

REFERENCE POINT

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The Altar of Sacrifice

Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out. (Leviticus 6:13 ESV)

All throughout Scripture the people of God have built altars and called out to God. When our loving Lord was giving instructions to the Levitical priesthood through His servant Moses, He charged them with the responsibility for the hearth of the altar. They were to be sure the fire never went out. Never!

These priests are never named. Their job wasn't one that made others stand in awe of their talents nor give special accolades at festive times. Nevertheless, they were faithful in doing their job. God noticed, and He took note of their obedience.

But what does this have to do with librarianship you may ask? Do we have an altar that needs constant tending? Revelation 5:8 portrays a scene where the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding bowls of incense from the altar—the prayers of the saints.

Secret devotion is the very essence, evidence, and barometer of a vital relationship with our Lord. Keep the altar of private prayer burning. The sanctuary and family altars borrow their fires from here; therefore, let them burn well. Let your closet seasons be regular, frequent, and undisturbed. Faithful prayer feeds our spirits and strengthens us for decision-making. It accesses wisdom

from above and directs our steps. In the library, in all of our work and relationships, prayer is our supply line to God's riches.

James 5:16 says, "The prayer of a righteous person has great power." Do we engage in lukewarm private devotion? Is the fire of devotion burning only dimly in our hearts? If so, let us be alarmed at this sign of decay! Let us go weeping and ask for the Spirit of grace to stir up the fire in our souls. Let us set apart special seasons for extraordinary sessions of prayer. If this fire should be smothered beneath the ashes of worldly conformity, it will dim the fire on the family altar, and lessen our influence both in the church and in our ministry.

God loves to see the hearts of His people glowing toward Himself! Let us give to God our hearts, ablaze with love and seeking His grace, so that the fire may never be quenched. Many things will attempt to extinguish the fire, but if "the unseen hand" pours the sacred oil on it, it will blaze higher and brighter. Let us use the texts of Scripture as fuel for our heart's fire, but above all, let us be much alone with Jesus.



—Paul Roberts

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