

bows his heart in prayer, or lifts up his voice in praise, feeling that surely this is "none other than the house of God and the very gate of heaven."

The holy place was the sanctuary of forgiven hearts. It was the retreat of those whose sins had been forgiven through the expiation upon the bloody altar without. True, they entered it then only vicariously in the person of the priest, "the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way was not yet made plain by the sacrifice of Christ." But all in that sanctuary spoke of reconciliation and love. The altar was the altar of love. The flame upon it was the flame of love, and the costly offering of the fragrant spices was symbolic of the offering of the heart's best treasures, its loftiest ambitions, its richest affections, its purest and most fragrant devotions.

Here then have we another lesson for all time. Oh man, it is thy heart which the God of heaven demands as an oblation upon His altar; not thy hands, even though they be busy hands; not thy feet, even though they be swift feet; not thy brain, even though it be a tireless brain; not the homage of intellect to truth; not the stern bending of the will like the oak before the blast, but thy heart, oh man—thy heart, with its capacities to love and hope, to fear and trust—thy heart, with its wealth of affection. It is that alone which can be fuel for the flame upon the altar of love. Nothing but love will satisfy love. Upon that altar of redemption where the love of God to thee is burning with so quiet, holy a flame, the heart, thy whole heart must be laid, that under fires which burn but consume not, its purified affections, set free from earthly dross, may rise like the white cloud of fragrant frankincense to heaven, and be glorified in the light of the Sun of righteousness.

III. We see that in the "sacrifices of God," the true oblation is not only the heart, but the broken heart, that is, as it is defined in the same verse, the contrite heart, the heart broken in contrition for sin. This is one reason why the way which conducts to the altar of

oblation, leads fast by the side of the altar of expiation. It is that the lesson of sin may be learned—its exceeding sinfulness be made to appear; that men may look in type "upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn;" that they may realize that sin is a bitter thing, and say:

"O! how I hate those lusts of mine  
That crucified my God;  
Those sins that pierced and nailed His flesh,  
Fast to the fatal wood."

It is therefore an essential element of this acceptable sacrifice that the heart shall be broken—transfixed with a sense of personal guilt and defilement, crying out with David in the earlier part of the Psalm: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me." This it is which makes it so hard for man to lay upon this altar of oblation the acceptable sacrifice. If the way which leads up to it were not the bitter way of repentance and confession of sin; if a man might bring his heart as a whole heart, with its carnal pride unbroken, with its stubborn self-will unsubdued, with its estimates of personal merit unchanged! But oh! this humbling of self in the dust; this writing bitter things of one's self; this being made to possess the sins of one's youth; this gathering up all the buried misdeeds out of the musty past, conning them over with shame and anguish of spirit, until the heart is ready to burst with the agony of its self-condemnation; this telling of them all with shame and grief in the ear of God, and humbly suing for pardon through the sacrifice of Christ—this it is which keeps so many on the vestibule, gazing in, wishing themselves amongst the number of the accepted worshipers, and yet evermore remaining without, because their proud hearts refuse to be broken in the view of the Cross.

And yet, this is the acceptable sacrifice, and the only acceptable one. It puts man in his true relation as a sinner to the mercy of God. It makes it possible for Him to be "just and yet