

Hebrews — Priesthood

Hebrews 5: 1-14; Hebrews 7: 1-25; Hebrews 9: 1-14; Hebrews 10: 1-14; Hebrews 10: 12-22.

Reading with G. Davison extracted from "Precious Things" 1956-1990

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When this epistle was suggested for our present series of readings it was not with a view to giving a general exposition of the whole of the epistle, but rather to consider the Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is why we begin at Hebrews 5, where this subject is about to be opened out. The Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus, has been introduced earlier in Hebrews 3, but the subject is more fully opened out in this chapter. It may help to see the connection between the Aaronic and the Melchisedec priesthoods, both of which have been taken up by our Lord Jesus Christ in answer to their typical foreshadowings. We shall see that there are two aspects of the priesthood of our Lord; what we venture to call the wilderness conditions; and the Minister of the Sanctuary, leading that company in holy liberty to God.

Priesthood is a service which was inaugurated by God, for no one takes up the position unless he is called to it by God. So Christ has not glorified Himself to be made a High Priest, "but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee", also said, "Thou are a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec". Priesthood must be a wonderful thing for Christ is glorified in relation to it by God Himself.

We rightly insist on the fact that the work of Christ in relation to redemption is done. He said ere He left this world, "It is finished". While that is true, as we rightly emphasize in the preaching of the gospel, the work of Christ is still going on in relation to those who have believed the gospel and now stand in relationship with God. Christ in glory is officially the Head, the Lord and the Priest; and these titles describe for us His present activities at the right hand of God as supporting and leading in safety through the wilderness those who have trusted him as Saviour. Hence His priesthood both Godward and manward has in view the supporting of the divine system He has brought into being as the result of His work upon the cross.

In relation to His present service is it not more His Person that is stressed rather than His work?

When we had the readings on the Ark, it was pointed out that the Ark was covered with pure gold within and without, and it was said that if He had not been God He could not have made God known. We noted that the altar of incense was also covered with pure gold. Only One Who is God could bring the revelation of God to man, and only One Who is God could adequately sustain a company in relationship with God. So in this chapter the Priest is THE SON.

God has found One Who can sustain the full thought of priesthood according to His own mind. In the systems of men nothing has been more vitiated with human ideas than priesthood. It has been reduced

to the level of men, but here we get priesthood of the highest possible kind according to the mind of God, and a blessed Person in view Who can sustain it there. So we have both His personal and His official glories stressed, one in relation to Psalm 2 and the other in relation to Psalm 110. Only One of such power could sustain priesthood according to God.

In that connection we note the statement which has already appeared in Hebrews 2, "in things pertaining to God" (v. 1). We may add that if we have reference to His personal glory in verse 5, and His official glory in verse 6, we have also His moral glory in verse 7.

That is particularly necessary in relation to His priesthood for had he not been morally perfect in His Manhood He could not have drawn near to us to help us in our need. So while He is Son and Priest, He has drawn near to us in Manhood, and we are able thus to appreciate both His personal and official worth.

What is the meaning of those words, "in things pertaining to God"?

His priesthood has been inaugurated for the sustaining of the divine system which has been brought into being, and in order to sustain the people of God in relation to it. Both things are in the verse, "for men" and "pertaining to God". It is because we are men that we need this Priest, but He is established to sustain us in the things pertaining to God. While we come to Him with all the details of our lives, He sustains and encourages only in that which is according to the will of God. We must not attempt to detach His priesthood from God's side to our side, as though it was merely to get us through the wilderness. Rather He sustains us in the wilderness in relation to the things pertaining to God. So while I may make movements here and seek His guidance in relation to those movements, He will guide according to the will of God.

Do men need to be sustained because of the conditions in which they are found?

Yes! You will remember Aaron was consecrated to bear the iniquity of the children of Israel, and he stood for them representatively in every aspect of their responsible life in relation to God. If we are to keep moving in relation to the will of God we shall constantly need to be sustained by the Priest. It is in view of response to God, as we read "offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin".

It is, of course, mediatorial, for He is there on behalf of both God and man, in order to sustain men who stand in relation to God to move rightly for God, whether Godward or manward.

There will be holy substance in our hearts as they intelligently respond to God, and the priesthood is to sustain this. Whilst God has given a full revelation of Himself yet there could not be a response from my heart apart from the priesthood of Christ. This anticipates Hebrews 10, where we are exhorted to draw near, into the very presence of God.

Will you distinguish between "gifts and sacrifices"?

We have the gain of the tabernacle system to turn to in explaining these things for it is always the tabernacle which is in view in Hebrews, not the temple. When Aaron was sanctified, anointed and consecrated in his robes, he was there representatively to offer to God the gifts and sacrifices of the people who brought them to God. The first sacrifices offered were offered to sanctify the priests, but thereafter they offered the sacrifices on the altar of burnt offering, and Aaron offered the bullock and the goat on the great day of atonement. Then there were gifts brought to God such as the firstfruits, oil for the light, spices for incense, etc., and the last act lay with the priest to offer to God that which was brought. They all represented the response of the people to God.

Were not the sacrifices "gifts"?

No! For most of them were obligatory, but these are quite distinct, "gifts and sacrifices". The point obviously is that every sacrifice or gift brought to God was presented by the priest.

Why are gifts put before sacrifices for sins?

It is "things pertaining to God", not things pertaining to man. Even when the offerings are outlined God begins with the burnt offering, not with the sin offering. We do well to note where God begins, and it will give us a higher estimation of the things which do come from our side. The gifts are on a higher plane than sacrifices for sin which really have in view the failure of the people of God.

So in these first four verses we have things said about Aaron which could never be said of Christ. His condition was descriptive of the condition of the people whom he represented.

Were there not priests before Aaron?

Yes! Melchisedec was there first, a point we do well to remember. Jethro was a priest, and there were provisional priests in Israel before the tabernacle was built; but the Aaronic and the Melchisedec orders are in view here. We must note again that they did not take this honour upon themselves, "but he that is called of God, as was Aaron". It is a divine institution. This ought to assure us of the importance of the subject, for had it been humanly instituted we might have doubted its utility, but when instituted of God and One called to fill that office we can be assured of its importance.

We must remember that the priesthood is not something merely to fall back upon in time of need. Thank God that is included; but it also has in view response to God for His glory. "He that offereth praise glorifieth God", and the various movements of the Priest have this in view.

Would not the things pertaining to God have in view God's revealing Himself in Christ and our response to that?

There could not be a response till there had been a revelation. We must know God if we are to approach Him and eventually the response will be adequate to the revelation. It is one of the great points of the priesthood of Christ to bring that about.

We noted when reading of the Ark that it was one and a half cubits high. The Table of Shewbread was one and a half cubits high. The Grate of the Brazen Altar on which the sacrifices rested was in the middle of the Altar which was three cubits high, and so the Grate would be one and a half cubits high also. One has thought about that measure; it is seen in the Most Holy Place, in the Holy Place and in the Court. When Christ came into this world -the answer to the Ark — He made God known to us. Then we see typified in the Table that He sustains us in relation to that revelation; and in His sacrifice upon the cross He has met the claims of God. He only could make God known; He only could meet the claims of God in relation to sin, and He only could sustain a company formed as the result of these two things. That is why we said earlier that only One Who is God can sustain us in relation to God.

In the rebellion of Korah, they attempted to take upon themselves an honour which God did not give to them.

Uzziah was guilty of the same sin, and it gives us to see the importance of being "called of God". What a serious thing for a man to force himself into an office to which God has not called him. It is one of the great errors of Christendom to which Jude alludes. On the one hand the priesthood of *all* saints is denied, and on the other the priesthood of Christ is usurped by men who dare to pronounce the forgiveness of sins, and of whom one claims to be the vicar of Christ. It is all in opposition to the teaching of Scripture.

It is remarkable to note in verse 5 that even Christ did not glorify Himself to be made priest. If priesthood is an office of divine institution to be filled by divine calling, it is a mark of the perfection of the subject Manhood of our Lord that He fills that office by divine appointment.

It is worthy of note that according to the New Translation, "Thou" art My Son; "I" have begotten Thee, and "Thou" are a priest, are all emphatic and show the importance of this matter. It is the action of God, yet intensifying the point that it is this Person Who is the Priest.

The word used here for "begotten" is not the same word as that used by John for the "only begotten" Son. The word used by John means one only of that character, and is used to preserve the truth that when the Son came into Manhood He did not change in His Person, hence we have "Who *is* in the bosom of the Father" (New Trans.), not *was*. It is His Person that is guarded there, But the word used here has to do with His birth into the world and God's declaring His relation to Him in Manhood. The word John uses does not refer to His birth into this world, but is the declaration of Who the Person is Who came into flesh; we believe He was the only begotten Son before He came into this world and abides so. The word has nothing to do with begetting at all. It is used in the Septuagint to translate the word which Mr. Darby translates as "my only one", and which the Authorised Version gives as "my darling". The word John uses is found once in this epistle and is used of Isaac as the only one of Abraham. Here we see the force of the word, for Isaac was not the only one begotten by Abraham but he was the only one of that character. If the word meant begetting, it could never have been used of Isaac. This may help in view of the erroneous things which have been said about it of late. In this chapter it is the relationship to God in time, but in John His relationship eternally. It is, of course, the same blessed Person in relationship to God eternally Who is acknowledged by God as in relationship to Him in time.

While in a different condition as coming into Manhood, He the Son is still recognized as in relationship to God as Son. Some object to the term condition, but what we simply mean by it is the flesh and blood condition into which He came and in which He obviously did not subsist before coming into this world.

So coming into time did not make Him the Son?

No! That is what we are trying to guard. It is the Son Who came into time, and while in flesh and blood He was in a new condition yet it was the Son Who came into it; He abides Son when in it, and is so called by God.

It is important on that line to remember that the Manhood of Christ continues.

In the opening of this epistle the Son stands in contrast to angels and His personal glory as such is maintained though coming into subject Manhood to accomplish the will of God. We are sure He abides in Manhood for ever. That is important in connection with this priesthood which continues for ever.

Now in verse 6 we move on to the quotation from Psalm 110. The same One Who says, "Thou art My Son", speaks again of a Person in Psalm 110, "Thou art a priest for ever". If we were not able to gather from Psalm 110 Who this Person is, we can certainly do so now in the light of Heb. 5: it is the Son. This Priest is established by an oath and God will not repent.

We can see now why Melchisedec had no earthly genealogy. This is one of the greatest supports of the truth of the eternal Sonship of Christ.

Does Psalm 110 suppose His resurrection?

It does! "Sit Thou at My right had, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool". You know that the terms there are "Jehovah said to Adonai". That is what puzzled the educated Jews when the Lord asked them

the question concerning His Personal glory, but here as simple believers today we have the solution to that problem.

Do we understand from verse 6 that Christ will always function as a Priest?

I gather that this term "for ever" means as long as time will last. The main thought in the term is that it will never be altered or passed on to another as the priesthood of Aaron was.

Is there any suggestion anywhere that priesthood will continue in eternity?

Not that I am aware of.

Will there ever be a time when we shall not be dependent upon someone for the administration of blessing?

We may put it this way, there will never be a time when we shall not need a mediator between us and God even in eternity.

I was thinking of 1 Cor. 15.

So am I! And there we gather that the Son remains in Manhood and will ever be the One through Whom we are kept in conscious relationship with God.

There does not seem to be any need for priestly function after the world to come, though it is obvious that Christ remains a Man. The word perpetuity is used later, and means without interruption. It is not there a question of going on to an end, but it is a priesthood which goes on without any interruption. The priesthood of Aaron was interrupted by death but this one will never be.

We have to remember that while the Lord is functioning now after the pattern of Aaron, He will come forth in the world to come after the order of Melchisedec.

Is not the Aaronic priesthood for the wilderness and the Melchisedec for the land?

Yes! Though we said before it has two sides, to sustain me in the wilderness and to get me to God.

What you said about Melchisedec helps us to understand why it is brought in here. The only thing said about him is — he lived.

Perhaps the two outstanding things connected with these two orders of priesthood are: in Aaron — intercession; and in Melchisedec — blessing. It was after the battle in which Abraham was the victor that Melchisedec comes to light, and it will be after the last great battle in which Israel will triumph that Christ in the Melchisedec priesthood will come forth. That is why we said that at present, though established as Melchisedec, He is functioning after the pattern of Aaron. So long as we are in the wilderness we shall need Him as such. Whatever the meaning of this word "for ever" is, whether as to character or duration, we can be encouraged by the fact that so long as a priest is needed there will be one.

It has been pointed out that Israel was never without a priest in the wilderness, for Eleazar was robed in the priestly garments before Aaron died. I judge where the term "high priest" is used Aaron is in view, for Melchisedec was never a high priest which involves others sharing with him. Though it says, "a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" I gather that the two thoughts of priesthood are involved. "High Priest" would refer to His present functioning, while Personally He is after the order of Melchisedec. I cannot see how "high priest" could refer to Melchisedec in any other sense.

