

argument they have – is the argument from history.

The laws as they stand are not what he says they are! It does not say that you can sacrifice anywhere that God places His name! It does not say that at all. There in the wilderness, the Lord tells Moses what to do. He describes the kind of altar to make, and in the course of describing it He says, “In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee and I will bless thee.” He is certainly not saying where they are to make altars! He is assuming that as they travel through the wilderness they will make altars at different places, and He is saying that in all the places where He records His name He will come and bless them. He is not saying where they may build at all! But He is assuming that they will build in different places while going through the wilderness where it would be only reasonable to expect they would build them at various places. He is not saying whether they would be restricted to one place after they go into Canaan or not. As the picture stands here, it is a picture of a united people with one altar. Even though the place of the altar moves there is always one altar. There is not a word in J or in E or in any other document to suggest that the Israelites, as a nation in the wilderness ever had two altars at the same time. Until the brazen altar was built they were all in one place. Until the brazen altar was built they would build an altar of earth or an altar of stone. It is assumed that there is one central place of sacrifice, whether it meant just one altar or two altars, there was one place of sacrifice.

When they came out of the garden they built an altar, and when Abraham came into the land they built an altar. They built altars at various places. As Abraham went about, if he was going to stay in one place for awhile, he would build an altar and make sacrifices. Cain and Abel made sacrifices. There is no reason for a command to have an altar only in a certain place until there is a large nation, worshipping God in the midst of a heathen world, where there was the tremendous danger that they would forget God and be carried away by heathen practices. It was in order that they be not led away to heathen practices that the LORD ordered them to keep the worship centralized in one place, in order that it should be under control. It would not mean that it had to have been that way before that time.