

March 5. 1678. the Altar of the Third Degree

by Jane Lead

Jane Lead's sermon emphasizes the importance of progressing through spiritual altars to achieve a perfected state of worship and communion with God.

Scripture: Leviticus 17:11, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 5:2, Hebrews 13:10, 1 Peter 2:5, Revelation 8:3

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Consecration"

Description

Jane Lead preaches about the significance of building a pure Altar of the Third Degree unto God, symbolizing the process of consecration and transformation of believers into perfect and dedicated vessels for God's use. She emphasizes the journey from the earthly Altar of contrition to the heavenly Altar of victory, praise, and atonement through the shedding of the Blood of Christ. Lead delves into the threefold consideration of Altars - Earth, Brass, and Gold - representing different stages of spiritual growth and purification, culminating in believers offering their bodies as a sacrifice to God, leading to the highest degree of Altar-Perfection in Christ.

Transcript

This Word spake in me, Erect a pure Altar of the Third Degree unto your God, that therefrom your Oblations may be of force, which hath been hitherto too weak. Then immediately the Figure of an Altar was before my inward Eye built up, of Stones like Diamonds of Square, Cut, in which you might as in a Glass see your own Face. It had four Cups in each corner, of Gold colours. This Word followed the foregoing Idea, saying, The ascending Altar shall move the Eternal Mystery, for the Renovation of that Life, which hath lain as slain under the Altar.

From hence let all your mighty Cries go forth; till you mingle your Sacrifices with the touch-Fire of the Holy Ghost. Then was it put to me to consider, what kind of Altar hereby was to be understood? And for what use set apart. For we may take notice, that in those Ages before Christ's appearing, no Worship of Altar-Ministration was to be regarded, as is numerously recorded; From which Figurative, visible Altars were upon all occasions erected, by which the Holy One might receive from his Creatures, Oblations, and sweet smelling Sacrifices.

And they had no other way to hear from God their Creator, from out of whose sight they were now expelled. But by the descent upon the Altar, with Seraphick Fire, as a Testimony of acceptance, which was often given in that Time. If so, what may be now expected from such an Altar as is the true, and real, Spiritual substance of all, Christ the Lord, who according to the express Pattern in the Heavens, is come to

frame and fashion in us his own perfect Figure, and to dedicate it only to one use.

Which may consist in a perpetual Commemoration of the Blood, that attoneth and taketh away the Sin. That so the Trespass-offering may have its Cessation, through the Blood-sprinkling of the Deity, which as the Seed of a Sinless Life, will through Nature spring, by which we shall become Perfect Consecrated Altars to God, and only shall be primarily for his use. Now it was given me to understand, that before there can be attainment to this high sacred Altar-degree, where no more of a Sin-offering is required, I this instruction from the Spirit received, according to the Vision Cry.

That there are Altars of a threefold Consideration, which the Holy Scriptures verifie. As first Altars of Earth, then of Brass, and then of Gold; which had upon it only the distinguishing Crown. The pure Incense, Night and Day, did burn upon this Altar. Which signified only Victory, and Praise. But now two Ministrations there be, before this can be reached to. Therefore we must look into our selves, and examine our selves, that so we may know to what Altar degree we are come.

For each one is called forth for to be a Consecrated Altar, that so all the Figures may be fulfilled in Life, Power, Substantiality, answerable to that great and high Altar, that is entred into the Holy Place in the Heavens, henceforth expecting our Ascending after him. Now we are to consider of the first Altar, which is in the form of an Earthly Figure, which stands without the Court, upon which the Sacrifices of contrition are offered daily in the Sense and Sorrow of Sin, making confession thereof, encompassing the Altar with Fears, as a preparing Oblation, for what is to follow.

For here we are not to stick, but further to proceed from the weak Earthly Image to the Heavenly, wherein is Strength and Might. Which the second degree doth signifie by the Altar of Brass, which must be changed into Gold. Therefore of this kind of Mettle our Altar-Body must be constituted. For to render them more refined out of the earthly Sensuality, and brought into Spirituality, so that gross Nature shifts it self into a more transparency, through the foregoing Compunctions, and Soul-Agonies, which is the first work that the Spirit puts some Saints upon: which being gone through, then one degree of Translation is hereby attained unto, that is into more Light, Joy, and Liberty.

