

indicate the outreaching of man for an inter-union with God, or with the gods, by substitute blood, and the confident inter-communion of man with God, or with the gods, on the strength of this inter-union by blood. There is an Akkadian poem which clearly "goes back to pre-Semitic times," with its later Assyrian translation, concerning the sacrifice to the gods, of a first-born son.<sup>1</sup> It says distinctly: "His offspring for his life he gave." Here is obviously the idea of vicarious substitution, of life for life, of the blood of the son for the blood of the father, but this substitution does not necessarily involve the idea of an *expiatory* offering for sin; even though it does include the idea of *propitiation*. Abraham's surrender of his first-born son to God was in proof of his loving trust, not of his sense of a penalty due for sin. Jephthah's surrender of his daughter was on a vow of devotedness, not as an exhibit of remorse, or of penitence, for unexpiated guilt. In each instance, the outpouring of substitute blood was in evidence of a desire to be in new covenant oneness with God. Thus Queen Manenko and Dr. Livingstone made a covenant of blood vicariously, by the substitution of her husband on the one part, and of an attendant of Livingstone, on the other part.<sup>2</sup> So, also the Akkadian king may have sought

<sup>1</sup> See Sayce's paper, in *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, Vol. I., Part I, pp. 25-31.

<sup>2</sup> See page 13 f., *supra*.

a covenant union with his god—from whom sin had separated him—by the substitute blood of his first-born and best loved son.

Certain it is, that the early kings of Babylon and Assyria were accustomed to make their grateful offerings to the gods, and to share those offerings with the gods, by way of inter-communion with the gods, apart from any sense of sin and of its merited punishment which they may have felt.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is claimed, with a show of reason, that the very word (*surqinu*) which was used for "altar" in the Assyrian, was primarily the word for "table"; that, in fact, what was later known as the "altar" to the gods, was originally the table of communion between the gods and their worshippers.<sup>2</sup> There seems to be a reference to this idea in the interchanged use of the words "altar" and "table" by the Prophet Malachi: "And ye say, Wherein have ye despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine *altar*? And ye say, Wherein have ye polluted thee? In that ye say, The *table* of the Lord is contemptible."<sup>3</sup> So again, in Isaiah

<sup>1</sup> "Whether he has overcome his enemies or the wild beasts, he pours out a libation from the sacred cup," says Layard (*Nineveh and its Remains*, Vol. II., chap. 7) concerning the old-time King of Nineveh.

<sup>2</sup> See H. Fox Talbot's paper, in *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, Vol. IV., Part I, p. 58 f.

<sup>3</sup> Mal. 1: 6, 7. See also Isa. 65: 11.

65 : 11 : "But ye that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a *table* for Fortune, and that fill up mingled wine unto Destiny; I will destine you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter."

See, in this connection, the Assyrian inscription of Esarhaddon, the son of Sennacherib,<sup>1</sup> in description of his great palace at Nineveh: "I filled with beauties the great palace of my empire, and I called it 'The Palace which Rivals the World.' Ashur, Ishtar of Nineveh, and the gods of Assyria, all of them, I feasted within it. Victims precious and beautiful I sacrificed before them, and I caused them to receive my gifts. I did for those gods whatever they wished."<sup>2</sup> It is even claimed by Assyrian scholars, that in this inter-communion with the gods, worshipers might partake of the flesh of animals which was forbidden to them at all other times<sup>3</sup>—as among the Brahmans of India, to-day.

In farther illustration of the truth, that inter-communion with the gods was shown in partaking of sacred food with the gods, H. Fox Talbot, the Assyriologist, says of the ancient Assyrian inscription:

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings 19 : 37; Ezra 4 : 2; Isa. 37 : 38. See also 1 Cor. 10 : 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Rec. of Past.* III., 122 f.

<sup>3</sup> Sayce's *Anc. Emp. of East*, p. 201; also, W. Robertson Smith's *Old Test. in Jew. Ch.*, notes on Lect. xii.

"There is a fine inscription, not yet fully translated, describing the soul in heaven, clothed in a white radiant garment, seated in the company of the blessed, and fed by the gods themselves, with celestial food."<sup>1</sup>

Among the Parsees, or the Zoroastrians, who intervene, as it were, between the primitive peoples of Assyria and India, and the later inhabitants of the Persian empire, there prevailed the same idea of divine-human inter-union through blood, and of divine-human inter-communion through sharing the flesh of the proffered and accepted sacrifice, at the altar, or at the table, of the gods, Ormuzd and Ahriman. The horse was a favorite substitute victim of sacrifice, among the Parsees; as also among the Hindoos and the Chinese. Its blood was the means of divine-human inter-union. "The flesh of the victim was eaten by the priest and the worshipers; the 'soul' [the life, the blood], of it only was enjoyed by Ormazd."<sup>2</sup> The communion-drink, in the Parsee sacrament, as still observed, is the juice of the *haoma*, or *hom*. "Small bread [or wafers] called Darun, of the size of a dollar, and covered with a piece of meat, incense, and Haoma, or Hom," the juice of the plant known in India as Soma, are used in this sacrament. "The Darun and the Hom [having been presented to the gods] are afterwards eaten by

<sup>1</sup> *Rec. of Past*, III., 135. <sup>2</sup> Sayce's *Anc. Emp. of East*, p. 266.