

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

In the Light of Scripture

by

F. C. H. Dreyer and E. Weller

Copyright © 1960

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE MASS

Question Box, page 263, quoting from the Council of Trent:

- 1. There is in the Catholic Church a true Sacrifice, the Mass, instituted by Jesus Christ—the Sacrifice of His Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine.*
- 2. This Sacrifice is identical with the Sacrifice of the Cross, inasmuch as Jesus Christ is Priest and Victim in both; the only difference lies in the manner of offering, which is bloody on the cross and bloodless upon our altars.*
- 3. It is a propitiatory Sacrifice, atoning for our sins, and the sins of the living and dead in Christ for whom it is offered.*
- 4. Its efficacy is derived from the Sacrifice of the Cross, whose infinite merits it applies to us.*
- 5. Although offered to God alone, it may be celebrated in honor and memory of the Saints.*
- 6. The Mass was instituted at the Last Supper, when Christ, about to offer Himself on the Altar of the Cross by His death (Hebrews 10:5) for our redemption (Hebrews 10:12), wished to endow His Church with a visible Sacrifice, commemorative of His bloody Sacrifice on the Cross.*
- 7. As a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedec (Psalm 110:4), He offered to His Father His own Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine, and*
- 8. He constituted His apostles priests of the New Testament, to renew the same offering until He comes again (I Corinthians 11:26), by the words, “Do this in commemoration of Me” (Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 11:34).*

Here we have the Roman doctrine of the Mass set forth by its own authoritative teachers.

Let us take the points enumerated one by one and examine them.

1. It insists that the Holy Communion is not only a sacrament, conveying grace to the communicant, but also a true and actual sacrifice to God, in which Christ as the priest offers His own body and blood.

We have seen in the chapter on transubstantiation that this is not so. After the blessing, or thanksgiving as we prefer to call it, the bread still remains bread, and the wine is still wine. The communion service is a sacrament in which the body and blood of our Lord are shown forth or represented by bread and wine, visible and temporary symbols, to remind us of the spiritual and eternal truth that “**Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures**” (I Corinthians 15:3).

2. The so-called sacrifice of the Mass is in no way identical with Christ's sacrifice at Calvary.

a. There are many offerings of the Mass; Christ's offering at Calvary was **"once for all."**

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Hebrews 9: 24-28).

b. The Mass is called bloodless, as indeed it is, though Rome inconsistently claims that the bread contains not only the body, but also the blood of Christ. The Word of God declares that **"without shedding of blood is no remission"** (Hebrews 9:22).

c. The communion shows forth the Lord's death (I Corinthians 11:26). How then can it be identical with the death?

d. Christ's death and sacrifice on the cross needs no repetition for, **"by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"** (Hebrews 10:14).

e. Christ's human body was subject to ordinary human conditions. It could be at only one place at one time, though in His spirit He is omnipresent (Matthew 28: 20; John 14:18; Acts 18:10; II Timothy 4:17).

But Rome claims the whole Christ, body and blood, humanity and divinity, are in every particle of the consecrated bread and in every drop of the consecrated wine. How can the millions and millions of wafers and drops of wine be His body and blood? The whole thing is preposterous.

3. Holy Communion is not a propitiating sacrifice. On the contrary, it is not a sacrifice at all. There is not a single reference to it as such in the Bible. Christ on the cross was our one propitiating sacrifice.

God hath set forth [Jesus Christ] to be a propitiation through faith in his blood . . . that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Romans 3:25, 26).

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (I John 2:1, 2).

On the cross, before He committed His spirit to the Father, Jesus Christ cried, **"It is finished."**

Because His propitiatory work was finished, His dead body was taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb. But He is not there now. The third day God raised Him from the dead, and today He sits at the Father's right hand, presenting His one perfect, completed sacrifice on behalf of all who trust in Him.

He needs no Mass to offer to supplement what He has done. To claim that the sacrifice of the Mass is for those in purgatory is false, for we have already seen that purgatory is a Roman Catholic fiction.

4. No Mass is necessary to make the sacrifice of Calvary applicable to us. It is already available, fully and freely. **"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely"** (Revelation 22:17).

5. Just how presenting to the Father a spurious sacrifice which dishonors His well-beloved Son can honor the memories of the saints in Heaven is not explained. The saints in Heaven are not concerned about the honor of their own memories. They are occupied with the honor of the Lamb upon the throne:

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (Revelation 1:5, 6).