Referring again to the Scripture where Melchisedec first comes to light, it was after the slaughter of the kings. It has been said that the first battle in Scripture typifies the last one, Armageddon, and when

Melchisedec met Abraham he pronounced a divine title which had not been known before, "the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth". Until Christ takes possession of both heaven and earth for God He is functioning after the pattern of Aaron, but when He does come forth as the true Melchisedec He will sustain the whole scene and fill it with the praises of God.

Melchisedec was a king. Personally, his name means "King of Righteousness, and after that King of Salem, which is King of Peace". Kingship has the world to come in view.

If we turn to Zechariah 6: 12-15, we have the whole matter set out for us. These men are crowned in relation to the Branch spoken of in verse 12. Isaiah speaks twice of the Branch, and Jeremiah also speaks twice of the Branch, and here in Zechariah we have it spoken of twice. Isaiah refers to Christ as the Branch officially; Jeremiah morally; and Zechariah personally, for we are told here, "Whose Name is The BRANCH". "Even He shall build the temple of the LORD; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (v. 13.). Royalty and Priesthood are brought together and the counsel of peace between them both. This is a clear reference to the Melchisedec priesthood in the world to come.

We do not presume to know what will be in the eternal state, but we do not read of a priest there, so we must leave it. It does say that in the world to come righteousness will reign and that is in line with this, while in the eternal state righteousness will dwell.

We should remember the word "for ever" means that certain things have been brought in which will abide. There was nothing of an abiding character in Judaism, death and such like things were always occurring, but this word is brought in to show that final things had now come in and were to abide. That is why the term is used so often in this epistle.

Would that not be why the Son is brought before us so much? Being eternal, all that stood in relation to Him would be abiding, as He could not be superseded by anyone.

That is why we stressed that His personal glory comes in before His official glory.

In regard to what was said earlier about "high priest", note in verse 5 this term is used, but in verse 6 "Thou art a priest" not "high priest", and I believe both things are incorporated in verse 10 — "Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec". All may not agree to this but I think it is right. High Priest is comparative, but Melchisedec is not comparative with any other associate. I judge the word "high" shows Him to be after the order of Aaron, He being personally after the order of Melchisedec. I do not think Christ is functioning after the order of Melchisedec as yet, but He is ordained of God as after that order. It is a point most difficult to grasp but we must see the two orders running together in Christ. Verses 7, 8, 9 all refer to the Aaronic character, verse 10 to Melchisedec. They are so closely interwoven that it is difficult to see both things in one Person. The point is — the One who is Priest now to support us in wilderness conditions, is the same One Who will support us in the world to come when we leave the wilderness to share in the kingdom.

We get all the anti-typical privileges suggested by Aaron in One Who is personally greater than Aaron. Not one thing typified by Aaron is lost, but we have them in One Whose priesthood supersedes that of Aaron, and He administers all the privileges typified by Aaron yet in the dignity of the Melchisedec order.

So we read of Christ as "a great high priest" (Heb. 4: 14). He is great as well as high.

Do we not anticipate those blessings which will come in with Melchisedec in the world to come?

We do in the power of the Spirit! But what we have here is the actual functioning of priesthood. In

answer to the Aaronic, He takes us *in* to God as we shall see; Melchisedec comes *out* from God to bring blessing to men, but let us remember it is the same Person Who does both things. Here is a priest great enough not only to sustain us in the wilderness but to set us all in our places in the world to come.

What is the difference between the Priest and the Advocate?

The Priest would give succour to prevent us from falling, but the Advocate would restore us if we have fallen. Three things are said to be ministered to preserve us — succour (Heb. 2); sympathy (Heb. 4); and salvation (Heb. 7), all on the wilderness side.

Will the Lord not give up the Aaronic line and function altogether as Melchisedec in the world to come?

It does seem to be so according to the prophecies, for He will sustain both heaven and earth in that day. We must keep in mind that here it is the order spoken of, not the future function.

It is clear that when we read of one going in with sacrifices Aaron is in view, for that is never said of Melchisedec. "High Priest" stands obviously in relation to the sons of Aaron, but Melchisedec had no sons; he stands alone.

The qualifications of Aaron are outlined in verses 1 to 3; the qualifications of Christ are seen in verses 7 to 9. There are most remarkable qualifications in verse 7. "In the days of His flesh", with a view to representing this company, He offered up "prayers", a word meaning "requests"; and "supplications", a word meaning "seeking a divine favour". It was with "strong crying and tears" — this refers to the garden of Gethsemane — "unto Him that was able to save Him from death", or more correctly "out of death"; and He was heard because of His piety, as the word really means.

The qualifications for this priesthood are stated before He entered into His priesthood, then in verse 10 He is "saluted of God" — as J.N.D. renders it. He has perfectly qualified for the office.

In Psalm 22 the Lord says He cried and was not heard, yet here it says He was. Why?

In the correct translation we see the answer. He could not be saved "from" death but He was saved "out of" death. In the beginning of that Psalm He was not heard, but after the work was accomplished He was heard (verses 2 and 21). If He could not be saved *from* death, He was saved "*out of death*" after doing the work, and that is what is referred to here.

Would the obedience here be the same as that in Philippians 2?

Yes! But note the words "learned obedience". While the Lord must have *known* what obedience was, yet He *experienced* it in perfect Manhood in the world, for He had never *experienced* obedience before coming into Manhood. Obedience was seen perfectly in Him. The Garden of Gethsemane depicts a scene of the most intense suffering.

We shall never have to face what the Lord faced in the Garden, but we may be subjected to the most intense suffering in seeking to carry out the will of God. If so, we can be sure of the support of our Great High Priest Who has gone through such a trial.

It says He became the author of eternal salvation.

Yes! And having so suffered in His spirit, in view of that, He can support those who obtain that salvation and may need His further support in working out the will of God as a consequence. Eternal salvation is in contrast to the temporal salvation which Israel as a nation had experienced. This is final and complete. Being made perfect has in view the experience through which He passed on the way to that, and it means that He is now able to succour His people no matter what amount of testing they may

be subjected to. It means He is fully qualified.

Perhaps the difficulty we have in apprehending these things is seen in our closing verses. It is apparently a subject which requires a certain amount of growth to understand. Had they not been so desirous of clinging to the earthly things of Judaism, they would have grasped it more readily. It is testing to see that the apostle is led into this long digression because of the immature state of their hearts; and how slow we are at times to take these things in.

I must say that when I have heard things which I have not understood, I have not blamed the minister. I have always blamed myself. The constant cry of "Give us something simple" is a palpable acknowledgment of the babe state out of which many ought to have grown. Let us rather give ourselves more fully to these things, and thus seek to understand the truths that God has so graciously given to us. We shall then be in a fuller enjoyment of the vastness of the sphere He has brought us into today, and more able to answer to it intelligently for the pleasure of our God.

Hebrews 7: 1-25.

We have passed over the exhortations of Hebrews 6 where the apostle seeks to encourage the saints to go on to perfection. This exhortation has a twofold application, for while there were those who belonged to the company through faith, but had made slow progress, there were others in the company who had no faith, and many of these were turning back to Judaism. It is clear that the opening verse of this chapter links on with Hebrews 5: 10.

Would it help to consider the circumstances in which Melchisedec met Abraham?

We mentioned in our previous reading that the account of this meeting as recorded in Gen. 14, was after the battle of the five kings against the four; the first battle in Scripture and indicative of the last. It is a picture of the deliverance of the remnant of Israel after the battle of Armageddon, and of their restoration in the land in the world to come. The Melchisedec priesthood is connected with the world to come, and if these believers are already associated with the One Who is the true Melchisedec it is obvious that they are going on to the kingdom. We are referring to the company of whom they were the beginning. That is why we read in verse 25, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost"; that is, right through to the end.

That seems to be anticipated in Heb. 6: 20.

Yes! They already had the blessings and privileges which were promised to Israel in relation to the world to come. In verse 19 of that chapter we have an anchor there *now*, but verse 20 would assure us that we are certainly going there also, for our Lord is there as forerunner.

Would there be any significance in the fact that Abraham only joined in the conflict in order to deliver his nephew Lot?

I suppose dispensationally Abraham represents the two and a half tribes who will stand for God in the conflict and who will ultimately be used to bring to light the ten tribes after the tribulation. All the goods and all the souls will be recovered. What we need to see is that we are already linked with the One Who will sustain the whole scene in the day of display, and will support us until that day dawns. That is why we have pointed that until that day dawns He functions after the pattern of Aaron. We have noted

that intercession marks the Aaronic and blessing the Melchisedec priesthoods. This is seen in the first verse of our chapter.

We shall not need an intercessory priest in the glory, but we shall join in the response which is the answer to the revelation.

So we read in Zechariah 6, "the counsel of peace shall be between them both". It is the responsive order of priesthood which is in mind in relation to Melchisedec, and it will be seen in that day.

Melchisedec brought forth bread and wine, and while we shall not need sustainment when we are with Christ, we shall be nourished in a spiritual way on the fruits of His victory. I connect the bread and wine with the fruits of the harvest and the vintage; and as Melchisedec ministered them to Abraham the conqueror, so will Christ minister to the overcomers not exactly in the way of sustainment, but rather of blessing.

Are you referring to Rev. 14. in relation to the harvest and the vintage?

Yes! But such references are scattered throughout the prophetic word. You may remember that in Joel we have the restoration of the meat offering and the drink offering; here again the harvest and the vintage are in view. I do not doubt Armageddon is the vintage and, like Melchisedec, our Lord will reap the fruits and will share the spoil with the strong.

Just one more reference to this matter. I have noticed that whilst the corn and the wine are mentioned once or twice in the first four books of the Bible, in Deuteronomy "oil" is added, suggesting perhaps that these things are to be enjoyed in the power of the Spirit of God, for Deuteronomy prepares the people to go into the land. The harvest is a discriminating judgment; the vintage is a wholesale judgment, and out of each will come something for God and for blessing to His people. The very fact of every opposing force being at last removed will prepare the way for the people to dwell in peace, and the King-Priest will bring this about.

Does the king speak of subjugation by rule?

Yes! But the linking of the priest with the king shows that when God at last asserts His right and power as the Possessor of heaven and earth, and when Christ reigns in that power, He will sustain both the heavenly and the earthly company to answer to His rule, and all will be seen serving God for His glory. He shall reign as Priest; if it were dictatorial law only, the people would fail in relation to it, but as wielded in a priestly way they will be sustained in relation to it.

Both the beginning and end of this chapter indicate the dignity of the Son. Why is that?

It is to show the greatness of the office in that such a Person as the Son is the One Who fills that office.

In this world the conferring of an official position upon a person often adds dignity to him, but no conferred office can add dignity to the Son; He rather, as Son, adds dignity to the office. Whatever He may be officially cannot add to what He is Personally, but being Who He is He brings a dignity into the office that was never there before.

Connected with this priest we have two inseparable divine principles — righteousness and peace. There never could be peace apart from righteousness. In Ps. 85: 10 we read, "And the work of righteousness shall be peace". These will be the governing principles in the world to come. So David, when he came to the end of his reign, said, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (2 Sam. 23: 3).

We stand before God on these two principles, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1). Our Lord has brought these things together and established them, and He is the King-Priest Who will govern in righteousness and bring peace to this

world. It is through Him that we have the gain of these things now.

These features are sustained in One blessed Person for the glory of God. He is the King of Righteousness — that is His Name. His character is — the King of Peace.

These principles characterize the kingdom today as we read in Rom. 14: 17, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost".

In this description of Melchisedec there is record neither of a progenitor nor of an heir. He neither received his priesthood from, nor did he transmit it to, another but the record is "that he liveth" (v. 8). He was a priest in his own right.

Why is it said, "made like unto the Son of God"? There is a record of the birth of our Lord as coming into this world.

The statement that Melchisedec "was made like unto the Son of God", does not refer to the birth of our Lord into this world, but shows the Lord to be eternal in His Person. As to the Manhood of our Lord, all these statements -father, mother, descent, beginning of days and end of life — are variously recorded; but the Person Who came into Manhood and of Whom these facts are true, is eternally the Son without any generation whatsoever. This proves what has already been said, that only such a Person could fill the Melchisedec office. Of whom but the Son of God could these things be true?

In Daniel we read of one like unto the Son of God in the midst of the fire. Why should the same statement be used there?

The New Translation clears that point by showing it more correctly as, "a son of the gods". What Nebuchadnezzar saw was a supernatural being that he, being a heathen king, could only describe as "a son of the gods".

You are not asserting that Melchisedec was a supernatural being?

No! And that is why it does not say the Son of God was assimilated to Melchisedec, but that Melchisedec was made like unto the Son of God.

