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The Whole Burnt Offering

by T. Austin-Sparks

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A *Precis* of Address.

Ezra 3:1-6. The *Whole* Burnt Offering is an inclusive representation that *God* has *everything* - the *Whole* Offering.

And not only does this Altar represent God getting "*the whole*" offering, but also *God's rights* are represented by the Altar. The Altar was upon the threshold of the Tabernacle - right at the door. Ex. 40:6,29, and compare Lev. 17:9, Deut. 12:13,14.

Ezra 3:3. The first thing that Ezra did when he began his ministry there, was to set the Altar in its right place.

So should the Cross be at the door. Even in heathen lands the threshold is recognised as a chief place and has testimony borne to it as being Sacred.

The Sovereignty of God is taught in this Altar - God first - God's place first. And God the right to "*All*." And *always* (Num. 28:3, Ex. 29:38). Not the Church first, or oneself first or anything else in life. And not God first only on Sunday, and every other day ours - but every day. Ezra 3:3,4 (offered the *daily* Burnt Offering). That in *all* things He might have the *first* place (Col 1:18). In home, in time, in private life (and public), in friendship, relationship, and for time *and* for *eternity*. *All* on that Altar. Is it not so often *our* time, *our* home, our things, and not "God's"?

All have to be brought there into relationship with this Altar (Ezek. 43:10). And remember that there is no "revelation" and no prayer-life *till* He *has* His right place in our hearts and life, and everything is on the Altar. *His* voice is not heard fully till then (Ps. 103:20; Is. 6:4). His voice was heard at the Altar in His House. His voice is not heard where there is any reservation. Next everything had to be sprinkled with the Blood (Heb. 9:21; Ex. 24:8, 29:20,21). The ear - the hand - the foot, and all the vessels. In *this way* God's rights are realised in His House.

Everything in His House is only "living," as in right relationship to the Altar and the Blood. See the Lord's Table. How it is regarded today as Man's table and under Man's system. Some cannot come who are the Lord's true children - because prevented by Man, when the responsibility should be on *them*. No, it is the *Lord's* Table in His House and *all* His true children can come. Christ is the Head. And He as Son over His House is Head and Host.

Christ is the anti-type, the one Altar or meeting-place between God and Man, the one only atonement for sinners, the one sacrifice, and the one priest. Christ's Godhead, on which He offered His manhood. And *He* being the Burnt Offering prevents the Sacrifice being consumed by God's fiery judicial wrath against Man. *He* the true Altar from whom We derive the spiritual food. The Holy Spirit teaching us that we must go forth after Him from legal ceremonialism (Heb. 13:10-13). The Epistle to the Hebrews written by reason of the adherents to the *visible* Altar. Paul says "We *have* an Altar" but it is a *spiritual* Altar and sacrifice. Now Hebrews contrasts the *outward* with the *unseen spiritual* things.

The Altar marks the *unity* of God - *one* God - as contrasted to the *Many* Altars.

Christ "the Sacrifice" and Christ "the Priest."

For us and God, Christ both Victor and Victim, and therefore Victor because Victim.

For us and God, Priest and Sacrifice, and therefore Priest *because* "the Sacrifice." Making us to God "Sons in Christ." As Victim He was the Sacrifice of the Altar (John 1:29).

The Lamb of God on the Altar, both Victim and Victor. As Victor He has "overcome" all in meeting Sin, Death, The World, The Flesh, The devil.

As Priest *He* laid down His life (John 10:18).

And *He* dismissed His Spirit (Luke 23:16).