are consecrated. τελειοῦν is used again in Heb.7:28, 9:9, 10:1 in the context of the consecration of the Heavenly High Priest. The argument would be somewhat weak if it depended on the usage in the fourth gospel alone, but the Hebrews passages are a little more convincing. A further passage which Torrance mentions is Jn.3:35

ὁ Πατήρ ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Υἱόν καὶ πάντα δέδωκεν ἐν τῇ
χειρὶ αὐτοῦ.

(The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand).

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- (1) cf Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus XXI.19, XXII.2 in
PALMER, P.F. "Sacraments and Worship" p.11.
(2) TORRANCE, T.F., "Consecration and Ordination", article in
Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.11, 1958, p.225 ff.

This 'has reference to Christ's baptismal consecration in Jordan and his anointing of the Spirit' (1). Torrance concludes 'It is in Christ's own consecration of Himself on our behalf ... that we are made to share in His consecration in such a way that through Jesus Christ our High Priest we all with bodies washed with clean water and with our consciences sprinkled with His blood, draw near to worship God, that is as priests in the House of God ... here where the institutional priesthood is done away, all God's children are priests after the fashion of the first born in Israel. Just as we are given to share in His Sonship, so we are given to share in His Priesthood. In Christ our sonship and priesthood are the same' (2). In the Aaronic consecration referred to, the consecration is of Aaron, and his sons (i.e. the priests) are consecrated in and by virtue of his consecration, the 'filling of the hand' indicating that the priesthood is committed to the priest as a gift. We can now close this section by once more quoting Torrance 'The Church which He has made His own was anointed with Christ's Spirit at Pentecost by the baptism of the Spirit, so that through baptism all who come to Christ are not only given the right to become sons of God but are anointed with His anointing, receiving the chrism of the Spirit (I Jn.2:20,27; II Cor.1:21) or are given the seal of the Spirit. So in Christ we are restored to the priestly kingdom, for He has washed us from our sins in His blood and made us kings and priests unto God. Everyone who is a son of God through Christ the Son belongs to this Royal Priesthood and shares in Christ's self-consecration on our behalf. Christ alone is the Christos, the Anointed and Consecrated one, but we who follow Him in baptism are given to share in it, putting off the old impurity and putting on Christ as our priestly garment, clothed with His righteousness, His consecration, and His holiness' (3).

Baptism, however, is only the initiation into the universal priesthood. It is participation in the death and resurrection of our Lord which was the earthly and historical part of his sacrifice and priesthood. It is unrepeatable as that into which the Christian is baptized is unrepeatable. But, as we have seen (4), the sacrifice of Christ is also continuous since it consists further

(1) ibid p.229

(2) ibid p.229

(3) TORRANCE, T.P., "Consecration and Ordination" S.J.T. 1958 p.232.

(4) supra p.45

of his heavenly offering and intercession. It follows that if baptism is a participation in the historical and unrepeatable part of our Lord's sacrifice then the sacrament of the Eucharist is a participation in the continuing aspects of that sacrifice. But here we must be careful to re-iterate that baptism is into not only the historical Christ but the whole Christ - living and real now. Likewise Eucharistic participation in Christ involves a participation in Him as dying as well as risen and exalted. There are therefore close similarities between the two sacraments. 'Both are sacraments of the Church and extensions of the atonement; both are concerned with incorporation into Christ, with death and resurrection; both are made powerful by the operation of the Holy Spirit; both stand under the sign of the cross; both are sacraments of inaugurated eschatology' (1). Both baptism and the Eucharist are the sacramental means whereby the Church is incorporated into Jesus Christ her Lord, baptism being the initial and unrepeatable act of consecration into the universal priesthood and the Eucharist being the supreme expression and action of that priesthood.

III. THE EUCHARISTIC OFFERING OF THE PRIESTHOOD

In our description of the sacrifices of the old covenant we saw that the final stage was when a part of the victim was eaten. In the peace-offering the worshippers ate a certain portion, whilst this was confined to the priests in the sin-offering (unless it was for their own sins) (2). Hicks distinguished this aspect of the sharing of life in the sacrifice as the most primitive and ancient of the three elements, the other two being life transformed (in burning) and life surrendered. When we considered these ancient sacrifices as a type of the sacrifice of our Lord and saw how his incarnation, life, death, resurrection and exaltation conformed to, and at the same time fulfilled the ancient pattern we suggested that the sixth stage of his sacrifice was when he gave himself in the Eucharist and in the Holy Spirit (3). 'There is no meaning in the Communion-meal, in the language of eating the Body and drinking the Blood, except as the last stage of sacrifice' (4).