When Melchisedec was in the world the Son of God had not come into incarnation, hence this type is to describe an eternally divine Person Who came into Manhood. It is the Person Who is in view, not His Manhood. We must keep the fact quite clear that Melchisedec was not an eternal person, but by having no genealogy he is a type of the Son of God. That is the point here.

All this is to show that this priesthood did not depend upon earthly succession, but was in the power of an endless life. It is not limited by death.

The record as to Melchisedec is "he liveth" (v. 8). Some have thought that Melchisedec was an angel, but we are left in no doubt that he was a man (v. 4). Others have said it was the Son of God Himself, but again we read, "made like unto the Son of God" (v. 3). Melchisedec was neither the Son of God nor an angel, he was a man with a priesthood which was entirely his own.

We are exhorted to consider this man in verse 4. Does it follow that if we do so we shall learn something more of the Son of God?

His greatness is seen in the fact that Abraham gave to him a tenth of the spoils and "the less is blessed of the better". Abraham was blessed by him, therefore Melchisedec was greater than Abraham, and Abraham owns this when he gave him the tenth of the spoils. I have thought of Melchisedec as the greatest man in the Old Testament. Of no other personage is it said, "consider how great this man was". We are not told to consider his history for he had none, but we are told to consider the way in which he

was assimilated to the Son of God.

Another remarkable thing is, that after the record of his meeting with Abraham we do not read of him again until we reach Psalm 110.

Could we not take the first three words of this chapter and link them with the last phrase of verse 3 like this, "For this Melchisedec . . . abideth a priest continually"?

A footnote by J.N.D. will help with that. He points out that the word "continually" means "uninterruptedness", showing that termination of his priesthood does not come into question. We have two things brought out here; the greatness of the Melchisedec priesthood and the greatness of the Person Who fills the office.

This is one of the most convincing verses to establish the truth of the eternal Sonship of Christ. To attempt to read into this verse the Manhood of Christ would wreck it altogether. I am sure we are not wasting time in giving this matter such long consideration. The office of priesthood is enhanced by this glorious Person.

We must remember that our Lord does take it up in Manhood.

That is quite right! But it is that great Person Who came into Manhood Who now fills that office uninterruptedly.

In verse 14 we read that "our Lord sprang out of Judah", the kingly line — not the priestly line of Levi. This clearly shows the need of a king being priest, as we have at the beginning of this chapter. Only a king could fill that order of priesthood. Therefore God brought in Melchisedec before He brought in kingship, knowing that the Son would be King and Priest.

Then the apostle adds that it is not only evident that our Lord sprang from Judah but, "it is yet far more evident" that another priest was to arise. See how the apostle now turns the question of similitude to the priest. Melchisedec was assimilated to the Son of God as to His Person, but now the Son of God is assimilated to Melchisedec as to His priesthood. It is remarkable how carefully these matters are stated to guard the Person of our Lord and yet to show His office. J.N.D. points out that in Psalm 110, from which this is quoted, it was not a prophetic pronouncement, but was oracular. It means that God *said* to Him, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec". It is by an oath, and not after the law of carnal commandment, but in the power of an endless life. Provision was made in the Aaronic priesthood for its continuance, but there is no such provision here, for He abides a priest continually in the power of an endless life. Hence our Lord has not derived this priesthood from any previous priest, but it is of the character of Melchisedec and He is saluted by God as in the office.

Would that oracle be given to Him in counsel?

We know that all that comes to light in the revelation God has given to us was there in counsel, but I think Psalm 110 had in view God saluting Christ when He was established in that office, and whilst the Melchisedec priesthood came in before Aaron we can easily see what was the greater thought of God in relation to priesthood. It is now an established fact — "Thou art a priest *for ever* after the order of Melchisedec". The expression we have been referring to has resurrection in view, for it is in resurrection that He takes it up.

Are you thinking of verse 16 in saying that, "the power of an endless life"?

Surely! He lives for evermore.

It is somewhat difficult to see how the two orders of priesthood are blended in the Lord.

Towards the end of this chapter we come back to the features of the Aaronic priesthood, for both are now running on together whilst our Lord is on high. The priesthood of Christ is after the order of Melchisedec but He is functioning after the patten of Aaron and will do so until we are out of wilderness conditions, and are with Him in the kingdom.

Why is the contrast to a fleshly commandment brought in?

That looks back to the time when Aaron passed off the scene and his garments were put upon Eleazar, and in course of time they would be taken from off Eleazar and put upon *his* son. God had given commandment that this was to be done because those priests died and others had to take their place. There is no such commandment in relation to the Melchisedec order, for it is an intransmissible priesthood. Hence it is by an oath and not by a carnal commandment. I may add that the power of endless life is not merely resurrection but what is true of Him essentially. It was because of what He was essentially that He came forth in resurrection.

Why is this priesthood connected with the new covenant?

It is bound to be! The carnal commandment came in with the dispensation of law. Moses brought it in as mediator, and Aaron was priest to sustain it.

It would be right to say the new covenant necessitated a new priesthood. How else should we have been free to draw near to God?

If it were as the result of His essential life that Christ came forth from among the dead, why does it say in Romans 6 that He was raised by the glory of the Father?

It is just another aspect of the great truth of His resurrection. Where you quote, it is the Father Who raised Him. In John 2: 19 the Lord said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up". Yet again Peter writes, "For Christ . . . being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3: 18). Each Divine Person was concerned in Christ's resurrection, and it depends on the objective in view as to which Divine Person is said to be active. The Lord Himself said of His life, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10: 18).

Christ having taken up this office in resurrection and in the power of an endless life, we shall never be without a priest. The only way man can establish perpetuity is by succession. We get perpetuity established here in one blessed Person. Even in worldly kingdoms it is said, The king never dies, but that fact is maintained by succession. That is what Christendom is trying to do in relation to the priesthood — keep it going by succession — but there is no thought of that here. It is maintained in one Person by an indissoluble life, and hence a dignity is given to this priesthood which causes us to bow in worship.

Two things are said here about this priesthood, it is perpetual and it is intransmissible, one being the outcome of the other.

We can see the need of the Aaronic priesthood being brought in if the people were to be maintained according to the law, but what need is there to bring in this Melchisedec priesthood?

If as you say Aaron was appointed to represent the people in relation to God in the wilderness, then Melchisedec comes in to sustain the people in the world-to-come. I do not think the Melchisedec priesthood has any function in the wilderness; it has to do with sustaining the universe in relation to God, the Possessor of heaven and earth. What we learn here is that the One Who is now established after the order of Melchisedec is carrying a company through the wilderness, acting after the pattern of Aaron towards a people in wilderness conditions, whilst waiting to come out fully as functioning

according to the order of Melchisedec in the world to come. We need sustainment by Christ after the pattern of the Aaronic priesthood until we reach that day. It may help to point out that Melchisedec is not said to be the priest of Jehovah nor of the Father but of the Most High God, which clearly connects his priesthood with the world to come. We have to see the distinction between what Christ is as Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and His present exercise of priesthood which is according to the Aaronic pattern.

I do not doubt it was to enlighten these Jewish converts that they *already* had available to them the privileges which will come out fully in the world to come, and that they were already in the care of the One Who would lead them safely to that end. Hence the two orders of priesthood being bound together.

Abraham lived in view of the world to come, and that is morally where we are today. We can see traces of this priesthood in the provisional priesthood of Aaron. Mention has been made of the purple being seen in the garments of Aaron, the Son of Man character; also it says in chapter 6, "Whither the forerunner is for us entered".

God has done a work in our souls and Christ has sanctified us, and as a consequence we have the ability to draw nigh unto God. In the tabernacle system the offerer could only approach as far as the altar of burnt offering. Aaron approached as far as the veil, but Moses could go right into the presence of God. Today we stand in relation to both the Apostle and High Priest, and the result is we go through the veil into the presence of God.

Hebrews 7: 1-25.

We see from verse 22 that the new order of priesthood is linked with a new covenant, and we shall also see that the priest *abides* to minister the blessings of the new covenant to those who stand in relation to Him. Priests according to the line of Aaron could not continue by reason of death, "But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable (intransmissible) priesthood". He will never hand over His priesthood to a successor, for He liveth for ever. We also see that His work of intercession is still in view, and because He liveth for ever He will sustain all who are associated with Him right to the end of the pathway.

In Hebrews 2 we have read of the Lord as the Captain of our salvation leading many sons to glory, and the "uttermost", in verse 25, would be that glory.

I suppose the fact of Aaron's being installed as the result of a carnal commandment shows that his priesthood was to do with man after the flesh, hence it is called, "a carnal commandment" (v. 16). The whole order had to do with man after the flesh.

Hence if God was to be rightly served He needed to bring in something of an entirely new character. We must remember that if God brings in certain principles and ordinances at various times, such things must abide until He Himself removes them. In this section we see that God has removed the order of fleshly service by the introduction of a more excellent ministry and of a better covenant (Heb. 8: 6).

Would verse 25 show the competence of the priest?

Yes! And in the passage you referred to, in Hebrews 2, I think that there we see the working out of purpose in bringing many sons to glory, while here we see them carried through by the power of the High Priest. Even though we are marked out for glory we are still encompassed by infirmity, and our Priest will see to it that we are all preserved to the end in spite of many weaknesses and infirmities.

Whilst this salvation does reach right to the end of the pathway, it is related here in verse 25 to our

approaching to God by Him. The highest point in our circumstances is our approach to God.

We have before noted that in this epistle we are regarded, characteristically, as comers to God.

This word "uttermost" occurs in one other place only — Luke 13: 11 — where it is used concerning the woman who had an infirmity and could "in no wise" lift up herself. "Extent" is the meaning of the word, she could not full extend herself. That helps to show the meaning of this word "uttermost".

It is important to see, as already observed, that the great objective is to get us to God.

The priest is not only established to get us through the wilderness, but also to sustain us in right conditions so that at all times we can come into the presence of God. One has written, "He comes to my side when I need Him, but blessed be God I learn that He comes to my side to get me to His side, and so into the presence of God". The result will be praise and worship to God.

We are exhorted in Hebrews 4 to come to "the throne of grace" to receive needed grace, but do all the saints receive this help?

From the point of view of divine sovereignty I do not doubt that they do, for Christ will see to it that all reach the end; but if we would live in the enjoyment of the presence of God and know what it is to be carried morally outside of wilderness circumstances whilst going on to the end, then we must experience the succour of Hebrews 2, the sympathy of Hebrews 4, and the salvation of Hebrews 7. It would be a poor thing to be taken safely home by the Priest without living through these things experimentally. What lack we should experience in relation to the service of God today!

Why is Christ said to be "a Priest", a "High Priest" and a "Great Priest"?

"Priest" views the Lord in a mediatorial position able to sustain a people compassed by infirmities, and so free them from pressure in view of their coming to God. "High Priest" would speak of the dignity of the One Who is pre-eminent in the company associated with Him, it is a relative term. That is the distinction between Aaron and Melchisedec; Melchisedec was never associated with a company so far as we know, he seems to have been alone in that order of priesthood. Aaron had sons, but while they shared in the priesthood he was elevated above them as the "high priest". The term "great high priest" was never used of Aaron, and it applies only to Christ because of Who He is. We read at the end of this chapter that the One Who is the "high priest" and the "great priest" is the Son.

What is the condition of those who may not avail themselves of the priestly services of our Lord?

Any who attempt to go through wilderness conditions without availing themselves of His high priestly service will most certainly be in constant need of His advocacy. It has often been pointed out that His priesthood is to help us in time of need but His advocacy is to restore us when we fall. If we availed ourselves more often of His high priestly resources we should not need Him as the Advocate. Further, if we do not come to Him for support we shall not know what it is to come to God experimentally.

Do I understand that the salvation here is not judicial salvation, which is ours by faith in Christ as Saviour, but practical, daily salvation which we have by Christ the Priest?

It is! We have salvation provided because of the many obstacles which may beset us in the pathway, perhaps as seen in Hebrews 12. Christ as Priest deals with every difficulty in order to sustain us in the service of God.

Why are the characteristics of the priest given in verse 26?

They are to show the characteristics of the people whom He represents, as the opening statement says, "For such an high priest became us". That word "such" is intense; it calls attention to *such* a Person, not

any person. His priesthood stands in relation to the many sons whom He is bringing to glory. It also indicates that these sons are heavenly.

The word "holy" means "pious"; the word "harmless" means "guileless"; the word "undefiled" means "spotless"; and such a Person is separated from sinners. He is not there for sinners, but for a company who have the privilege of drawing near to God.

I suppose pious, guileless and spotless refer to what He is in Person, and separated from sinners in His present position.

He is, of course, out of the world now and made higher than the heavens, but as Priest He is not there to be appealed to on behalf of sinners, but on the behalf of saints. If this is what becomes such a company, we may well consider what manner of people we ought to be as answering to it. No doubt He lives to maintain us in relation to the dignity of the position.

