

The King's House. The Altar of Sacrifice

The Present Truth – November 7, 1901

E. J. Waggoner

THE ALTAR OF SACRIFICE

There was another altar belonging to the tabernacle, besides the altar of incense, of which we have lately learned. This was a large altar made of brass, that was not kept in the Holy place, but outside in the court, opposite to the entrance of the tabernacle. Every morning and evening, a lamb without spot or blemish was slain, and offered up as a burnt offering upon this altar.

Long before the tabernacle was built, in fact, ever since the days of Adam, God's people had offered sacrifices. Abel, you remember, brought one of the firstlings of his flock to offer to God. Do you not think he must have been sorry to take the life of the lamb? But this showed the suffering that sin has brought, and taught of One who has given His life to save the sinner from death.

The first thing that Noah did when he left the Ark, after the flood, was to build an altar of stones and offer as a sacrifice to God some of the animals that had been on with him in the Ark.

Abraham built an altar wherever he pitched his tent, and offered sacrifices. To try his faith, God told him to offer up his own son Isaac. He bound Isaac upon the altar, and would have slain him, if the angel of the Lord had not stayed his hand.

Do you remember Abraham's words to Isaac when the boy asked him; "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" He said, "God will provide Himself a lamb." And when God had told him not to kill Isaac, he saw a ram caught in the thicket, and he offered this instead of Isaac, who went joyfully home again with his father.

Jesus is the sacrifice that God has provided. For when He was on earth, John the Baptist said of Him to the people, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh

away the sin of the world." God has given His own Son to take our place, and taste death for every one, so that we may all go free.

Jesus "was brought as a lamb to the slaughter." Why did He thus suffer death? The innocent little lambs that were offered upon the Jewish altars had done no wrong. They were not slain for their own misdeeds. Their lives were taken because of the sins of the people.

But could the blood of these animals take away their sins?—Oh, no; but they were to teach them about the true Lamb of God, who suffered death that they might live.

Besides the morning and evening sacrifice, when any one of the people had sinned, he brought a sacrifice to be offered on the altar. Before the lamb was killed, he put his hands upon its head and confessed his sin. This was to teach him that "the Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all."

"I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears these all and frees us
From the accursed load."

When we confess our sins to Jesus, He takes them right away from us, and bears them Himself. They are washed away in the blood that He shed for us, and they will never be found any more.

When the lamb had been killed and offered, the blood was taken inside the tabernacle, and sprinkled in the holy place and before the Ark.

"The blood is the life." When Jesus shed His blood, He gave His life for us. But this will not save us unless we receive the life that He has given. The life of Jesus must come right into the inner apartment—into the heart—to make us clean, and to keep us from sin.

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or take away the stain.

"But Christ the heavenly Lamb
Takes all my sin away,
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

"My faith would lay her hand
On that meek head of Thine,
While as a penitent I stand,
And here confess my sin.

"Believing we rejoice
To feel the curse remove;
We praise the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And trust His bleeding love."