(1) CLARK, N. op.cit p.83.

(2) supra p. 31

(3) supra p. 32

(4) HICKS, F.C.H. article on "The Eucharistic Sacrifice" in "Ways of Worship" ed. Edwall, Hayman & Maxwell, p.207.

In the sin-offerings of the Old Testament the priests alone participated in the final stage of the sacrifice. The portion to be eaten was reserved for them alone because of its special holiness.(1) In the one sacrifice of the New Testament all participate in this final stage since all are now priests. In the peace-offerings of the Old Testament all the worshippers ate the fellowship meal. The Eucharist therefore is the extended fellowship meal which is an integral part of the sacrifice of our Lord.

It is here that we see the importance of the claim made earlier that the Heavenly High Priest is sacramentally present in the worship of the Church on earth (2). Again he is present in the identity of priest and sacrifice. He is the true celebrant present as Heavenly High Priest. As that which is given to be eaten and drunk he is present as sacrifice. As in the dual rôle he makes his offering to the Father in heaven so he now gives us not only his presence as priest but himself as sacrificed.

'This is my body' (τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου Mk.14:22). With these words Jesus gave the bread to the disciples at the last supper. Even if we omit the additional words in some readings of the Lukan version ('which is given for you') the sense and meaning are there, and it was a true instinct which led the copyist to insert them. 'His action alone, understood in the light of His ministry, had a discernible meaning: the bread which He gives is His body. Even in the absence of any utterance this bread is His body because he gives it and what He gives is His body, His life, His person ... His intention is to make it known that the action He performs in giving His bread accomplishes the same intention as the whole of His ministry, the fundamental intention which is summed up in His saying: the Son of man is come to give His life. If He says that what He gives is His body, He says it because what he gives is indeed His body' (3). As he had spent his life giving himself for them, so now he gives himself to them. 'The place Jesus had at that last supper is now occupied by the living, heavenly Lord. The ascension is the condition of his continuing presence. The sacrifice of Christ does not belong only to the past. The sacrifice fulfilled once for all

(1) cf. HICKS, F.C.N., op.cit. p.13.

(2) supra p. 106.

(3) LEENHARDT, F., "This is My Body" in "Essays on the Lord's Supper" by Cullmann & Leenhardt p.55.

is eternally valid, and as such it is effectively present in the sacrament. In this way Christ mediates the blessing of the new covenant to the new people of God' (1). In the Eucharist he ever gives himself anew to us, for this is an essential part of his eternal sacrifice.

It follows that the part of the worshippers is to receive him by eating the bread which is his body and drinking the wine which is his blood. In thus receiving we give ourselves to him. This is the point of St. Paul's allusion to the worship of idols in I Cor.

10:16,18 :-

Το ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλάμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστὶν; ... βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα· οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίουντες τὰς θυσίας κοινοῦ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου εἰσιν;

(The cup of blessing which we bless is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? ... See Israel after the flesh; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar?)

Here the apostle says that we partake of the sacrifice as did 'the partners in the altar' in Israel. This could refer to either the priests in the sin-offerings or the worshippers in the peace-offerings, but more likely the former (2). κοινωνία derives from the profane usage in Greek of κοινός meaning 'common'. The consequent biblical usage of κοινός as a synonym for unclean was best understood in its sense of being the opposite of ἅγιος, set apart for God. In κοινωνία there is a reversal to the secular sense and it means 'fellowship with, participation in anything' (3). St. Paul is saying that just as eating part of the sacrifices of the altar was a participation in that sacrifice so to eat the bread and drink the wine in the Eucharist is to participate in the sacrifice of our Lord. That is to say, the use of bread and wine in a context of Christian worship and ... in relation to Christ's death effects an actual participation in Christ's sacrificed life - and St. Paul's readers evidently know it. It actually unites the worshippers with Christ'(4).

(1) AULEN, G., "Eucharist and Sacrifice" p.159.

(2) FINDLAY, C.G., "E.C.T." Vol. 2 p.865 disagrees with this obvious interpretation.