6. Christ did not institute the Mass at the Last Supper and under the semblance of bread and wine make His body and blood into a sacrifice for sin. He did not present the bread and wine to God, but gave them to His disciples to eat. The body spoken of in Hebrews 10: 5 was not made of the communion bread—it was the body formed in Mary's womb, for Hebrews 10:5 reads, **“Wherefore, when he cometh into the world [that is, at the incarnation], he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.”**

The suggestion that Christ at the Last Supper *“wished to endow His Church with a visible Sacrifice”* is nothing more than speculation, without one scrap of scriptural foundation.

7. It is altogether untrue to say that Melchizedec's bringing out bread and wine to Abraham prefigures the Mass. He was only following a custom of his day in welcoming Abraham and his followers as they returned victorious from the slaughter of the invading kings. They were weary and hungry, and he met them and fed them.

That Melchizedec is in several ways a type of Christ is clearly established in the Scriptures.

a. *His name and title.* Melchizedec means King of Righteousness. King of Jerusalem means King of peace. Both of these are applicable to our Lord.

b. *The absence of named parenthood:* **“Without father, without mother”** (Hebrews 7:3). **“Having neither beginning of days . . . but made like unto the Son of God”** prefigures the Deity of Christ.

c. **“Without descent . . . nor end of life . . . abideth a priest continually,”** sets forth Christ's eternal priesthood, never to be superseded, but ever living to make intercession for us.

In these things Melchizedec was a type of Christ, but he did not offer the bread and wine as a bloodless sacrifice. Had his offering to Abraham been a sacrifice to God, Melchizedec certainly would not have followed Cain's faithless example by presenting a bloodless sacrifice: he most certainly would have shed blood as Abel had done before him and as Abraham himself later did, when they approached God.

8. Christ did not appoint the apostles, and still less their so-called successors, the priests of Rome, to offer Mass when He said, **“This do.”** The words of institution were, **“This do in remembrance of me.”** He did not say, “This do as a sacrifice of me.” They were to remember Him and His once-for-all sacrifice soon to be accomplished on the cross.

The sacrifice of the Mass is grossly idolatrous. In 1226, eleven years after the promulgation of the dogma of transubstantiation, the Church of Rome for the first time practiced the “elevation of the host,” before which the assembled congregation knelt in worship. Ten years later, in 1236, for the first time the host was carried in solemn procession through the streets, accompanied by bishops and other church dignitaries, priests, monks, and nuns, while the thronging crowds fell down before it in worship.

In practice, the Roman Church exalts the host above the crucified and risen Saviour, worshiping it with a ceremony and state which is not accorded to the Lord Himself. Yet the Mass is not mentioned once in the Bible, while the story of the last week of our Lord's life on earth, culminating in His death on the cross and His resurrection on the third day, occupies almost one third of the pages of the four Gospels.

The word of Hosea to idolatrous Israel seems applicable to the Roman Catholic Church:

Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be unto him to sin (Hosea 8:11).

It has been computed that throughout the world there are four celebrations of Mass, each with its exaltation of the host, for every second of day and night, throughout the year. What an offense to God! What a perversion of His purpose is this turning of a divinely appointed feast of remembrance into a continuous round of idolatrous worship, the thing which He hates (Jeremiah 44:3, 4).

Another thing which God indeed must hate in connection with the saying and singing of Masses is that they are celebrated to get souls out of purgatory at a price—for money. This evil practice was started in the seventh and eighth centuries, and by the twelfth century had become a regular thing. All this is based on two falsehoods: that the souls of Christian believers are confined in purgatory, and that the saying and singing of Masses availed to ease their pains and eventually secure their release.

The Roman Catholic Church has to admit that there is no New Testament teaching or precedent for receiving payment for Masses, but holds that, since she was appointed by God to be His judicial authority on earth—another blatantly false claim—nothing she decrees for general usage can be contrary to His law.

The amount of money received by the Church of Rome for saying Masses is beyond all computation. In taking this money they are making merchandise of the grace of God, a thing which Peter certainly would not have done, for he said to Simon the sorcerer:

Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money (Acts 8:20).

If Peter spoke this sternly to one who sought to buy, what would he say to those who in the name of Christ pretend to sell that grace!

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Romans 8:32).

Yet in spite of these millions of Masses said, Rome gives no assurance of deliverance. Masses are still being said, even for popes who died forty or fifty years ago. If they have been released from purgatory through the Masses, those who are saying them do not yet know it.

~ end of chapter 22 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
