

The Lamb of God

by G.W. North

The Levitical sacrifices were reflective and predictive of the eternal spiritual sacrifice of Christ, which is a natural demonstration of love and substitution.

Scripture: John 1:29, Hebrews 10:1

Topics: "The Sacrifice of Christ", "Spiritual Reality vs. Physical Reality"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes that the sacrifices of animals in the Old Testament were mere foreshadowings of the ultimate sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God, who was slain before the foundation of the world. He explains that while these sacrifices were real and significant, they were limited to the physical realm and could not fully capture the spiritual reality of Christ's atonement. The outward suffering of Jesus on the cross, though vital, was only a small part of the greater spiritual transaction that took place, which was hidden from human eyes. North urges believers to understand that the true value of Christ's sacrifice lies in the unseen spiritual realities it represents, as God intended for the physical to point to the eternal. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper meditation on the miracle of Christ's sacrifice, which transcends human understanding and reveals God's profound love and substitutionary grace.

Transcript

Sacrifices of animals made on God's altar pointed on through time to the actual bodily sacrifice of Christ Jesus; that was their limitation. They could not point backwards to eternity and the spiritual sacrifice that God made then, for flesh does not typify, nor can it understand spirit. Nevertheless the Levitical sacrifices were instituted to be reflective as well as predictive. By them hearts taught of God to know that the spiritual sacrifice is the real one are afforded a backward look through all time to that occasion when the Lamb was slain by God before the foundation of the world. Looking forward from the time of institution, they dimly and dumbly foreshadowed the least part of Jesus' sacrifice -- that is the physical, outward sacrifice and death of the Lamb. Looking back with understanding from that time to the beginning of the world, they are seen to be projections from and adaptations of the eternal spiritual sacrifice which neither human eye saw nor human hand ever handled. Meditation upon the miracle convinces the heart also that they were but pale reflections of it.

Whether any eye but God's ever saw this miracle we do not know, but certainly if any did it was not a man's. But then it was not a miracle to God, only a natural demonstration of love -- substitution -- any sacrifice is only an application of the necessary principle of eternal being to present need. In whatever

realm of natural life we move, the invisible, inaudible, intangible things are always vastly superior to those which we can apprehend by human sense. Real as the outward is, it is only of spiritual value to us as an indication, a parable or type of that which is inward; God intended and created it to be so.

Such Bible phrases as 'which was a figure for the time then present' for instance, specially inform us of the typical nature of the whole tabernacle complex and associated worship. Those things were solid and real enough, but they are none the less pictorial and teach us more by the reality of their existence than by what was accomplished by their practice. All were foreshadowings of the person and works of Christ; like the law itself under which they were ordained they found their fulfilment and end in Him. Spiritually, naturally and humanly He is their terminal point, for He fulfilled all. However, having said that, we have again arrived at the heart of the matter under consideration, for the physical person and sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth only fulfilled that which was material and outward. When humanly manifest on the earth, especially at Calvary, He not only fulfilled inward truth, but the more pointedly and visibly expressed it.

Care must be taken lest in thinking along these lines the outward be divorced from the inward. In actual fact it is quite impossible to do this; nevertheless in our minds we must strive to keep them together as they truly are in Christ. In Him they are one, but while wholeheartedly confessing this, we must clearly understand and firmly assert also that the outward sacrifice at Golgotha was the least part of that which was transacted there. The endurance of the cross was vital to Him as a man and to God as the Eternal Being; it was also necessary to us men for our salvation and eternal being. Indeed the cross and all He suffered there was completely unavoidable to Him if He was to fulfil what the scriptures predicted and He Himself had said. However, save for the inward, unseen things, which the visible, audible things indicated, the events of Calvary would have had little value. Since the unnamed thieves crucified one on either side of the Lord lingered on in their death-throes longer than Jesus did it is to be presumed that they also shed blood more copiously and suffered bodily tortures for a longer period than He did; it is almost as certain too that, with the possible exception of a few next of kin, their blood and death meant nothing at all to men, and have no spiritual value whatsoever. In common with all men of normal mentality, they fought death: Jesus did not.

Perhaps a fuller grasp of what was happening may be gained if we understand at least part of the reason why God blacked out the awful scene for three hours. He did it partly because He was seeking to emphasise that the outward, physical suffering of His Son was not the chief thing to which He was directing our attention. By drawing the veil of darkness over the whole scene He was attempting to redirect our gaze to what was happening in invisible realms. Paul says plainly 'we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal'.

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