(3) CREMER, H., *op.cit.* p.363.

(4) MOULE, C.F.D., "Worship in the New Testament" p.35.

But the point St. Paul is making in the passage is that if the Corinthians thus participate in the sacrifice of Christ then they cannot do likewise with demons, therefore they must abstain from eating in the pagan sacrifices. The implication is important: participating is an act of positive commitment since thus to eat is more than passively to receive. κοινωνία in a sacrifice means involvement with and commitment to the deity (1). Some very penetrating words on this aspect of the Eucharist were penned by the late D.M. Baillie when he said 'The very giving of ourselves to God is a receiving of Him, and the very receiving of Him is already a giving of ourselves. There is no other way of receiving Him except by giving ourselves to Him: and there is no way of giving ourselves to Him except by receiving Him. Both of these are happening in every single process, in every moment when we are worshipping God; and the supreme instrument and medium of that double movement, all in one, is the sacrament which we call the eucharist' (2). There is thus a mutual self-giving in the act of participating in the Eucharist, as we would expect in a true κοινωνία or fellowship. We must emphasize, however, that it is his self-giving alone that draws out ours. His sacrifice calls forth our self-offering. Thus the Eucharist is the means by which the λατρεία of Christ passes into us and hence we can say that we make the offering of ourselves in him and offer our sacrifice in his. He takes up into his sacrifice our sacrifice of self-presentation. 'As our Lord's offering of Himself to His Heavenly Father never ends, or can end; so in that offering His people, organically united to Him, one with Him, must be offered, and must offer themselves; and this they do in the expressive and touching symbols of the Eucharist' (3).

If in response to his giving of himself to us we make the offering of ourselves to and in him, this is again but something that he has given us, since when he gives himself it must also be as response to the Lord. Thus our offering is incorporated into his. But his offering is not only to us here in the earthly worship, it is also his eternal offering to the Father. He therefore, by giving himself to us also unites us with his heavenly offering and we therefore participate in the one sacrifice of Christ at the heavenly

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- (1) cf MAXWELL, W.D., "The Eucharist" p.2. 'The sacraments ... take place in the context of "meeting" and become "an involvement in salvation events".
- (2) BAILLIE, D.M. "The Theology of the Sacraments" p.122.
- (3) MILLIGAN, W., op.cit. p.266.

altar. 'The Eucharist takes us up into the latreia of the Suffering Servant of God, that self-offering to God which embraces all that we mean by worship and all that we mean by service'. (1) Thus Maxwell can say 'this earthly worship, linked to the heavenly by the living risen Christ, is part of the cosmic liturgy of the Lamb' (2). The worship of the earthly Eucharist is thus linked with the worship of heaven in the offering of the Heavenly High Priest. He is the centre of it, or as Nicholls has put it in the title of his book, he is the "Jacob's Ladder" upon which God's love comes down to earth, and man's response travels back to God' (3).

It is in this supreme act of the Church's worship that she is most truly the universal priesthood. In considering the Heavenly High Priesthood of our Lord we saw that his work consisted of offering, intercession, and blessing (4). So it is with the high priestly race. The offering they make is the offering of themselves in him, and he, as celebrant of the earthly worship and at the same time as the High Priest of their offering presents them in his own. And so 'At the Table of the Lord they are not only receivers of the gifts of Christ, but they officiate, they partake, they exercise the priesthood conferred upon them by Baptism and Confirmation' (5). In making this offering they exercise and actualise their priesthood, for by his grace and because of his sacrifice they are granted access to the presence of God in heaven where they make their offering.

The Heavenly High Priest 'always lives to make intercession' (Heb.7:25). In him the priesthood also offers intercessory prayers. Since he is present as Heavenly High Priest he joins the prayers of the faithful with the prayers of the saints at the heavenly altar (Rev.5:8, 8:3-4). The prayers of intercession which the Church makes are the earthly counterpart to his all-inclusive prayer. Aulen claims that our Lord's heavenly intercession is his heavenly offering, and hence can speak of his 'intercessory sacrifice' as being continuous 'while the sacrifice through which God reconciled the world to himself has been made once for all' (6). Such a claim seems to be based on a misunderstanding of the eternal dimension of