We are almost afraid to take full account of ourselves as the fruit of the work of God, but note what John says — "he that is born of God cannot sin". There is a work in our souls which is characterized by the things spoken of here, and Christ lives to give to us all that is needed to bring that character out in display.

Why is this sentence brought in which tells us that Christ has gone right outside the created sphere (v. 26)?

The first verse of chapter 8 gives the answer. He is "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens". While it speaks of heaven here as in contrast to earth, yet He is at the right hand of the Majesty, beyond the created sphere. The type is seen in Aaron who went through the door of the Tabernacle, then through the veil into the presence of God once every year. So our Lord has passed through the heavens into the presence of God. We read in verse 24 of chapter 9, "now to appear in the presence of God for us".

Would the statement "made higher than the heavens" mean that He now has something added to Himself which He did not have before?

If you refer to His Manhood, that is true! He has gone back to the place from whence He came, and while Personally He could not be greater, nor have anything added to Him yet He has gone back in perfect Manhood, and as such appears in the presence of God for us. In the greatness of His Person He came forth alone, but now in Manhood He has a company associated with Him there.

Is this what is called acquired glory?

All His official glories are acquired! They mark Him out in His supremacy and in His ability to hold the universe for the pleasure of God, as the Man into whose hands God has put all things. We see in the divine revelation which God has given to us that it was His intention to put the whole universe into the hands of a man, but we know today that Man is His own Son, and every official glory taken up by Him in Manhood will be manifested as that by which He will administer the universe for the pleasure and glory of God. Here it is the High Priest, and we are told "He ever liveth to make intercession for them". There is so much to drag us down and attach us to things down here, but He is there to lift us out of them all and to keep us in touch with God.

How great and essential is the priesthood of Christ! There is not a difficulty in the whole created sphere which He is unable to deal with.

It may be that on more than one occasion we have been engaged with something which, while not a

sinful practice, was robbing us of time that we could have put to a better use in the service of God. Perhaps the priestly intercession of Christ brought us to the decision to give it up and devote that time to the service of God. It may have been unconsciously drawing us away from God.

Would there be a change in the subject at the opening of Hebrews 8? We read that the Lord is "set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens"?

There is a change, as we have tried to indicate. Up to the end of Hebrews 7 we see the Priest presented largely on the side of our need, for while as the fruit of the work of God *in* us and the fruit of the work of Christ *for* us we are fit to associate with Him in the presence of God, yet we are in constant need of His help, because there is much in us and around us that would rob us of our enjoyment of the blessings of God as outlined in this epistle. As we have seen, He is able to meet us in every need to keep us as potential worshippers of God. Ere we leave Hebrews 7, notice verse 28. It is no less a Person than the Son who is the Priest: capable of freeing us from every hindrance and keeping our souls in touch with God, and thus able to maintain a people for His pleasure.

In Hebrews 8 we come to the other side of His Priesthood, "A Minister of the sanctuary". The subject in view is "coming to God", not now getting through the wilderness. I am sure the one is dependent upon the other but it now has coming to God definitely in view.

If in Hebrews 7: 26, we read of "such an high priest" in relation to our need, we have the same phrase again in Hebrews 8: 1, but this time in relation to our approach to God.

Would both of these things be seen together in Hebrews 2: 17, "a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God"?

Yes! — "merciful" as on our side, and "faithful" as on God's side. We must ever remember that what He does to us and for us has ever in view maintaining us in relation to God. If we get hold of this in these readings we shall not have been here in vain. His service has ever in view our coming to God.

We read in verse 3 that He has "somewhat also to offer". Would that link with Hebrews 13 where we are exhorted to offer spiritual sacrifices to God by Him?

I do not doubt that whatever is offered to God today is offered through the Priest but you will find, if you look at this verse carefully, it does not mean what He offers, but that as established in the priesthood He must be an offering Priest. That is, priesthood is not static; it is ordained to offer, and if He is established in the priesthood then He must be offering, or we might say, the priesthood is to be in movement. We may have somewhat to say later as to what we believe He *is* offering, but the point here is that He is established as Priest, and hence He must be offering.

We might think that Hebrews 13: 15 would be one place where we read of His offering.

I do not think that verse has to do with being inside the veil at all but is referring to being outside the camp. If you read the passage in the New Translation you will find that the offering with our lips is the confession of the name of Christ in a hostile world, not our approach inside the veil.

Is it not true that the saints today are both outside the camp and within the veil?

That is true! But one cannot be in both places at the same time. Only those who are outside the camp can know the privilege of being inside the veil but the two things are not the same.

If we were in the good of all this priestly support, we should have strength to confess His Name outside the camp.

That is the meaning of that passage. If I confess His Name in this hostile world it will cause me to offer

something of a sacrificial character, and when I do so it ascends as praise to God. Sacrifice is outside, there never was a sacrifice offered in the most holy place. I can praise God inside the veil by speaking to Him of the perfection of Christ, and I can also praise God by standing for Christ in the place where He has been crucified.

What then is involved in His being the minister of the sanctuary?

He has taken up the service of the Christian company as being in holy places, as I believe the words mean, not only in one place but in both.

We read here that He has entered into the "true tabernacle". There are two words used for "true", one which means a contrast to what is false; but this word means the genuine or the real thing. The tabernacle of old was not a false tabernacle, for Moses carefully made it according to the instruction given him of God, but it was not the real thing itself. This tabernacle is the real one of which the other was but a shadow. It is the same word as that used for the true worshippers, the *genuine* worshippers who had the *genuine* tabernacle to worship in. It stands in contrast to the shadow, not to what is false.

It is interesting to note also that the word used in Hebrews 9 in regard to the tabernacle and translated a "figure", is really a "parable" (verse 9). this is the true building of which that was the parable.

So today we are serving in that which is real, the true tabernacle which is the heavens themselves, and not a mere parable. To get hold of this will preserve us from slipping into the principles of Judaism.

Why does the apostle say so much about the tabernacle in this epistle? It must have passed away long ago and the temple would be better known to them. Why does he use the tabernacle as a type in this way?

It is interesting to note that while Paul always refers to the tabernacle in this epistle, Peter always refers to the temple in his epistles; both, of course, were patterns of the house of God. The tabernacle had approach to God in view, while the temple had more the display of God in view; and we judge that approach to God is the greatest privilege that we have today, hence the tabernacle is used to portray that. It has been pointed out that the tabernacle is a greater thought than the temple, for it is the tabernacle character which is seen in the eternal state. In the tabernacle God dwells with men, but in the temple man dwells with God. The city is seen in temple character during the thousand years of the kingdom display, but is seen in tabernacle character in the eternal state. It gives one cause to think that the eternal state will be more characterized by contemplation than by display.

I have looked into the functioning of these two buildings and as yet have not found a record of a priest functioning in the most holy place in the temple. It is, of course, called the Oracle; but I have not found a place where a priest functioned there, that is, within the veil. What was said when Solomon had dedicated the temple and the cloud covered it was, "And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house" (2 Chr. 7: 2). It strengthens the thought that the temple was more for the display of the glory of the LORD, and that it will be of this character during the kingdom reign; while the tabernacle has approach to God more in view, and that is what marks the eternal state. The day of display had not yet dawned, so the writer is using the figure of the tabernacle to assure these Hebrew Christians that they had the privilege of access to God within the veil. These chapters are leading on to that. We read in the next chapter that Aaron went in, and thus the teaching of this epistle is maintained.

The two most prominent things in the temple were the pillars, both of which were outside. These have an answer in the house of God today, "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15). There it is the display of God in testimony. But in the chapter we are considering we have the answer to the

tabernacle, and approach to God is the theme.

It is said of the priest that he was ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices and referring again to Hebrews 7: 27 we read, "He offered Himself". Note in Hebrews 8: 4 He is said to offer gifts, not sacrifices. May it not be that it is gifts that are offered today in the holiest and not sacrifices? I know the general interpretation of Hebrews 13 is that what is said there is inside the veil but I am persuaded that no sacrifices are offered inside the veil. Some seem to be unable to see this point, but I think verse 4 substantiates it. The only things offered inside the veil were the blood which met the claims of God and the incense which covered the mercy-seat. The incense ascending from the golden altar is indicative of priestly intercession, but the incense ascending from the censer is indicative of worship. This will be one of the themes in the next chapter.

What then of the holy priesthood mentioned in 1 Peter 2?

I think that passage is in line with Hebrews 13 of this epistle. It is the temple character there.

It has been taught that the holy priesthood is inside, and that the royal priesthood is outside.

I do not think Peter ever raises the question of being inside the veil. He speaks much of suffering in testimony, and I believe he links the priesthood with that. On the one hand suffering in testimony rises as a spiritual sacrifice to God, and treating with kindness those who so persecute the saints shows forth the virtues of God. I do not think offering spiritual sacrifices is speaking to God about the sacrifice of Christ but rather that I am suffering in relation to the will of God.

We know that the offering of sacrifices is not a work which Christ does Personally. He has offered Himself in His great sacrifice, and there is no more sacrifice for sin, but He is there to offer mediatorially the gifts of others.

All the sacrifices were involved in that one sacrifice which He offered once for all, but it appears that the gifts go on.

I believe it is on the gift side that worship comes in. So it would be that He offers the gifts of His people.

I think it is worth considering that the word "sacrifices" is not used in verse 4 where obviously the present work of Christ as Priest is in view.

While we are assured that our Lord was not a priest while on earth it is significant that at the end of the gospel of Luke we find a company of people continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Seven times it is recorded in that gospel that men glorified God, hence it is a priestly gospel. He produced all that without being an official priest. So here where He is established as Priest, He is functioning in regard to a company in whose heart there is a response to God, something greater than anything which had been in the world before — the true worshippers indeed. He certainly has something to offer. If, without being a priest, he produced all that we read of in that gospel, what must He be doing now that He is a Priest in relation to a heavenly company!

Is not the thought in priesthood — representation?

It is in Hebrews 8 and Hebrews 9! But when we arrive at Hebrews 10, association is in mind. This we hope to see. Just one point in regard to what has been said about our Lord while in this world. There are two words used for the temple, "Naos" — which means "the inner shrine"; and "hieron" — which refers to the outer courts. When it says our Lord was in the temple it was the "hieron" — the courts; He was never in the "naos" — the inner shrine.

So while He did not take up the priestly function in an official way, all He did was priestly.

Indeed! The greatest offering ever made to God was when "He offered Himself without spot unto God". Now He leads the greatest company of priests into the presence of God.

Did you say "praise" was not worship?

I think one is higher than the other, so far as we can gather from their usage. What was said was to contrast praise mentioned in Hebrews 13 and worshippers mentioned in Hebrews 10. It has been suggested that we thank God for what He has done; we praise Him for the way He has done it; but we worship Him for what He is in supremacy of His being as the Supreme One to our souls.

If the sacrifices offered in the court ascended as a sweet savour to God, the incense which was offered in the most holy place went beyond that. This, I have thought, is the real thought of worship in the typical system. Both are right in their place, but consciousness of being in the presence of God is bound to produce more intense reverence and consequent worship. Whilst much is said about our association with Him it is a fact that we are never said to be priests in this epistle. On the other hand we are said to be priests in the first epistle of Peter, but the priesthood of Christ is not once referred to. These things are not so presented by chance, and we do well to enquire into them. I have thought that the reason Peter does not mention the priesthood of Christ is because entrance within the veil is not the subject of his epistles. In Hebrews that is the point to which the epistle is tending, hence the priesthood of Christ is brought in.

It has occurred to me that in Hebrews 10 we have something which only God can take account of, but in Hebrews 13 and in Peter it is something of which man can take account.

That seems to clear the matter a great deal. In Hebrews 10 it is inside the veil with God, but in Hebrews 13 it is outside the camp in testimony to man.

However, we mention these things to cause exercise, and if we consider them we shall get help from the Lord. No one grows in the knowledge of these things without exercise and much study, and we can well afford to give time to meditate on them with profit.

Hebrews 9: 1-14.

We noted in a previous reading that Hebrews 8 marks a change in this epistle in relation to the priestly service of our Lord. Up to Hebrews 7 His ministration manward is in view, ministering succour, sympathy and salvation; but Hebrews 8 presents Him as the offering Priest. Both sides of His priestly service are thus brought before us; a ministration from God to man covering the first seven chapters, and a ministration from man to God in Hebrews 8, Hebrews 9 and Hebrews 10. The truth we are now considering is leading up to our association with Him as the Great Priest over the house of God, inside the veil. We have both the first order and the second described for us, and we shall see the great advance which has come in, the shadow giving way before the substance, and we having ability to enter fully into the liberty of approach to God. The translators have inserted the word "covenant" in italics, but it is more than that; it covers the whole system of Judaism.

