

WHAT THE CHURCH SACRIFICES

IN THE SCRIPTURES the word sacrifice is very properly used in two ways – first, to describe the surrender of our will in order to have God's will done in us; second, to indicate the work of our great High Priest, to whom we give up ourselves, and who makes that consecration acceptable to God. Primarily we sacrifice what we possess of the present earthly rights, privileges and opportunities; for this is what we possess. But, additionally, we give up something by faith. By faith we believe that God has made a provision that all mankind shall have the privilege of restitution to perfection during the Millennial Age; and by faith we forego, or give up, our share of Restitution privileges. Thus our principal giving up is our surrender of what we have; and our secondary giving up is that which we have by faith in God's great Plan.

However, it is not necessary for one to have an appreciation of the coming restitution blessings in order to sacrifice these and thus to present himself a living sacrifice, as the Apostle exhorts. (Rom. 12:1.) A knowledge of Restitution blessings is connected with a full knowledge of the Ransom. We can see that others in the past did not have this knowledge clearly. But since those who consecrate to the Lord give up everything that they have, this would include Restitution also. So, then, while the saints who lived before the Harvest period did not have this knowledge of Restitution, yet they made an acceptable sacrifice through faith in the Redeemer.

The terms *offer, sacrifice, devote*, etc., sometimes have different meanings. When, for instance, we read that the high priest offered the sacrifices and also that we offer our bodies living sacrifices, we would differentiate between these uses of the word *offer* and say that to devote for sacrifice is our part. This we do when we present our bodies. We can do no more than present them. This is shown in the type by the bringing of the two goats to the door of the Tabernacle and the

tying of them there. In this sense we sacrifice – that is, we give up our own will and our own rights to everything. But the Heavenly Father does not deal with us in the sense of accepting a sacrifice from us, except through the Redeemer. As our great Advocate He stood ready to impute His merit to our offering; and as the High Priest, the representative of God, He sacrificed it. We had already [R4900 : page 391] presented ourselves; and our offering was completed when the High Priest accepted the sacrifice and began the killing of the antitypical goat. But *this is a gradual work*. In the type, the life was accepted instantly when the High Priest thrust the knife into the goat; but the sacrifice was not actually completed until the blood was taken into the Most Holy. And so in the antitype.

OUR WORK NOT COMPLETED AT CONSECRATION

This work of sacrificing the Church our Lord is continually accomplishing in one way or another all through the Gospel Age. When we received the begetting of the Holy Spirit we became New Creatures. And this actual dying, and all the sufferings in the "narrow way," and our continuing to yield ourselves to the guidance of the Lord, are all parts of the work of sacrifice. When we sacrifice our will we should not entertain the thought, Now I have done my part, let the High Priest do the rest! This is not the right thought. At any moment we may cease to *will* and thus cease to present ourselves; at any moment we may sit down and say, "We will take our ease." We must not do so; but we are to continue to fill up the sufferings of Christ.

It is not all over when we consecrate. Then we gave up all of our rights and interests. It requires a great deal of grace to be dead to the world and alive to God. This the Apostle represents when he says, For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the Most Holy by the high priest, wherewith to make atonement for sin, are burned outside the camp. (Heb. 13:11.) In one sense of the word that "goat" is dead. Our experiences represent the actual suffering and going outside

the camp – all that happens to us while we are reckoned dead according to the flesh.