(1) NICHOLLS, W., op.cit. p.26.
(2) MAXWELL, W.D., "The Eucharist ..." p.4.
(3) NICHOLLS, W. op.cit. p.31.
(4) ch.2 passim.
(5) VAN DER LEROUW, G., in "Ways of Worship" p.229-30.
(6) AULEN, G. op.cit. p.153.

the one sacrifice of our Lord understood in its all-inclusive nature which we have outlined in chapter 2. As we have shown (1) our Lord intercedes on the basis of his sacrifice, and his intercession and offering are really two ways of looking at the same aspect of his work. So the intercession of the earthly priesthood is a lifting-up of the needs of the world which 'God so loved' (Jn.3:16). It is a mentioning of these needs in the supreme moment when we recognise the presence of the Heavenly High Priest in his Church on earth and when that Church is lifted up into the heavenly worship. The Eucharist has rightly, therefore been called 'the supreme moment of prayer' and 'this prayer is associated with the high-priestly prayer of Christ' (2). 'Therefore the church enters into the passion of the Redeemer, and in his name treavails in prayer for all mankind' (3).

In an interesting section of his unpublished thesis on 'The Meaning and Significance of Intercessory Prayer for the Christian' E.W.D. Young, after examining the place of the prayers of intercession in the early liturgies claims that 'the intercessions in early liturgies were the work of the Church proper' (4) and 'the "Great Intercession", belonging to or closely associated with the Eucharistic prayer, was ... shared only with the faithful' (5). This would accord with what we have seen to be the theology of the universal priesthood, viz, that baptism is the consecration or ordination into the priesthood, and that since the catechumens are not yet admitted to this priesthood and the intercessions are (theologically at any rate) the duty of the priesthood then on these grounds it would be reasonable to suppose that the catechumens would not be included as participators in the 'Great Intercession'.

The final aspect of the work of the Heavenly High Priest was that of blessing (6). As the blessing which he gives is not a derived blessing and since he himself is the blessing, so the priestly race is itself a blessing in and to the world. It is the channel or bearer of the blessing of its Heavenly High Priest. His providential care will be manifest through the serving, caring Church

(1) supra p.46

(2) AULEN, G., op.cit. p.10.

(3) ibid p.21.

(4) YOUNG, E.W.D., op.cit. p.76-7.

(5) ibid p.77.

(6) supra p.48.

in its διακονία . His acceptance in grace will be shown through the showing forth of his 'wonderful deeds' which include the offer of forgiveness (1). His bestowal of peace will come through the unceasing efforts in the world of men of those who are, by his indwelling Spirit, the world's peacemakers. (Matt.5:9)

(1) of ROBINSON, J.A.T. "On Being the Church in the World" p.80 where he claims that 'our ministry of absolution' is 'essentially part of the priestly function of the Church'.

A P P E N D I X

THE UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD IN LITURGICAL FORMS

Some of the ideas we have endeavoured to show as being integral to a doctrine of the priesthood of all believers have - not unnaturally - appeared in liturgical form from time to time. Some have similarly been obscured in the history of Christian worship. Since liturgy is the vehicle for the expression and embodiment of the Church's worship and since the Church is most truly actualised as the universal priesthood in its worship it seems fitting that this study should include a brief glance at some liturgical forms which show this.

The following are the ideas which emerge in this way :-

1. The presence of the Heavenly High Priest,
2. The partaking by the community in what we have seen to be the fullness of our Lord's sacrifice,
3. The offertory symbolising inter alia our offering to God,
4. The offering of ourselves,
5. Union with the worship of heaven,
6. The corporate nature of the Eucharistic offering, and
7. Prayers of Intercession.

We will see how each of these in turn is found in a few samples drawn almost at random from :-

- (a) the early liturgies or writings,
- (b) some of the historic liturgies,
- (c) Methodist worship, and most especially the "Hymns on the Lord's Supper" by John and Charles Wesley, and
- (d) some modern liturgies and the liturgical movement.

1. The presence of the Heavenly High Priest

(a) In early liturgies

St. James 'In this liturgy the thought of the coming of the Lord is also associated with the "Great Entry", when the unconsecrated elements are displayed to the people and brought to the altar, at the beginning of the mass of the faithful, to the strains of the cherubic hymn: "Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and stand with fear and awe, and put away all earthly thoughts; for Christ our God, the King of kings, cometh to be immolated and to be given for food to the faithful"' (1)

Mezarabic 'Be present, be present, O Jesus, thou good Priest, in our midst, as thou wast in the midst of thy disciples; sanctify this oblation, that we may receive the hallowed gifts through thy holy angel's hand, O Holy Lord, eternal redeemer' (2).