We read in verse 6, "Now when these things were thus ordained". Does that refer to what is said in verses 1-5?

It does! The whole material system was ordered and we know by referring to the Scriptures which speak of that ordering that there were certain services connected with it, and the whole system was earthly and material. The tabernacle was a picture, or parable, or figure of the universe.

What is meant by "a worldly sanctuary"?

J.N.D. gives a most interesting footnote to this word in which he says that it could be translated as "the holy universal order". He tells us that the word, an extension of the word "kosmos", refers to the creation in its ornamentation. It would seem therefore that this tabernacle in its ornamentation was a figure of the universe as verse 9 shows.

Is it the same as "garnishing the heavens"?

Yes! The same idea. More than one word is used for the universe even in this epistle, but the "kosmos" refers to its ornamentation, so we are told.

Why is there no reference to the court in this outline?

That is another matter which shows the point reached in this epistle. We have noted that our Lord is here presented as the Minister of the Sanctuary; thus it is the inside rather than the outside which is in view. We are told the tabernacle was constructed (v. 2), and we know that this was by Moses. What are to be noted are the references to the first and second places, in their order. We read that the candlestick, the table and the shewbread were all in the first place which is called the "holy place". It was here that the divine services were carried out daily. The approach of Aaron was limited to the holy place, when he went in daily to trim the lamps and again to light them.

We do not have this limitation today, for it says in the next chapter that "He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second".

In that connection we must note that in Hebrews 10 it is the first and second *orders* which are referred to, while in Hebrews 9 it is the first and second *places* which are in mind. The first order allowed man to come at all times into the first place only, as seen in the daily service of Aaron; but the second order gives us liberty to come into the second place. This is what we are reaching on to in these verses.

I suppose the apostle is referring to these vessels, not to show their service but rather to bring out the great contrast which marks the present day. Is that right?

It is! That is why he says it is not the time to speak in detail about them. He is not giving us an outline of the tabernacle service, but is rather showing the contrast between that service and what we have today. He is not concerned with typical teaching but with contrast.

We have both an omission and an inclusion in this section which bring out that contrast very clearly. The golden altar, which had a very important place during the time of the tabernacle, is omitted here. The golden altar is indicative of priestly intercession, and the answer to it would come out in the first seven chapters, which we have considered. Here it is a question of a response to God, not a ministration of intercession in regard to wilderness conditions. I believe the Spirit of God has purposely left out any reference to that altar, and refers instead to the golden *censer*. Whilst we suggest this as the reason for the altar not being mentioned, we are assured that if we have not received that of which the golden altar is typical we shall not be in a fit condition to handle that of which the golden censer speaks.

One has thought that in coming to a morning meeting we may be so occupied with wilderness conditions that it may hinder our moving consciously inside the veil. As having availed ourselves of the priestly service of our Lord manward, we should be in a right condition to leave the wilderness and its needs out of our thoughts for the moment, and so enter into the presence of God as worshippers.

I am sure that is right, while not limiting this to the morning meeting. The principle is there. It is remarkable that a saint of God can be so relieved of difficulties that he can be absorbed with the

greatness of God and is thus able to worship.

I am sure that is what these verses are leading on to. There is the question of *need*, that we have in the opening chapters; there is also the question of *response*, and that is what we have in this section. The end of this section is where we are exhorted to come with boldness inside the veil. The writer outlines the types first; then goes on to show how the work of Christ has glorified God and has sanctified those who can enter with Himself inside the veil.

Why does he speak of these things in the holy place if access within the veil is in view?

We need the gain of all these things if we are to know what is involved. The lampstand gave its light inside the holy place; the only light that was inside. I do not think the lampstand has in view testimony in the world, but rather light in the circle where priestly activity is seen. It is light in relation to the holy things of God, and it is there for the saints of God, not exactly for the world. We need to move in the light shed by the Spirit in the divine circle if there is to be any response from our hearts for the pleasure of God.

Will you amplify a little the distinction between the holy place and the holiest of all?

While these verses are not an exposition of the teaching of the tabernacle, yet we do have mention of certain things, and we need to know what they typify. I believe the things in the holy place have to do with the sustaining of the people in relation to God, for we have light, food, and priestly intercession mentioned there. That is why we said that without such provision we should not be in a fit state to go on through the veil, and, as occupied with the glory of Christ and the glory of God, worship Him in spirit and in truth. Aaron moved in that holy place daily as representing the people of God. Yet, while I think it has sustainment in view it is nevertheless in relation to the divine circle to which we belong.

So then, in the holiest of all we are where Christ is and join Him in priestly service Godward?

Yes! The court is the place of sacrifice, and the holy place the circle where the daily service of God for His pleasure is carried on, such as our coming together today. We are here enjoying the privileges of the divine circle and not as before the world in testimony. Then, as we shall see, we have the privilege also of moving inside the veil where the character of the service is worship to God.

Could we say the holy place represents what we need in our responsible pathway and the holiest what is ours in privilege?

In a way, Yes! So far as what we need is in view, but think of the shining of the light there which indicates the ministry of the Spirit to illuminate the saints according to the mind of God. You may remember we have noted the absence of the golden altar, which does have responsibility in view; but these vessels as mentioned here are all connected with privilege.

Do you not think that our responsibility is brought in as an answer to the light which shines there? We have to walk in response to the revelation which God gives to us.

Yes! It is, but we must remember the blessing which is ours as we are in the shining of that light, the ministry of these divine things by the Holy Spirit.

The priesthood being brought in would give us to see that we are sustained in relation to that light, and we cannot pass over the holy place to enter the holiest. We need this light and provision if we are to be intelligent and in suitable conditions to enter the presence of God. This would preserve us from the idea of coming together on a Lord's Day morning merely for the breaking of bread. We should see that all that might be a hindrance has been removed, and that we were in a right condition to enter within the

veil.

We suffer in our morning meetings from those who are seldom at a week-night meeting, and hence have little idea of the ministry of the Spirit in the company. If they came more into the sphere where the word is ministered in the power of the Spirit, they would then be able to follow the leading of the Spirit, and to add something intelligent to the service Godward.

If we understood the bearing of what is brought in here, we should seek every opportunity to be instructed in divine light and thus have something to present to God when we did come together.

I am sure that if we do not get the gain of the provision of the holy place, we shall not know what it is to move within the veil in holy liberty. If we are in the enjoyment of this daily service, then when we come together on the Lord's Day we shall be in a right condition to follow the leading of the Spirit, and to enjoy conscious association with Christ in the holiest of all.

While there is liberty for every saint to enter the holiest, we must ever remember we have to be in a sanctified condition practically in order to be suitable for the presence of God. We must have, first of all, no more conscience of sins, and thus be freed from pressure of every kind. Though not brought in here, the laver would remind us of the absolute necessity of moral cleansing with a view to entering the presence of God. While saying this, we do not limit the entering within the veil to the morning meeting, or to any other meeting. It is available for every individual to enter at all times, whether in company with one's brethren or in private communion with God. What is essential is a suitable condition as being free from every hindrance on our side and perfectly at home in the presence of God.

While the vessels mentioned in these verses were in use, men did not know what it was to approach inside the veil.

In line with that the apostle says in verses 6 and 7, that the priest entered daily into the first place, but not into the second, except once a year with blood. In this Holiest of all were the Golden Censer; the Ark with its contents; the Cherubim of Glory, and the Mercy Seat. It is remarkable that the first vessel mentioned as being within the veil is "the Golden Censer". We might have thought the Ark, or the Mercy Seat would have been placed first. Does it not suggest that once we step within the veil we are there in the spirit of worship? How could we appreciate the glory of the other vessels unless we were? How could we rightly contemplate all that was there if we were not in the spirit of worship?

Do you think this Censer would suggest the lines of the hymn -

"His deep perfections gladly sing,

And tell them forth to Thee".

Surely! that is the answer to the Censer. It is the appreciation of the greatness and glory of Christ in our souls that gives us an enlarged apprehension of the glory of that place, and directs our hearts Godward in responsive praise and worship. Whilst there is a distinction between thanksgiving, praise and worship, all can be offered to God within the veil.

When you draw the distinction between the court, the holy place and the most holy place, are you suggesting that this involves the necessity of progress in our souls in order to pass from one to another?

No! We are just keeping clear the bearing of each so that we may understand the truth in its completeness. We must see that the claims of God have been met on our account at the Brazen Altar. Then we become aware of the support of all that is for us in the holy place, and as having the gain of this provision we are free to enter the holiest of all. The whole is for *every* saint of God, but it is the

apprehension of it which gives us the gain and liberty of all. We must begin with our acceptance before God through the work which Christ has accomplished; that introduces us into the divine circle where every provision is made to sustain us there, and as the fruit of it we can enter into the presence of God Himself.

So the youngest believer has the capability of worshipping God!

A new convert can worship God immediately after being saved. That is what we are trying to point out, but the teaching of this epistle would produce a much more intelligent note of worship.

Was the Censer always in the most holy place or was it taken it?

I believe it was always there. I believe this is the only place where location is mentioned in relation to it. It says, speaking of the holiest of all, "Which *had* the Golden Censer". We are not told in Leviticus 16 where it was kept. I have thought that it was always before the Testimony filled with incense. In Ex. 30: 36, we read that incense was ever before the Testimony. In which vessel was it? From this verse in Hebrews it appears that it was kept in this Golden Censer, and was thus in the presence of God at all times.

Connected with the Censer are the other vessels in the holiest. The Ark would speak of the Son of God in His Manhood, and the contents would suggest all that which He sustained for the pleasure of God. Then the cloud which covered the Mercy Seat, seen here as incorporating the Cherubim, would have in view the revelation of God which He has given of Himself through the Son. It involves that we are in that light, and thus consciously in the presence of God.

If we are to be free from wilderness conditions as in the holiest, why is it that we have mention of the Manna and of Aaron's Rod that budded? Both came to light in the wilderness.

They are attached to Christ Himself. It is not what *we* are encompassed with in wilderness conditions, but what Christ was to the pleasure of God when in the wilderness. He was the answer to all these things, and so they would engage us with what He was and not with what we may be feeling as to ourselves. Whilst we did not know Christ when He was in this world, we can now consider all the glory attaching to Him when here, and in the presence of God tell Him of our appreciation of it. It was an "omer" of Manna for every man; it was an "omer" in the Sheaf of Firstfruits. The same blessed Man Who glorified God in this world is now in the glory, and whilst it is as He is there that we have been brought to know Him yet we learn also of what He was when in this world.

The Manna in the Golden Pot was never eaten by men.

No! that is why we said it was God's own appreciation of Him when He moved here for His glory.

Why is the gold mentioned so much here?

To assure us that all that was there stood in direct relationship with God Himself. In the typical system we have a distinction between "gold" and "pure gold". We believe "gold" sets forth what is divine, but that the "pure gold" sets forth Deity. The apostle has said this is not an outline of the Tabernacle system, but a reference to those vessels in order to show the answer to them in Christ.

Covered in every part with gold would teach us that there has been a Man here whose every movement was for the pleasure and glory of God. Is it not the appreciation of that in our souls which leads to the spirit of worship?

The Manna was what He was as come down from heaven. Aaron's rod which budded speaks of His coming forth in resurrection, taking up His priesthood in the power of an indissoluble life. It may be the

two tables are connected with the world to come, when He will order the whole universe according to the mind of God. The new covenant will be consummated with Israel and God will write His laws in their minds and in their hearts, and Christ will sustain the universe for His pleasure. As Melchisedec He will sustain a company who, in both mind and heart, will serve God for His pleasure. By their minds they will apprehend what is due to God, and from their hearts they will render it to Him. Christ did answer to it of course in His pathway here according to Psalm 40, "Yea. Thy law is within My heart". As the fruit of this He will sustain the company in the world to come. I believe all three things in the Ark can be seen in Psalm 40. Brought up out of that "horrible pit" would be the answer to the rod. He also says that in His pathway He had declared the faithfulness of God and His salvation — the answer to the Manna. Then the one already quoted — "Thy law is within My heart" — the answer to the Tables of the Covenant.

When consciously within the veil, there is surely much to produce a sense of worship if we have been rightly enlightened as to these things.

If we are led by the Spirit, we shall know when we are there, and we shall know what to say. We need much concern and much thought about these things if we are to enjoy the presence of God in company with our brethren.

We must keep clear that the first thing for which we come together on Lord's Day morning is to remember the Lord. While ever desiring to be led on from that point to conscious association with the Son inside the veil, we cannot lay down rules about this matter. We have found over many years that if we break bread early in the meeting — and that is why we come together — then are led on to worship the Father, that seems to be the normal way to enjoy the presence of the Lord, and to function in true assembly order with Christ as He leads the praise to the Father.

Yes! We must begin with the precious fact of the death of Jesus in His love to us. We cannot know anything of either the holy place or the most holy apart from that.

