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The Ram of Consecration

by T. Austin-Sparks

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Reading: Leviticus 8:6,10-15,22-24,30.

Connected with the setting apart of the priestly company were two rams, the ram of the burnt offering (verse 18) and the ram of consecration (verse 22). It is about the ram of consecration that a brief word should be said at this time.

The ram of consecration, with which Aaron and his sons became identified by laying their hands upon its head, represents Christ in that special aspect of His life toward the Father, namely, His devotedness to the will of God — a Ram of Consecration. "Lo, I am come... to do thy will, O God"; "I do always the things that are pleasing to him"; "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work". Those are words which show us the inner relationship between the Son and the Father, and give us the motive of His life, that which governed Him utterly. A fire consumed Him, even the doing of the Father's will; an utter devotion to the will of the Father, so that He could say, "For their sakes I consecrate myself".

These who were forming the priestly company laid their hands upon the ram of consecration, and then it was slain, and, as the outcome, the blood of that ram was taken and placed upon the right ear, the right thumb and the right toe, meaning, as is quite clear, that this priestly company was given wholly to the Lord, to be governed by Him alone. In the first place they were to be ruled alone by what the Lord said. In the second place everything that should be done was to be governed by the directing of the Lord — the hand, the symbol of service; a work to come altogether under the

government of the Lord's will. In the third place the foot, the great toe, spoke of movement, goings and comings, all to be in the will of God. The blood of the ram of consecration controlled everything.

This is all well known and understood, but it has its own special application for us at an hour like this in which we live. The Lord has spoken many things to us in these meditations and the issue for us is in what is meant by this ram of consecration; that we shall give ear to the expressed and revealed will of God; that we shall give the hand to make that will of God our life business, and that we shall give our walk, our goings, henceforth right into the way of that will as it has become known by us. Such is the company that the Lord seeks to have; the whole man, the whole life in the will of God.

The standard is Christ. He is the measure. Here is a ram wholly given over to the Lord, speaking of Christ and the utterness of His devotedness to the Father. The governing word is, "even as Christ". Union with Christ in life, in fellowship, means that the devotedness of Christ to the Father is to be the standard and measure of our devotedness. That surely takes us all the way. We have in heart to reach out our hands and lay them, as it were, upon His head, and become one, identified with Him in His devotedness to the will of God. "He died for all," says the Apostle, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." We speak much about identification with Christ, but we need to realise that when we see that, without the slightest reservation, He was abandoned to the will of God to the last measure of the greatest cost possible, we are looking upon the true measure of consecration; because "as he is so are we in this world".

Here you have something more than identification with Christ as the Sin-bearer. That has gone before in the burnt offering and the sin offering. We have perhaps very gladly laid our hands upon His head in that capacity. We have very gladly accepted identification with Christ as our Sin-bearer. That is one thing, but this is another. We rejoice that He has borne our sins in His body on the tree, and now in what follows we come to another aspect, to the living side of identification with Christ. This is where the will of God in its fullness and utterness comes into view; Christ, the Ram of Consecration, His blood upon us, our hands upon Him.

You notice how in everything this consecrated and priestly company were one with what speaks of Christ, one with the altar. The same blood as was put upon the altar was put upon them (verse 30). They were one with the altar, one with the Cross. Moses sprinkled the tabernacle and the people. They were one with the tabernacle, one with the house of God. They are one with the anointing Spirit, by which everything is made one. The anointing oil and the blood are sprinkled upon everything, including themselves, and that oil and that blood makes a oneness of all — altar, house, garments, persons.

It is all by reason of one blood, one Spirit. All that is called consecration; that is, to make wholly the Lord's.

We should recognise that, if in any sense we mean that we have given ourselves to Christ, we are united with Christ. It involves and carries with it this, that the whole will of the Father is to govern every part of our lives; not only that we should be saved from sin, but that we should be consecrated to the Lord.