(1) BRILLIOTH, Y., "Eucharistic Faith and Practice" p.63.
(2) ibid

Armenia (St. Athanasius). 'Thou who didst remit the burden of our debts and gave us Thy only-begotten Son, both Debtor and Debt, Victim and Offering, Lamb and Bread of Heaven, High Priest and Sacrifice; for He is indeed the Distributor, and He is distributed among us without being consumed' (1).

(b) Historic Liturgies

The German Rite of Strasbourg 1537-9. 'The third: that the Lord truly delivers and gives to us His holy and sanctifying Body and Blood in the holy Supper under visible things, bread and wine ...' (2)

Anglican - Present Rite. 'We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he is us' (3).

(c) Methodism. In its rite the above prayer of humble access is repeated. The following hymns also reveal the sacrificial meal:

Hymn No. 4 Let all who truly bear
 The bleeding Saviour's name,
 Their faithful hearts with us prepare,
 And eat the Paschal Lamb.
Our Passover was slain
 At Salon's hallowed place,
Yet we who in our tents remain
 shall gain His largest grace.

This eucharistic feast
 Our every want supplies,
And still we by his death are blest,
 And share His sacrifice;
By faith His flesh we eat,
 Who here His passion show,
And God out of His holy seat
 shall all His gifts bestow.

Hymn No. 35 O Thou Paschal Lamb of God,
 Feed us with Thy flesh and blood;
Life and strength Thy death supplies,
 Feast us on Thy sacrifice. (4)

(d) Modern. In the liturgical movement great emphasis is laid on the Eucharist as a meal. So Robinson can say that 'somehow we must get through to people in such a way that they can really see it - which means in such a way that they can literally see it - that this is a meal before it is a 'service' (5). Pope Pius XII in his encyclical 'Mediator Dei' takes up the theme: 'But this (spiritual communion) is not enough. For, banqueting on the bread of Angels we can share in the sacrifice by "sacramental" communion ...' (6). In the 'Experimental Liturgy' there

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- (1) MAXWELL, W.D., "The Eucharist ..." p.9.
 - (2) MAXWELL, W.D., "An Outline of Christian Worship" p.105.
 - (3) BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER (South African) p.241.
 - (4) RATTENBURY, J.E., op.cit. pps. 196, 206.
 - (5) ROBINSON, J.A.T., "On Being the Church in the World" p.67.
 - (6) PALMER, P.F. op.cit. p.319.

is an echo of I Cor.10:16 :

Celebrant: 'The Bread which we break, is it not a communion of the Body of Christ?'

Peoples: 'We who are many are one Bread, one Body: for we all partake of the one Bread' (1).

3. The Offertory symbolising our offering to God

(a) In Early Liturgies

Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus. 'To (the bishop) then let the deacons bring up the oblation (prosphora), and he with all the presbyters laying his hand on the oblation shall say "eucharistising" thus ... It is right for everyone to bring his prosphora" (i.e. to his baptism) (2).

St. Cyprian. 'Cyprian points out that the faithful regularly (hence apparently every Sunday) bring an oblation along to church, for he is rebuking the rich lady who comes to church without any oblation (sine sacrificio) and therefore communicates of what the poor have offered. So we must presume that an offertory procession has already been introduced, namely that offertory procession of the faithful which subsequently was to be found in all countries, and which flourished in the Occident for over a thousand years' (3).

Speaking of the meaning of the later Roman rite Hebert says: 'The offering of the gifts must always have been the speaking symbol of the people's will to offer up themselves to God; and here the self-oblation of the Church, the Corpus Christi, is set forth as the matter of the sacramental Corpus Christi' (4).

(b) Historic Liturgies

Luther's Formula Missae. Brilioth records the disappearance in the Reformation of this essential part of the Eucharist: 'the pruning-knife must be more rigorously applied; and of the latter half of the service only a torso is left. First, the whole Offertory disappears; the bread and wine may be prepared during the Creed or after the sermon; ...' (5).

