

Israel's Altar

by G.W. North

The sermon highlights the significance of sacrifice in ancient Israel, not just as a means of salvation, but also as a way to acknowledge God's presence and union with His people.

Scripture: Exodus 29:38

Topics: "Presence of God", "Sacrifice"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the centrality of sacrifice in the life of the Children of Israel, illustrating how the Lord's presence among them was contingent upon their adherence to the sacrificial system. He explains that sacrifices were not only a means for the Israelites to approach God but also a reflection of their acknowledgment of His sovereignty and will. The altar served as a vital connection for the people, symbolizing their relationship with God and foreshadowing the ultimate sacrifice at Calvary for atonement and redemption. North highlights that the significance of these sacrifices extends beyond mere salvation, representing a deeper communion with God. Ultimately, the altar was foundational for Israel's identity and their ongoing relationship with the Lord.

Transcript

From the day the Children of Israel were constituted a nation with a law and land of their own the Lord dwelt in their midst. From that time onward He commanded that sacrifice should become daily routine; each day was to begin and end with sacrifice. At set times throughout the year supplementary sacrifices were also to be made to Him; apart from this He would not, could not dwell with them. There were also great commemorative and prophetic feasts of Jehovah in which the people were invited under command to join with their God.

This was the background in which they lived; in Israel sacrifice was as permanent as God's being and presence in their midst.

Israel may not have known that sacrifice was as necessary to Him as to them, but it was, so He secured their continued union by ensuring that His superior knowledge and will should be acknowledged and done. He did this by the simple means of enforcing the sacrificial system upon them as their only means of gaining entrance and approach to Himself. Their acceptance by Him and their continuance with Him as His people and His presence with them as their God depended primarily upon what took place at the altar. This has provided the ground for the concept of Calvary as being the means of atonement, forgiveness, redemption and cleansing.

In short, the altar with its sacrifices are almost exclusively associated in our minds with the means of procuring salvation for men; few seem to realise that the sacrifices of ancient Israel were intended by God to signify far more than that.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gw-north/israels-altar/>

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