The apostle then proceeds to show why he had referred to these two places and the vessels which reposed in them. He reminds the saints that while that structure had its standing, the priests went at all times into the holy place accomplishing the service of God. That would refer to putting the shewbread in its place once a week; burning the incense and trimming the lamps twice a day. While the altar is not mentioned, we know it was there. While that service was carried out daily, the high priest alone entered into the holiest, and that but once a year, on the great day of atonement. This was a serious work for Aaron, for had he made but one mistake he would have died. "Lest he die" was said to Moses concerning him.

We do not have in Leviticus the reason for Aaron's being barred from approaching, but we are told why in verse 8 of our chapter. The Holy Spirit is teaching that approach into the presence of God could not be realized while the first tabernacle was standing. The material system must give way before the spiritual answer to it, if man is to stand in the presence of God. This could never be done under the first order, for the sins of the people had never been put away. That is undoubtedly the fundamental reason.

We are thankful for the teaching of the first order, but just as thankful that we now have the answer to it.

Does that mean that those who had this privilege had it outside the camp?

That is so! as Hebrews 13 clearly teaches. If *they* were to have these privileges as being outside of the actual system of Judaism, what is our position in regard to that which is but a poor imitation of the Jewish system? If they are exhorted to be outside of that which God had originally set up, surely we are

to be outside of that which man has set up. According to Heb. 8: 13, the system was about to vanish away, yet men have attempted to rear it up again and with what disastrous results.

We learn from verse 9 that the whole system was but a parable. The word translated "figure" is really parable. Whilst the parable was in function, those who served were never made perfect as to their consciences, and the result was they were never free to go in to God. They could not go, nor could God have them there.

Would this service be the same as that referred to in verse 14, "to serve the living God"?

Yes! What they could not do we can do, for the work of Christ has fitted us for it. Those ordinances were there until the "time of reformation" (verse 10) — a term which means "setting things right". The time for setting things right has come, for verse 11 goes on to transfer our thoughts from the carnal ordinances to the work of Christ. There He is, the new High Priest in relation to this new spiritual system, the answer to the parable. Nor is He said to be there so much in the accomplishment of what went before, but of what was to come — "good things to come". These good things are those to which the tabernacle points; they have come, and Christ in glory is the guarantee of them all.

The "more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands" (not of this creation) is not material at all, but is the spiritual answer to the old. Nor is Christ's High Priestly office based upon the offering of the blood of goats and calves; it is based upon His own blood. "By His own blood" has caused much controversy as to the real bearing of the phrase. There is a comma after blood in the New Translation. In a critical note it has been pointed out that the sense of the passage is that He became High Priest by His own blood, and not quite that He entered in by it. This seems to be the real bearing of the verse.

J.N.D. says in a footnote that the preposition "by" gives the character of His coming; not the place through nor the means by which. It means, so far as I can make out, that all that has come to pass has come to pass in the power of His own blood.

I am sure that is right, and it would show at once that the idea of His carrying His blood into heaven is simply not in this passage at all. Propitiation was made at the cross. As a result, Christ has come forth from among the dead and as High Priest has entered in, His own blood being the basis of all in view of our association with Him in the presence of God.

Would the difficulty arise through carrying the parable too far, do you think?

I am sure of that! Some have thought that between His death and resurrection He went to heaven and sprinkled the heavenly Mercy Seat. Obviously the parable had been carried too far. A right understanding of this verse will dispel those ideas. There could only be one entering in, and that was when He ascended; He "entered in once".

We then read that wonderful word "offered Himself" — a priestly action. Who is the Priest Who was great enough to offer that sacrifice? In the power of the eternal Spirit He offered Himself, and as the fruit of this accomplished work He has entered in. Having obtained eternal redemption before going in. He has fitted us for association with Him there. In verse 25 it speaks of the "blood of others", a word which means "alien blood". this word is so translated in Heb. 11: 34. The inference is that the blood carried in by Aaron was really inferior to the blood of those for whom it was shed. This was bound to be so; but what a contrast when the blood of Christ is in mind, which is infinitely superior to the blood of those for whom it was shed. Truly Peter says of it, "the precious blood of Christ". It reminds us too of that word in Acts 20, "the blood of His own".

Certainly His blood has effected what the blood of bulls and goats could never effect. In the power of

that we are brought to God. The superiority of the one work as compared with the other is abundantly manifested here.

In what way were these Israelites purified by the blood of bulls and goats?

In an external way! They were set apart in flesh and blood conditions, as the verse says, and to touch a bone or a dead man externally defiled them. The ashes of the heifer were sprinkled *on* them but did not effect anything *in* them. In verse 14, the blood of Christ has not sanctified us outwardly, but has purged our *consciences* from dead works. The whole of that system was for man after the flesh, it did not deal with their souls or clear their consciences. The entire nation was sanctified when they came out of Egypt; all has to do with their external standing with God. Those sanctified were never free in heart and in conscience, and were never able to worship God as we can today.

What place would "for the remission of sins that are past" have in relation to this?

The work which was typically but ineffectively done by the blood of bulls and goats, was all taken account of when Christ died. His death was effective for the sins that were past; and what the blood of those animals did only in type, Christ has done in actuality, and the whole question is now settled. God was forbearing in view of the time when Christ would, through His own work, vindicate Him in passing over the sins of the Old Testament saints. The great point for us, as in the full blessing of what Christ has done, is that we can enter into the presence of God without any question of our sins ever being raised. That question is settled for ever, and we are set free in His presence as worshippers.

Hebrews 10: 1-14.

In our previous readings we have been occupied with the new order of priesthood connected with our Lord Jesus Christ, and we have seen that it is established after the order of Melchisedec, and is related to a new order of things which are spiritual in contrast to material. In this chapter we see a *new* company who stand in relation to the *new* Priest, whose service is connected with a *new* Sanctuary. Moreover, we see this company not only represented *by* Him in the presence of God, but also associated *with* Him in the presence of God, having right of access inside the veil. This appears to be the bearing of the verses we have read together. We thus have a further contrast between the old and the new orders, the shadow giving place to the substance.

Will you define what you mean by association with Him?

In the record of the consecration of the priesthood as recorded in Exodus 28, much of the detail is taken up with an account of the garments of glory and beauty. On the shoulders of the High Priest were two onyx stones, and on each stone six of the names of the tribes of Israel according to their *birth*. On the breastplate which was upon the heart of Aaron were the names of the children of Israel according to their *tribes*, each one on a different stone. On the shoulders and according to their birth, would suggest their place of responsibility before God; on the breastplate according to their tribes would suggest the thought of privilege as set by God in their order around the tabernacle. Each time Aaron moved Godward in these garments the whole twelve tribes were represented by Him in the presence of God. Not only do we read of these garments, we also read of Aaron's four sons who were consecrated with him, and who functioned in association with him in the service of God. When we are not, as in association with our Priest, in the presence of God, He represents us there. When we are not taking up our privilege as with Him there, we need to be represented, and He *does* represent us at all times as we move through the wilderness; but there comes a time, as we shall see in this chapter, when not only is He there as representing us, but we are there *with* Him in the immediate presence of God. That I think

is association. This is a truth we need to apprehend lest we regard the Priest only as our Representative. In His character of Representative He ministers to us all that which we need in wilderness conditions, but we are to see that He does this in order that we may enter into the presence of God, free from all that would have hindered our going there. That is the ground we have been covering in the earlier chapters, and in the one now before us we see the new company who have been sustained by Him, and who have liberty to enter in to the presence of God as in association with Him.

Is all this involved in His coming into this world to do the will of God?

It is! The three main truths in this chapter are, the will of God (vv. 1-7); the work of Christ (vv. 8-14); the witness of the Holy Spirit (vv. 15-17). These verses teach us that the will of God has been accomplished by the work of Christ, and that the witness of the Holy Spirit is to give us an understanding of this and, consequently, liberty to approach into the presence of God. According to verse 14 everything from the divine side is perfect. On our side the Spirit would bring us into the blessing of it.

Was not the Holy Spirit given by Christ ere He ascended?

That was an inbreathing of life associating them with Him in His resurrection state, but not as associating them with Him in heaven above. That could only be as recorded in Acts 2 when, on the descent of the Spirit, all who received Him were in immediate association with Christ in heaven above. This has now extended to all who are in the Christian company and we are in association with Christ in heaven.

It says in verse 15 the witness is to us.

Had we not the Spirit dwelling in our souls we could not have understood that Christ has accomplished the will of God, nor could we have drawn near as a consequence.

The work of Christ had produced the company seen in the opening chapters of Acts.

I believe John 20 had in view that those upon whom He breathed were those who would bear witness to Him as having seen Him alive from among the dead. He breathed into them life as in resurrection, not resurrection life as is sometimes said.

What would be the difference between the witness in us and the witness to us?

I gather "to us" would involve the Spirit calling attention to the record given of these things for our learning, and "in us" would be to bring us into the blessing of it all.

It has been said that the greatest tribute to the perfection of the work of Christ is that another divine Person has committed Himself to that which was formed by it.

We read in verse 1 that while the Tabernacle system was a shadow of these heavenly and spiritual things, it was not the exact image. We need to take care lest we think there are vessels in heaven of which those in the Tabernacle were the counterpart. The latter were constructed to convey a spiritual meaning, not as exact representations of vessels in heaven. We need to be free from these materialistic ideas.

What did Moses see when he was in the mount?

The vessels he was instructed to make. He saw the pattern, and was told to make the vessels according to the "pattern which was shewed thee in the mount" (Ex 25: 40). I do not think he saw the spiritual things, but the pattern of the material things.

We read in chapter 9 that there is a distinction between the patterns of things in the heavens and the heavenly things themselves.

We have just such a symbol in the loaf which we break. It represents the body of Christ but it is not an exact image. In the same way we are not to think that the vessels mentioned here were an exact replica of the things in heaven, but they were a representation of them. We can understand how needful it was for these Hebrews to understand that point.

What does the word "patterns" in Hebrews 9: 23 mean?

"Representation", as the New Translation renders it. We saw yesterday that the whole tabernacle system is called a parable (Heb. 9: 9).

If association is the main thought in this chapter why is so much said of the incarnation?

So far as man is concerned the material system was in being before the spiritual system was revealed, but with God the spiritual system was there first. That led to the giving of patterns in view of the spiritual displacing them when the time came. Hence we have the Son saying that His coming into Manhood was in counsel before the sacrifices were introduced. The substance was there first, then came the shadows, then the answer to the shadows, which is really the original thought of God.

If these sacrifices could not bring in perfection, why were they given?

We read in Hebrews 9: 10, that they were given till the time of setting things right, or "the time of reformation". It was a temporary state of things until the moment dawned in the ways of God when the true things came into being. God was teaching them something of the holiness of His presence, and that only on the foundation of the shedding of blood could man stand in His presence. These important truths were indicated by the types until plainly established by the work of Christ.

Why, then, do we go back to these types?

Because we can now interpret them in the light of Christianity, and can understand them better than those to whom the types were given. In the inscrutable wisdom of God He introduced a system with a worldly sanctuary, which was outside the region of faith. It consisted of that which was *tangible*, but in this dispensation we can see every principle expressed in that system to the consistent with God's thoughts as now made known in Christ.

Moving on to the teaching we read that whilst the first order was standing there was a constant repetition of sacrifices, because not one of those sacrifices was great enough to settle the question of sin. They were offered "year by year" — a reference to the day of atonement — but instead of settling the question of sin we see how it kept the matter very much alive. Had the question been settled, the sacrifices would have ceased. No one in that day knew what it was to have "no more conscience of sins".

Some of us may say that *we* are very conscious of sin.

We are all conscious of sin *within*. "No more conscience of sins" means that they are no more on our *conscience*; we know that the work of Christ has settled that question for ever. It does *not* mean no more *consciousness of sin*, but our sins are no longer on our conscience; we know that God has forgiven them all through the work of Christ and our faith in Him as Saviour.

In view of our association with Christ inside the veil, that question needs to be very clearly before us.

We have noticed that in the consecration of the priests, a bullock for the sin offering was offered, suggesting that the largest appreciation of the death of Christ was needed for the priests. Also on the

day of atonement it was a bullock for Aaron and his house.

How could anyone feel happy in the presence of God with sins pressing upon the conscience? That question must first be settled before one can be free to worship God.

One is struck with the teaching here. God maintains His Holiness, yet brings such as we are into His presence. What a wonderful light that throws upon the death of Christ as fitting us for the presence of God.

Were not sins forgiven on the ground of those Old Testament sacrifices?