(c) Methodism. Methodism followed the Anglican practice where the emphasis in the Offertory was upon the alms, while the preparation of the elements by the celebrant took place at the credence table and altar. These were almost unperceived by the people. Certainly in Methodism, where the elements are normally prepared by a steward before the service begins, there is little or no symbolism of the Offertory apart from the "collection for the poor".

(d) Modern. In the modern movement the symbolic value of the Offertory has been brought out again. 'One of the principal outward and visible changes which the Liturgical Movement has made in the manner in which we celebrate the liturgy is the offertory procession - the laity presenting gifts of bread and wine to the priest in the Holy Communion service ... To present the bread and wine as symbols of our life - creation ... industry ...' (6).

Church of South India Rite. 'A hymn is sung, and the bread and wine for the Communion, together with the alms of the people, are brought forward and placed on the Table.

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- (1) COPE, G. et.al. op.cit. p.44
(2) DIX, G. "The Shape of the Liturgy" p.110.
(3) JUNGSMANN, J.A., "The Early Liturgy" p.116.
(4) HEBERT, A.G. "Liturgy and Society" p.77.
(5) BRILIOTH, Y., op.cit. p.116.
(6) SHANES, A.R. "The Liturgical Movement and the Local Church" p.81-2.

Who crucified with Jesus are,
And follow where their Saviour trod.

Saviour to Thee our lives we give,
Our meanest sacrifice receive,
And to Thine own oblation join,
Our suffering and triumphant Head,
Through all Thy states Thy members lead,
And seat us on the throne Divine.

Hymn No. 153 Father, our sacrifice receive;
Our souls and bodies we present,
Our goods, and vows, and praises give,
Whate'er Thy bounteous love hath lent.

Thou canst not now our gift despise,
Cast on that all-atoning Lamb,
Mix'd with that bleeding Sacrifice,
And offer'd up through Jesu's name. (1)

- (d) Modern. Here 'the Liturgical Movement sees that the Christian doctrine of the priesthood of Christ is the key both to the re-integration and wholeness of life and to participation in the Body of Christ. This priesthood is the offering of Christ to the Father which is carried on to the end of time in His Body. It is the offering of ourselves ... through the eternal offering of Christ on behalf of the world. The priesthood is this action of Christ, which becomes our action through Him' (2).

Experimental Liturgy. 'Receive, O Father, we beseech thee, these gifts which we have brought to be offered to thee, in the unity of the Spirit; accept in them the sacrifice of our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN' (3).

5. Union with the worship of heaven

(a) In Early Liturgies

The Sursum Corda and Sanctus. 'Cyprian ... is the first to mention the Sursum Corda which appears hereafter as the introduction to the Prayer of Consecration in every known liturgy' ... (4)

Ministers: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up unto the Lord.
Ministers: Let us give thanks unto the Lord.
People: It is meet and right so to do.

The Sanctus, referred to by Clement of Rome in his letter to the Corinthians (5), possibly has its roots in the synagogue service (6). It also appears in Cyprian in a form that came widely to be used: 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory;
Glory be to Thee, O Lord'. (7)

'This is not merely an injunction (as it is commonly understood) to lift up our hearts metaphorically in joy and thanksgiving, but to lift them up in actuality to where Christ is, to join Him in the heavenly places of triumph and power where He reigns as Lamb and offers as our Great High Priest. Thereafter the Preface quickly moves on to express ecstatically our fellowship in adoration with the heavenly host when "with cherubim and seraphim, and all the company of heaven we praise and laud Thy glorious name, evermore saying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Heaven and earth are

(1) RATTENBURY, J.E., op.cit. p.236, 244.
(2) SHANDS, A.R., op.cit. p.18.
(3) COPE, G., et.al. op.cit. p.40.
(4) MAXWELL, W.D., "Outline" p.15.
(5) ibid p.8
(6) cf. BRILLIANT, Y., op.cit. p.24.
(7) MAXWELL, W.D., "Outline" p.15.

full of Thy glory" - a hymn offered "day and night", i.e. continuously before the throne of God⁽¹⁾.

- (b) In Historic Liturgies. The above appears, as we have noted in all the great liturgies of Christendom and there is no need therefore to repeat it again.

- (c) In Methodism

Hymn No. 96 The Church triumphant in Thy love,
 Their mighty joys we know;
 They sing the Lamb in hymns above,
 And we in hymns below.