And hereby capable of another kind of Ministration, in offering up the Sins of the Flesh, through the Eternal Spirit, that from thence may follow or flow the attoning Blood. And how is this to be considered? verily not as it hath been generally understood, the Holy Spirit hath fathomed this Secret, and brought it thus unto me, by way of similitude. The Priest with his own Hands, was to slay the Heifer or Ram, and to sprinkle the Blood thereof upon the Altar, and then upon the Altar of Brass, to burn the Flesh as a whole burnt-offering.

From this much was revealed to me, as shewing and opening the depth of this Mystery. Now whereas these Types have been only applicable to Christ's suffering, and his Body-offering as a representative for all, and so no further deed of any following attoning Sacrifice, but to expect Redemption from that only, as exhibited in the Flesh. This is to be owned and allowed, as our true Altar-Sacrifice. But withal know this, that Christ doth expect from his Saints, that we should answerably to his own example fulfil the Type with him, which is, that we his Saints should also offer up our Bodies as our reasonable Sacrifice.

And how must this be, and by what Hand? First the Life of the Beast must go for it, the very Life-Blood let out by the Priest, which presents the Spirit of Christ Jesus in his Saints, as distinct and separated for that end, to put to Death what would live after the Flesh, which thoroughly expiates the Sin, when the Blood-Life thereof runs down. This is a true attoning offering, which will bring down Fire-Coelestial upon the Altar, as a Testimony that Christ in Spirit hath slain in us the Earthly-Life afresh, that so hereby our

Debt-offering may be fully paid.

No other way there is to make us clear and guiltless, but first to shed forth the Blood-Life of this Sin-offering. Then after that, a Blood of High and Immaculate kind will spring through all Nature's Properties, to change the Altar yet once again. For hereby the Holy Place in the Mind, Will, and Senses will be prepared, and they will be purified with Fire and Blood. Then shall you see, what will be the third degree. Now after our own Life sown in Death has been, to be raised up again into a Figure all of weighty transparent Gold, where all polluted Offerings must for ever cease, no more Sins of the Flesh or Beast must be confessed hereupon.

For the New Covenant inscription is upon this Golden Altar to be read, as it was in Words given to me, so hereof I shall declare, the Motto was this, To the known God, whom no more ignorantly do we Worship. For in the Altar-Light, we do see his Face, the Blood-Life hath removed away all enmity, and iniquity is no more to be found. The Crown of Perfumed Oyl doth belong to this Altar, and the Incense that is like Flaming Pillars of smoke, Scented with Powders all Coelestial from the Eternal World.

This is the definition of God the Lamb, as he comes to be our Highest degree of Altar-Perfection in us. Then will go forth the inspiring Powers, that will redress our defects. Till this shall be accomplished, we must proceed on in our Priestly course, in our daily offering for the expiation of Sin. Living and staying our selves upon the Meat and Drink offering, which in this present Ministration will be sent down from our great High Priest, from the most inward Tabernacle in the Heavens, till we shall be assuredly Crowned with this Altar-Figure, and therein be found true Worshippers in Altar-Flames.

[This was continued, and a further Revelation hereof given, upon the seventh Day: as it hereafter follows, March 12. In the intrim many Spiritual assaults were made, in order to withdraw the Temple-waiters from such a close Attendance on this most Holy Altar, as was required. Whence it was needful to give down this Advertisement and Caution the very next Day, being the 6th of March.]

A Word of Caution.

As I awaked in the Morning, it was said, Haste, and prevent all of an evil purpose that is against the Head-Life. Which by and through putting on the Garment of the Spirit close about thee, will be both a Fence and Ornament, against all of Sin-contrivance that would bereave thee of the Kingdom of Joy, Peace, and Purity.

Upon the 8th and 9th of this present Month, there were two Considerable and Prophetical Dreams, sent from a Superiour Sphear, to give a seasonable Premonition against imminent Perils, Private and Publick. The one did relate to the Cunning Treachery of some Spirits of prey, in whom the Nature of the Serpent concealed should come to be manifested, and a Victory obtained by the Watchful Spirit: Which accordingly was verified. The other to the Outward State of the Kingdom, and the General consternation of the same, through the Publick ownment of the Papal Authority, then about eleven or twelve Years before this came to pass. Both these are thought fit here to be omitted: but may elsewhere possibly be inserted. That which follows is from a deeper Center.

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