They were for God said so; but while that was said in a provisional way, the question was not settled. That is why in Romans 3 we read of the "sins that are past, through the forbearance of God". The word "propitiation" in the New Testament carries much greater weight than the Old Testament word "atonement". Atonement means — "covering"; but propitiation does not mean to cover, it means "putting them away". We believe that is why the word "propitiation" is the word used in the New Testament and not the word "atonement". In 1 John 2: 2, we read "He is the propitiation for our sins". We read in Leviticus 1 that the offering "shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him"; but we are told in Hebrews that the offering did not take the sin away. The blood of bulls and goats was efficacious for atonement, but not for propitiation as we appreciate it in this day. Christ has not now covered the sins, He has put them away for ever.

If, as we are so definitely told here, the question was not settled by the blood of bulls and goats, we can thank God that it is settled today.

It is summed up in verse 4 in the words, "take away sins". The blood of bulls and goats could not do this, but the work of Christ has. So we read in verse 5, "Wherefore (or, seeing that is so) when He cometh into the world He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me". He came to do what other sacrifices could not do, and took a body that the question of sins might be settled for ever.

Would this reference to the incarnation of Christ carry our minds back to the life of Christ as preceding His death?

There is a remarkable break here worth noting, verse 5, "Sacrifice (the peace offering) and offering (the meat offering) Thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared Me". The statement regarding His body is brought in before mention is made of burnt offerings and sin offerings. Why are they thus divided? When it is repeated in verse 8 they are all put together. J.N.D. points this out without commenting upon it. Would it be that the first two did not deal with the question of sin? They were both food offerings; but after the statement "a body hast Thou prepared Me" sin comes into the question. He did not come to present a food offering only to God; He came to deal with the question of sin also. It may suggest His spotless life as underlying His efficacious death. While the peace offering has His death in view, it was not to deal with sin. The meat offering as we know was His perfect life. We are assured that both in His life and in His death He has glorified God.

Both the burnt offering and the sin offering have sin in view; in the first it is dealt with for the pleasure of God; in the second it is for the relief of man.

However precious the life of Christ was, He must go into death if sin was to be dealt with.

Why does it say in Psalm 40, from which this is quoted, "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire"? That is translated here as "Thou hast had no pleasure". When an Israelite brought an offering, God was

pleased with the *offerer*; it was a movement of heart Godward. But He could not take pleasure in the *offering*, because it could not do for the offerer what God desired to do for him, hence the term "didst not desire". We learn from many Scriptures that the pleasure of God is bound up with the accomplishment of His will. The pleasure of God could never be secured until Christ came. The offerings were imperfect; how could God take pleasure in them?

Why do you think the statement in the Psalm, "I delight to do Thy will" is omitted in this quotation?

The four offerings are all in view in the Psalm, and also the testimony of our Lord in His life hence the joy which filled the heart of the Lord when He said "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8: 29). The meat offering was included in that Psalm as it is here and Christ as Man ever found joy in pleasing the Father. That may be another reason for the break we pointed out earlier, for we see that stress is placed upon the burnt offering and the sin offering, and whilst our Lord ever found delight in accomplishing the will of the Father in His pathway, He found no delight in being made sin. We would gather that is why the Spirit leaves out here "I delight".

We see that coming to light very clearly in the garden of Gethsemane. There was no delight there.

Was the burnt offering propitiation?

Both the burnt and sin offerings have propitiation in view, for both have to do with dealing with the question of sin. In the burnt offering the work was to glorify God, and to give Him a basis upon which He could come out in blessing to His creature. In the sin offering the work had in view the clearing away of the sin so that man could come into the blessing of God. Both found their answer in the cross, but we distinguish that the work was for the glory of God on the one hand, and for the need of man on the other. It is the work in its *totality* which is seen here in these two kinds of offering, God glorified and our need met.

Can we rightly take account of His death without taking account of His life?

The whole of Psalm 40 has to be taken into account. In that Psalm we hear the Lord speaking prophetically of all He declared in His life, five things I think, hence the thought of delight. But the Spirit in Hebrews 10 has selected only those items which speak of His death, for even a portion of the meat offering was burnt upon the altar as indicating His obedience in the death of the cross. We know it was never intended that our Lord should continue to live in this world, He came into Manhood to die; hence we must keep the whole truth before us, and here the accomplishment of the will of God was in the offering of His body. Sins are the main question here, and so stress is laid upon the burnt and sin offerings. It was a statute that no burnt offering was to be presented without a meat offering, we must keep that in mind; but here it is altogether His dealing with sin and sins, whatever else may underlie it. At the very moment of His transfiguration they spoke of His decease, and we know the coming of Christ into this world had ever in view His death upon the cross. We see not only His personal fitness, but the reason for His coming into Manhood.

I have noted that in Luke chapter 2 there are four distinctive references to His death, and that at the moment of His birth. A universal testimony that that Babe born into this world was born to die. We must not separate these matters one from the other. He said Himself, "even so must the Son of Man be lifted up". So we have three things mentioned here in relation to His coming into Manhood in order that He might die — His body, His flesh and His blood. They all have to do with his coming into this world to accomplish the will of God.

What is conveyed by "the volume of the book"?

It is generally thought to be the book of counsel. The word volume means "the heading of the roll". It would involve something to which

God was committed. Divine writing is unalterable and if this was written of Him then it must come to pass.

It is worth noting that it involved a sanctified company and divine Persons were committed to that.

Could you say simply what the will of God really is?

All that was conceived in the heart of God for His own glory, and as a sanctified company was in mind the cross was a necessity.

The will of God springs from eternal purpose, the objective towards which God is working until all is secured. The details of that will involve the region of counsel, and it is in that connection that we read here, "Lo, I come to do Thy will". He comes to give effect to the counsel of the Godhead.

We hear God saying in sovereignty "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (Rom. 9: 15). Only God can really say "I will". The moment God said that, the death of Christ became a necessity. How could God carry out His will which involved the showing of mercy apart from the cross?

Two things may be noticed in regard to the will of God; first that it is according to His purpose, and secondly He has power to accomplish this purpose without being in any way deflected from it. Man may have the will to do certain things but may not be able to accomplish that will. God has both the will and the power to accomplish it.

Did you say counsel was the expression of eternal purpose?

I believe the ways of God to be linked with His counsel. I have not yet found a Scripture which connects His ways with His purpose. We do not read in Scripture of eternal counsel, but we do read once of "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3: 11). So far as I know we have this statement once only. Counsel is the deliberating of the Godhead in view of accomplishing eternal purpose. In the ways of God we see the working out of the details of counsel which will ultimately bring into effect eternal purpose.

I suppose we can say that both purpose and counsel belong to eternity, while the ways of God come into view in time.

Both purpose and counsel were formed before the ways of God were manifested in time, and indeed the creation was a necessity to effect them.

We read therefore that the will of God involved a sanctified company.

In verse 9 we read of Christ coming into Manhood and saying, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God", and in verse 10 we read, "By the which will we are sanctified". It is the Son who says "I come to do Thy will", and we also see that that "will" was to sanctify a company. If we lay hold of that we shall soon understand what it is to be in association with Christ inside the veil.

This is an aspect of the will of God which should be of great interest to us. It involves one of our greatest privileges.

Then we read "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second". It does not say that He established the first, but He has established the second. We saw in chapter 9 that first and second there referred to *place*; but here it is the first and second *orders* that are in mind; the material displaced by the spiritual of which it was the type. It has ever been so in the ways of God; the first goes, it is taken away; but the second abides, it is established.

There are many Scriptures which bear record to the Deity of the Son and here is one. Who dare attempt to take away anything that God had brought in ? Only the Son could do that, for He is God.

The Son being co-equal in Godhead, how does He say here "Thy will"?

The Godhead presents the three Persons as *One*, but we use the word Trinity to distinguish the three Persons in the Godhead. They are distinguished in this chapter. Whenever the source of things is in view, this is attributed to the Father. The active instrumental Agent who brings all into being is the Son, and the power to secure it all is in the Spirit. In Godhead the will of God is the will of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of that there can be no doubt. So we read in Genesis chapter 1 "Let us. In Hebrews 10 the Son has taken a subject place in Manhood in order to carry out that will, and in that place of subjection He says, "Lo, I come to do Thy will". So the source of this matter is in God; the doing of His will in sanctifying the company is by the work of Christ, and the witness of it is by the Holy Spirit.

Why is sanctification connected with the body of Jesus Christ rather than with His blood?

His body has to do with our state, while His blood deals with our guilt. Another place where these two things are seen is in Colossians 1, "And you . . . hath He reconciled, in the body of His flesh through death". The blood of Christ has settled for ever the question of our sins, but there was in us a state of alienation which could only be ended by the offering of His body. We could never have come into the presence of God whilst in that state of alienation, but so wonderfully and fully has Christ wrought, that our sins have gone through His precious blood, and our old state has gone by the offering of His body. Not only are our sins forgiven, but the old condition from which they sprang has been judged, and we stand forgiven and in an entirely new condition in the presence of God.

Not only has God dealt with what we have done but also with the man who did it. He has removed the sins and the sinner, but He has secured the *person* by bringing him in in a new condition entirely.

Does this word sanctified mean set apart?

It does! And we learn that by the work of Christ He has set us apart altogether for the service of God. In the type, Aaron was washed all over with water; then blood was put upon his ear, thumb and toe. Washed all over with water is suggestive of being born of God, and we have also been cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. The water cleanses morally; the blood judicially; the result is that we have holy liberty to approach into the presence of God.

Both blood and water came out of the side of Christ *when He was dead*. It is the twofold effect of His death. The result is a sanctified company secured for the pleasure of the Godhead, a company in the light of all that has been done in Christ, and capable of approaching God intelligently in the light of it all. Thus there is secured a response to the Father and to the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 10: 12-22.

Where we begin, in verse 12, we have the statement that the work of Christ in dealing with sins is so complete that it will never need to be repeated; the work being done He has sat down "in perpetuity" (New Trans.). Two statements are seen in verse 11; one that the priests never sat down but were standing daily; the other that they offered "oftentimes the same sacrifices". Verse 12 assures us that Christ has sat down, and that He will never again need to offer Himself. It is to this completely finished work that the Holy Spirit bears witness, in view of our having perfect liberty of approach into the presence of God.

Why do we have this quotation from Ps. 110 added here?

To assure us of the order of priesthood our Lord now takes up in relation to that accomplished work. It is the Psalm in which we have the two statements, "Sit Thou at My right hand" and, "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec". The world-to-come is in view in His enemies being made His footstool.

Will this be at the rapture or at the appearing?

The point here is that Christ is *already* in the place of power. He will begin to exercise that power at the rapture, and will complete it at His appearing. I do not doubt it goes on to the end of the kingdom when the last enemy to be destroyed is death; but He has the power now at the right hand of God, and we are attached to Him ere He uses that power publicly.

Is that why it says "the right hand of God" and not, as in Heb. 1, "the right hand of the Majesty on high"?

"The right hand of the Majesty" is so stated to impress us with the greatness of His person, for who but the Son could sit there? Here it is not so much the greatness of His Person but of His work.

It says, "until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Heb. 1: 13).

Yes! He has accomplished this work for the pleasure of God, and all authority is placed in His hands in order that the full results should be manifested in the world-to-come.

Will that be the David character or the Solomon character of the kingdom?

Mainly David! For when Solomon came to the throne there was neither enemy nor evil occurrent, for David had subdued all. Yet we must remember what is written in 1 Cor. 15, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death". The final subduing of *all* enemies will not be seen until the end of the kingdom.

It is not the subduing of enemies which is the main point here, but that Christ is there *now* in the place of *power*.

That is the point! And also to establish the fact that He has now taken up the office of Melchisedec. He has gone in and has sat down there, and this is in view of our going in as in association with Him. We saw at the end of Heb. 9 that He has gone in and has not yet come out. While *He* is in, *we* can go in; that is what is before us in this section. Thus we are brought into all the blessed results of His going in before He comes out for the blessing of Israel.

We see that in type in Leviticus 9. Moses and Aaron went in and came out; on their coming out the glory of the LORD appeared and fire came down and consumed the sacrifice, whereupon the people shouted and fell on their faces and worshipped — a picture of the appearing of Christ in the world-to-come. At the moment, as Moses and Aaron He has gone in; that is, the same One Who came out has gone in, and that is what is in view in the verses we are considering.

Would that be why we need the Holy Spirit to testify of these things, seeing He has gone in and has not yet come out?

It is! And the result is that before He comes out in display in a future day, a spiritual order is in function now; that is why the Holy Spirit is spoken of here. While we await the moment when this display will be seen, we have access even now into the presence of the One in Whom everything is secured.

Why does it say, "expecting" (v. 13)?

There is no doubt that it *will* be brought to pass, hence Christ sits there "expecting". We must

remember Christ is seen in Manhood in all these statements and we in association with Him. You may remember in Mark 13 our Lord said Himself, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (v. 32). The Father has reserved to himself the right as to this, and hence the Son patiently waits the Father's time.

It was stated yesterday that the presence of the Spirit here is the greatest proof of the perfection of the work of Christ. Is there still some thought of that here?