 Thee in Thy glorious realm they praise,
 And bow before Thy throne;
 We in the kingdom of Thy grace,
 The kingdoms are but one.

 The holy to the holiest leads,
 From hence our spirits rise,
 And he that in Thy statutes treads
 Shall meet Thee in the skies. (2)

- (d) Modern. The modern liturgical trends have not discarded the ancient tradition and we find the same strains of praise and unity with the heavenly host in e.g. the South India rite (3) and the Experimental Liturgy (4).

6. The corporate nature of the Eucharistic offering

- (a) In Early Liturgies

Clement of Rome. 'Unto the high-priest (-the celebrant-bishop) his special "liturgies" have been appointed, and to the priests (presbyters) their special place is assigned, and on the levites (deacons) their special "deaconings" are imposed; the layman is bound by the ordinances for the laity. Let each of you, brethren, make eucharist to God according to his own order, keeping a good conscience and not transgressing the appointed rule of his "liturgy"' (5). 'The whole church prayed in the Person of Christ; the whole church was charged with the office of 'proclaiming' the revelation of Christ; the whole church offered the eucharist ... All that which (Christ) has done once for all as the Priest and Proclaimer of the kingship of God, the church which is 'the fulfilment of Him' enters into and fulfils' (6).

Justin Martyr. 'And on that day which is called after the sun, all ... gather together for a communal celebration ... all stand up together to recite prayers. After the prayers ... the bread and wine mixed with water are brought, and the president offers up prayers and thanksgiving, as much as in him lies. The people chime in with an Amen ...' (7)

Jungmann comments: 'Justin is a layman. With a certain pride he emphasizes this right of the Christian congregation to declare its assent to the president's prayer of thanksgiving. The service is, therefore, truly a community service, corporate worship; there are no idle spectators or listeners; all are actively cooperating' (8).

(1) MAXWELL, W.D., "The Eucharist ..." p.8.
(2) PATTERSON, J.N., op.cit. p.224.
(3) p.5
(4) p.42.
(5) DIX, C. op.cit. p.1
(6) ibid p.29
(7) JUNGMANN, J.A. op.cit. p.42.
(8) ibid p.44.

(b) In Historic Liturgies

Gallican. 'A notable feature of the Gallican rite was the place it appears to have given to the people in worship. There were many responses and musical parts' (1).

Calvinian. Maxwell quotes Doumergue's estimate of Calvin's rite: 'Shall it be said that ... the true Calvinian cultus was by nature cold and impoverished? Those who were present at the services have told us that often they could not keep back the tears of their emotion and joy. Singings and prayers, adoration and edification, confession and absolution of sins, acts both formal and spontaneous: all the essential elements of worship were there. And, perhaps not less important, they were united in an organism that was very simple, yet supple and strong' (2).

(c) In Methodism. Despite the weakness of the service in confining most of the spoken parts to the celebrant, there are two respects in which the corporate nature is brought out:

(i) in the important place given to the singing of hymns. Whilst adequate scope is given for this in most Methodist services, it is particularly interesting to witness the spontaneous singing of hymns in African services, where, whilst the communicants are walking to the communion rail and receiving the sacramental elements the rest of the congregation sing well-known and popular hymns. The effect is that a sense of corporate oneness is created which the more sophisticated (though dignified) European worship seldom achieves.

(ii) In the custom of communicating by 'tables'. 'The communicants are led up by stewards in groups, according to the number who can kneel at the sanctuary steps at one time. They all kneel together and remain kneeling until the last person has received Communion; whereupon the celebrant dismisses them with a blessing, such as: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" ... We come to the Lord's table not as individuals but as members of a family' (3).

(d) Modern.

The Church of South India Rite. The corporate nature of the worship in this rite is revealed in the fact that there are a possible 38 responses and prayers read by the congregation. Of these 6 are Aens. By comparison in the 'long' Methodist order there are only 18 responses of which 8 are Aens. In the South India rite the prayer for the whole estate of Christ's Church is broken down into litany form with the congregation taking a responsive part.

