

**Words of Fellowship to
the Working Saints in Northern California**

July 22, 2017

**Laying Ourselves on the Altar
to be Burned by and Mingled with the Lord
for His Present Recovery**

Scripture Reading: Lev. 6:8-13; 9:24; Num. 28:2; 2 Chron. 5:6; 7:1; Psa. 110:3; Mal. 3:10; Rom. 12:1

- I. Leviticus 6:9 says, “Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it”:**
- A. The burnt offering being on the hearth signifies that anything offered as a burnt offering must be put on the place of offering to be burned; those who offer themselves to God as a burnt offering must be on the place of burning and must be willing to become a heap of ashes—v. 9, note 2.
 - B. All night until the morning signifies that a burnt offering should remain in the place of burning through the dark night of this age until the morning, until the Lord Jesus comes again—v. 9, note 3; 2 Pet. 1:19; Mal. 4:2.
 - C. The continual burning of the fire on the altar (vv. 9b, 12a, 13) signifies that God as the holy fire in the universe (Heb. 12:29) is always ready to receive (burn) what is offered to Him as food, and that God’s desire to accept what is offered to Him never ceases—v. 9, note 4.
- II. We need to lay ourselves on the altar and be burned by God to be mingled with Him—*Hymns, #280, stanza 3*:**
- A. God always has the desire to come down to the earth to accomplish something for His purpose—Matt. 6:10; cf. Rev. 21:2a:
 - 1. But God cannot accomplish anything on the earth alone; He needs the cooperation of His people; He needs humanity to meet with divinity so that the two natures—divinity and humanity—can be mingled together as one.
 - 2. We need to see that to satisfy God’s desire to change the age, the place where God meets with man is not only man’s spirit but even more the place of sacrifice, the place of burning—the altar.
 - B. What we offer to God must be ourselves in Christ as our burnt offering—Rom. 12:1; Lev. 1:4:
 - 1. The burnt offering is a type of Christ as the One who is absolutely for God’s satisfaction—v. 4.
 - 2. In offering the burnt offering, the offerer laid his hands on the head of the offering, indicating that he identified himself with the offering and was one with the offering; thus, in a sense, the offerer offered himself to God in his union with the burnt offering.
 - 3. After an offering was placed on the altar, fire came down from heaven and consumed the offering; this consuming fire signifies God Himself—Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29.
 - 4. We are the offerings, and God Himself is the fire; if we are willing to be the offering, God will be the burning fire.
 - C. The best way to carry on the work [of the Lord] is to be burned by the Lord:
 - 1. If we would be used by the Lord to turn the age, we must first be willing to lay ourselves on the altar; we must be willing to pray, “Lord, I lay myself on the altar.”
 - 2. We need to be burned by the Lord to such an extent that we are consumed; then we will be one with the Lord, and upon us there will be the glow of the divine fire, that is, the glory of God—Ezek. 1:4, note 5.
 - 3. To experience the burning, we do not need to pray with many words; we simply need to pray, “Lord, I am here on the altar. Burn me. O Lord, burn me!”
 - D. God as the holy fire is always ready to burn us:

1. God as the holy fire from heaven is always ready to consume whatever we offer to Him; He is waiting for us to offer ourselves to Him by placing ourselves on the altar—Lev. 6:9.
2. If there is no altar and no offering, the fire cannot come down; but when there is the altar with the offering on the altar, the fire comes down; this kind of thing occurred several times in the Old Testament.
3. After the tabernacle was built up and the priestly service was established, fire came forth from before Jehovah, that is, from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar—Lev. 9:24.
4. After the building of the temple was completed, King Solomon and the people of Israel offered sacrifices to God without number; after he concluded his prayer to God, fire came down from heaven and devoured the burnt offering and the sacrifices—2 Chron. 5:6; 7:1a.
5. Whatever is offered to God on the altar becomes food to Him for His satisfaction—Lev. 3:11; Num. 28:2.

III. Psalm 110:3 says, “Your people will offer themselves willingly / In the day of Your warfare, / In the splendor of their consecration. / Your young men will be to You / Like the dew from the womb of the dawn”:

- A. In the eyes of the Lord our willing consecration, our offering ourselves to Him, is a matter of splendor; although the church has become degraded, throughout the centuries there has been a line of those who have offered themselves willingly to the Lord in the splendor, the beauty, of their consecration—v. 3, note 2.
- B. The word [*splendor*] may also be translated *adornment*; the splendor of consecration is an adornment; if we offer ourselves willingly to the Lord, we will be beautified with a divine, heavenly splendor.
- C. Here Christ likens Himself to a plant that needs the watering of the mild, soft, gentle dew; as Christ is on His way to carry out God’s economy, He needs to be watered; whoever volunteers himself to Christ as an offering is a young man likened to the dew conceived in the womb of the dawn for watering Christ—v. 3, note 3.

IV. Malachi 3:10 says, “Bring the whole tithe to the storehouse that there may be food in My house; and prove Me, if you will, by this, says Jehovah of hosts, whether I will open to you the windows of heaven and pour out blessing for you until there is no room for it”:

- A. In the Old Testament the children of Israel were commanded to offer a tithe, a tenth, of the produce of the good land to God—Lev. 27:30; Deut. 14:22-23.
- B. Today many Christians practice tithing by offering ten percent of their income to God.
- C. However, the offering that God desires is not only money, something without life; God desires His people to offer themselves to Him—Num. 6:2; Psa. 110:3; Rom. 12:1.
- D. In addition to bringing our material offerings to the Lord (Mal. 3:10), we need to bring ourselves to the Lord; we need to bring our tithes, our material offerings, to the storehouse, and we also need to bring ourselves to the storehouse.
- E. If we do this, we will prove the riches of the Lord’s blessing; we will see that the Lord will open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing for us until there is no room for it (v.10).

V. Rom. 12:1 says, “I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service”:

- A. God has had many kinds of compassion on us, as shown in His selecting us, calling us, saving us, and bringing us into His life that we may enjoy His riches and become His expression; through these many compassions as the means and the motivating power, the apostle exhorted us to present our bodies to God for the fulfillment of His purpose—v. 1, note 3.
- B. For the church life, the life of the Body of Christ, to be realized, our entire being is needed; thus, Romans 12 speaks concerning our body (v. 1), our soul (v. 2), and our spirit (v. 11); our body must be presented to God for the Body of Christ—v. 1, note 4.