There is! For we are going on to see not only that the Spirit's presence here is a witness to the perfection of the work of Christ, but so great is that work that we can join Him in the very presence of God. How effective that work is if such fitness is ours.

We saw yesterday that only a divine Person could take away what another divine Person had brought in, and here we see a divine Person testifying to what another divine Person has established. The Son took away what had been brought in originally by God, and the Holy Spirit bears witness to what has now been established. Who but He could tell us where Christ is as the result of the work He has done? So by the Spirit we may know and enjoy the full value of that work ere Christ comes out into public display.

In that way we have the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant, hence the terms are repeated here. How else could God put his laws into our hearts and minds but by the Spirit? Here we are today with our hearts in right condition before God, and we have spiritual intelligence which enables us to apprehend this teaching. This time the heart is put first, before the mind.

Why should that be?

It may be that Israel will yet have to understand the prophetic word and accept it as the means of God's working in them, while God *has* worked in our hearts today and is now teaching us the principles of Christianity.

Movement Godward springs from the affections and that may be why the heart is put first. Approach to God involves more my loving God than my knowledge of His will. One would not despise the mind, for we cannot know anything apart from it, but what we learn ought to affect us in our hearts, and this will lead to a response to God.

As distinct from Israel, is not Christ written on the hearts of the saints today?

That is true according to 2 Corinthians 3! But was there any detail in the law which did not shine out in Christ? He was the living expression of every divine statute. This is given here to produce a willing people in the day to come. Yet we read in Romans chapter 13 that love is the fulfilling of the law.

So something higher is given to the saints of God today, that which would fully fill out all the righteous desires of God. We have the power to do this by the Spirit.

Would it be right to say that Christ taking His place at the right hand of God in glory is not the completion of the story, but that it is necessary for the Holy Spirit to come here to bring us into it?

Yes! For all that was being effected according to the will of God involved a company being sanctified and able to draw near to God. Christ has accomplished the work necessary for our sanctification, and the Spirit has come in order to bring us into the light of it and into movement Godward as a consequence.

When we read "after those days", to which time does that refer?

I do not doubt it refers to the world-to-come, the time of reformation of which we read in Hebrews 9 —

the time of setting things right — but the spiritual blessings of that day are introduced in Christianity so that we can *now* draw nigh to God. They will know in that day what we know today, that sins and iniquities are remembered no more. In Israel the remembrance of sins was perpetuated, and so far as they are concerned this is not ended yet; the *work* is done, but they do not know that. They will yet be brought into the blessing of it. We are already in the blessing of the work done on our account while Israel, nationally, have to come into their place in the world-to-come.

While that is true, something better has come to pass today than will come in for Israel in the future.

The world-to-come has the blessing of Israel in view, hence the reference to it, but the One Who did the work brings us first into blessing on the heavenly side today, and will also bring Israel into it in that day. Their blessing will of course be on the earthly side.

Are you keeping in mind the thought of Aaron and his sons?

Both sides are here! — the present and the future. While verses 16, 17 and 18 look on to the future, the apostle refers to the present in verse 19. The one sacrifice of Christ has covered both the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat; the first for Aaron and his house, the other for the people. We are the answer to Aaron and his house, and we have access today, while Israel awaits His coming out to bring them into their place.

Verse 19 shows us the blessedness of what is present. There is remission of sins *today* and we are in the good of that. The New Covenant is connected with the death of Christ in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and with His glory in the second Epistle. It is His death as bringing us into blessing, but the Spirit forming us according to His glory by the ministry of the New Covenant in 2 Corinthians 3.

Why does it say "no more offering for *sin*" when remission is in view in v. 18?

I think it refers to the work in its completeness. You remember that Aaron confessed *sins* on the head of both the bullock and the goat, but here it infers that the work for *sin* has also been accounted for in the greater sacrifice of Christ. It is the effect of the death of Christ in its widest character. If we were to turn the verse round it would involve that if *sin* has been dealt with in its totality, then my *sins* must have been removed.

It is that which I had committed which had been a dishonour to God, my sins and iniquities. It is summed up in the statement that where remission of these is there will never be a need for another sin offering. The assertion in verse 18 is the answer to the negatives mentioned in verses 1 and 4, that the blood of bulls and of goats could never make the comers to God perfect. We have three statements in verse 1, and the answer to them in this chapter. The "shadow" gives way to the substance in verse 7; the "image" is removed in verse 9; the "never . . . perfect" is answered in verse 14. Thus what was lacking in the first order has all been secured by the coming in of Christ, and by His work on the cross.

We do read in v. 12 that Christ offered Himself to take away sins and now in v. 18 it is *sin*. I am not clear as to what was said about the distinction. Would you repeat what you said?

In the types we do not read of a *sins* offering but a *sin* offering. That is, an offering altogether to deal with the sin question. It does say when an offerer brought a sin offering to confess some sin, "it shall be forgiven him". Yet I judge the meaning here is, an offering for sin, the sin having been dealt with *in its entirety*, both the root and the fruit, we are now free from both in the sight of God.

These passages are so extensive that it takes time to explain them a little, but we do want to see the importance of these things to ourselves today. The first great result is that we have boldness to enter consciously into the presence of God by the blood of Jesus.

Is this the privilege we have when we come together to break bread?

We have learned by experience that when we do come to remember the Lord and are led on to experience approach with Him into the presence of God, that we then have the most fruitful time together, and we reach greater heights than one can reach individually. On the other hand to say we can enter the holiest on a Lord's Day morning only is not true. I would not like to think that if I could not assemble with the saints I could not draw near into the presence of God as a worshipper. Yet we do not wish to weaken the collective side, for this is clearly taught in the Word. Nor would we limit these experiences to the morning meeting, for often in Bible Readings and Prayer Meetings we have known what it was to touch an atmosphere of worship to God.

What do we find when we do enter the holiest?

When looking at the outline of the Tabernacle system at the beginning of chapter 9 we suggested what was to be found there, the Ark and the three things which were in it; also the Mercy Seat and the glory. In other words that which speaks of Christ and of God would engage our souls.

Why is it put as an exhortation, "Let us draw near"?

They had been cut off from the Temple where the literal thought of drawing near was seen, hence he is showing them that in having embraced Christianity they had something far superior to the Temple worship.

Does this mean that they drew near to the Father?

We have connected that with Hebrews 2 and with John 17, "I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren". In this chapter it is not so much the revelation which the Son has given of the Father but rather God Himself, and they seen in responsibility. All having been cleared on that ground, they now have liberty to draw near to God. It could hardly be to God known as Jehovah but rather known as Father.

What revelation do we receive in the Holy of Holies?

It is because of what *has been revealed* that we can go there. We go into the place from whence the revelation has come. It means we are consciously in the presence of God Himself. I doubt if any one could ever be there consciously apart from the revelation which God has given of Himself. The New Translation gives it as "the holies", and I gather both places are in view. As in the light of the first we have access into the second, access into both places, by the blood of Christ. It would mean that the sense of having been forgiven gives freedom to approach into the presence of God, in order that we might respond to the revelation which He has given of Himself.

What would be the character of that response?

Thanksgiving and praise and worship; and all for the heart of God. We are not told here what we do or what we say when we get into the presence of God, but I think as experiencing it we give God His portion in answer to all that we know of Him and all that He has done for us.

Do we go in as brethren, sons or priests?

I think as brethren in the dignity of sonship, His brethren and sons of God. We are never said to be priests in this epistle, but what is stated is the dignity of the calling, and as in association with Him as His brethren we are said to be "all of one". This may suggest equality with Him in all His service Godward, for we are as acceptable to God in Him as He Himself is, the fruit of His sanctifying work. I gather that is why it reads "great Priest" in the New Translation, not "High Priest", as we have it in the

Authorised.

What is the difference?

"Great" has to do with the dignity of the Person Who is Priest. Aaron was said to be a "high priest", but was never called a "great priest". Only of Christ could that be said. I gather the reason we are not called priests is to impress us with something greater, and that is *relationship* rather than *office*. In Hebrews 2 we are said to be sons, brethren and children.

Is this in view when Christ is referred to in Heb. 8 as, "minister of the sanctuary . . . which the Lord pitched, and not man"?

It is! For we read in Hebrews 9 of the first place and the second place, and in this chapter of the first order and of the second order. It all has in view the spiritual answer to the material shadow.

We must keep in mind that it is not the Personal glory of Christ which is in view in these passages, but what He has effected in Manhood, and into which He has graciously brought us, hence the term "all of one".

I am sure that it is in the realization of the height of the calling that worship is produced in our hearts.

So we go into the holiest to give, not to get?

Quite so! That is why we said that we go as in response to the revelation, not to receive it. We have revelation and response complete in Christ. In revelation Christ was alone, but in the response He associates us with Himself.

I suppose being consciously in the holiest the heart will be so full that worship is bound to be the outcome.

We go there in the light of all that Christ has done, as typified by the brazen altar, and all we learn of Him in the holy place. Then as with Him in spirit in the most holy place we are filled with a sense of His Personal glory and all that we know of God as coming to light in Him, with the result that the heart *must* be filled with worship in the contemplation of these blessed things.

The more we are enlightened by these things and the more our hearts are affected by them, so much the greater will be our response. In the reception of the truth of these things our affections should be stimulated, and this would lead to a greater response. We must link intelligence with the affections.

Should not one keep in step with the other?

Surely! For there is great danger of our becoming unbalanced and extreme, but if our affections are engaged by these things all will be in right balance.

We are told in verse 20 it is "By a new and living way". Literally it means "a newly slaughtered way", that is it is based upon the offering of a recent sacrifice, the sacrifice of Christ. It is in that way He has opened out for us a way in "through the veil, that is to say His flesh". Even at so late a date since the sacrifice was offered, it still abides in its efficacy, still "a newly slaughtered way".

It says in verse 10 that, "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ", while here it refers to "His flesh". What is the difference?

I think His flesh brings before us His Manhood, "The Word became flesh". God was at one side of that veil and Man at the other. He brings God to man, and man to God; revelation and approach are complete in Him. As I appropriate Christ He brings the light of God to me and, in result, through Him I go in to God. It would be presumption to go in any other way. I take it His flesh means He came into

Manhood to effect all this.

Two things seem to be involved in verse 20. We have pointed out that the word means a "newly slaughtered way", but it is also a "living way". I believe it suggests both His death and His resurrection. His death clearing the ground on our side, and His resurrection opening up the way for us to go in to God. Christ came in flesh in order that He might die. This we have in John 6, eating His flesh, not His body. That involves we believe He was the Word who became flesh and went into death on our account. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God Who has died for us, and in believing we have life through His Name. Again in Colossians chapter 1 we read of "the body of His flesh". There again His death is in view.

Then we also have the mention of His blood.

That is to give us the sense of cleansing and to remove sin from our consciences. Not only has His death and resurrection opened up the way for us to go in to God but when we do go in it is in association with Him, "an High Priest over the house of God". We could not go in apart from His work, nor could we go in apart from Himself, for it is as associated with Him we approach into the presence of God. It is thus that what is said in Hebrews 2 is brought about — "in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee". We have often heard Psalm 22 referred to as the Sin Offering; Psalm 40 as the Burnt Offering, and Psalm 69 as the Trespass Offering, and in each of them we have a song. There seems to be an ascending note of praise from Psalm 69 to Psalm 22 then to Psalm 40. In the first it is "I will praise", that is Christ alone; in Psalm 22 it says, "in the midst of the congregation"; while in Psalm 40 it adds "praise unto our God". It suggests that while the praise begins with Christ Himself He associates us with Himself in it.

Would there be a distinction between praise and worship?

I think so! It has been suggested that we thank God for what He has done; we praise Him for the way He did it; but we worship Him because of *Who He is*. All three can be offered to God within the veil.

It seems clear that we need to be in company with Christ to participate in this.

Yes! We have pointed out that we first need to be in touch with Him as we move in this wilderness, for if we do not get the gain of His priestly ministry in regard to our circumstances we shall not be in a condition to join Him in the holiest. He first removes all that would hinder; then, having freed us, would draw us with Himself inside the veil that with Him we may praise and worship God.

We may worship God without uttering a word, and if we do worship God it must be in association with Christ, for we could not know anything at all about God apart from Him.

Worship is more the state of the heart than what is actually said. Certainly we need to use right expressions and the word will supply us with these, but worship is not so much what one may say but the attitude of heart in the one who says it.

Thus we have the two great sides of the priesthood of our Lord in this epistle. We cannot do without Him if we are to move for God in this world; His succour, sympathy and salvation are ever available, and we shall be in constant need of them as long as we are here. But may we ever remember that if He does support us in the scene of trial, it is to maintain in our hearts right conditions to enable us to come as worshippers into the presence of God. This is the great end in view. May we all reach it experimentally.