The Liturgical Movement. Shands declares 'In both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches, the clergyman alone is the principal focus. The rôle of the liturgical assembly in worship has largely disappeared. We have been trying to indicate a way back, so that the laity can assume their rightful rôle. It must be a way which places the principal stress on God and not on us. The answer to this dilemma is, we believe, a return to a more comprehensive understanding of the priesthood as something spread throughout the whole liturgy and not concentrated in the celebrant saying the Prayer of Consecration. If the laity could see that it is the lifting up of their hearts to God in thanksgiving which

(1) MAXWELL, W.D., "Outline" p.48.
(2) ibid p.119.
(3) GARRETT, T.S., op.cit. p.70.

is the cornerstone of the Consecration Prayer, then perhaps the true proportions of Christ, minister, and laity would begin to come clear. When the laity begin to realize that they are in part at least 'co-consecrators' ... they will be more ready to see Christ is the only true consecrator at the liturgy' (1).

7. Prayers of Intercession

(a) In Early Liturgies

The Liturgy of the Apostolic Constitutions. 'We pray thee, O Lord, for Thy holy Church spread from one end of the world to the other ... that Thou wouldst keep it unshaken and untroubled ..., and for myself, who am nothing now offering to Thee, for the deacons and for all the clergy ..., for the king ..., and those in authority, the army, for the saints in all ages who have pleased Thee ..., whose names Thou knowest ..., for this people ..., the virgins ..., widows ..., women in labour ..., and for the babes ..., for this city ..., the sick, those in bitter slavery, in exile, in prison, those that hate and persecute us for Thy Name's sake, those who wander ..., the catechumens, those possessed of demons, the penitents ..., for reasonable weather, the fruits of the earth ..., the absent' (2).

(b) Historic Liturgies

Roman Rite. 'And so, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, we humbly pray and beseech Thee, most gracious Father, to accept and bless these gifts ... which we offer Thee in the first place for Thy holy Catholic Church. Be Thou pleased to keep and guide her in peace and unity throughout the world ... Remember, Lord, thy servants and handmaids M and N, and all here present, whose faith and devotion are known to Thee, and for whom we offer, or who themselves offer up this sacrifice of praise to Thee, on behalf of themselves and all who are theirs, for the redemption of their souls, to gain the hope of safety and well being, and who pay homage to Thee, their living, true, eternal God' (3).

Anglican. '... beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: And grant, that all they that do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech thee also to lead all nations into the way of righteousness and peace, and to direct all Kings, Presidents and Rulers that under them the world may be godly and quietly governed ... Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons ... And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and specially to this congregation here present ... And we most humbly beseech thee of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity ...' (4)

(c) In Methodism. The prayer of intercession follows the lines of the Anglican one above. In the 'Hymns on the Lord's Supper' there are the following references to the intercession of our Lord :

Hymn No. 104 Returning to His Father's throne,
 Hear all the interceding Son,
 And join in that eternal prayer:
 He prays that we with Him may reign,
 And He that did the kingdom gain
 For us, shall soon conduct us there.

(1) SHANDS, A.R., op.cit. p.80-81.
(2) MAXWELL, W.D., "Outline" p.31-2.
(3) PALMER, P.F., op.cit. p.93-4.
(4) B.C.P. (South African) p.233-4.

Hymn No. 117 For us He ever intercedes,
 His heaven-deserving passion pleads,
 Presenting us before the throne;
 We want no sacrifice beside,
 By that great Offering sanctified,
 One with our Head, for ever one. (1)

(d) Modern.

The Liturgical Movement. 'A ... sign of the rediscovery of the meaning of the Church seems to me to be the place accorded to intercession. Intercession is a duty which proceeds from the reality of the Church ... It is in fact practiced regularly by the Taizé, Pomeyrol, and Grandchamp communities, which see it as one of their essential tasks, as it is also their aim to recall us all to the great duty of intercession' (2). 'In some churches now, one finds a large ledger at the back of the church in which the congregation is invited to enter their intercessions. These intercessions are then collected and read aloud by a layman as part of the offertory during the Parish Communion' (3).

From this brief survey it can be clearly seen that, whatever the Church may have thought and taught about the nature of her priesthood she has nevertheless fulfilled it. In her worship (with which is combined her witness) she has embodied the elements and principles by which she is the priesthood of all believers.

(1) RATFEBURY, J.W., op.cit. p.228, 232.
(2) BENOIT, J.D., op.cit. p.54.
(3) SHARDS, A.R., op.cit. p.104.

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