

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Topic: Do not desecrate the Altar of God - Part 1

Bible Reading: Genesis 8: 20-22

Introduction

An altar is a structure upon which offering such as sacrifices are made for religious purposes. It is an elevated structure or place that incense is burned in worship, or religious rites are performed to gods or ancestors. Altars can be found in shrines and temples/churches. The altars in the churches are usually a raised area with a table or flat-topped block used as a focal point where people can honor God with their offerings. In the Biblical context, **it is the table which stands in the presence of the Lord.** The angel that was sent to show Ezekiel the vision described the altar by saying “The altar was of wood, three cubits high, and its length two cubits. Its corners, its length, and its sides were of wood; and he said to me, ‘**This is the table that is before the Lord**’” Ezekiel 41:22. **Since it has been clarified that the altar is the ‘Lord’s table,’ then it is an abomination for anyone to share in both the Lord’s Table and the table of demons; thereby becoming partners with them.** You must make a choice because you cannot eat at the Lord’s Table and also at the table of demons; according to the scripture which says “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord’s Table and of the table of demons” 1 Corinthians 10:21. **Brethren, do not participate in any activity at the table of demons because it is forbidden.**

Today, nations are desecrated due to the conducts of their citizens, who are violating the statutes of the Lord and breaking the eternal covenant which, He had with them. The earth is polluted by its inhabitants because they have disobeyed the instructions of the Lord, swept aside His laws and broken the ancient covenant that He had with them. As it is written “The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant” Isaiah 24:5. **The world is suffering for the sins of its people who have desecrated the altar of God and twisted His instructions. Are you among those who have violated the laws of God**

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or broken His covenant? Have you ever bowed down to deities or serve contrary gods? Have you ever set up any altar in private to worship idols? Do you have any custom that support and encourage you to offer sacrifices to other gods? How many contrary altars have you participated in their construction physically and financially? How many idols/gods have you promoted under the guise of promoting your traditions? It is time to change.

The countries of the world have built many altars where they offer sacrifices, in order to solve their national issues, but these altars have become places of sin. The more altars the people of this world are building to make offering which will remove their sins, the more the number of places they have for sinning; according to the scripture which says “Because Ephraim has made many altars for sin, they have become for him altars for sinning” Hosea 8:11. Therefore, do not worsen your situation by building more contrary altars that will make your sin to multiply instead of taking your sins away. It is time to build acceptable and sanctified altars in the Churches, where God will manifest His awesome power.

Majority of the Churches in the world do not have altars; what they have are stages or raised platforms to entertain the congregation. Those churches who have altars are not keeping their altars holy, which makes it impossible for the angels and the hosts of heaven to descend into their midst, and perform wonders during their services. Christians think deeply, do not bring contrary things and perverse people to defile the sacred altar of God, else, Satan and the hosts of hell will have the opportunity to dominate your Churches and put the congregations in spiritual slavery and perpetual bondage.

Earthlings have set up uncountable altars throughout the globe where they are sacrificing to their disgusting gods in order to multiply their sins and provoke God. The Bible says, “For according to the number of your cities were your gods. O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to the shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal” Jeremiah 11:13. Can you name or think of a

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city/state in your country where there is no contrary altar? Do you participate in celebration of gods under the guise of a carnival? As it is norm of the day to persecute the people of God and demolish the altar of God, because Satan has hijacked the souls of the larger population of the world and they are cruel to the servants of God, to the extent that they are putting them in jail/prison based on trumped-up charges. Inasmuch as the fear of God is scarce among humans, people are breaking the covenant of God at an alarming rate and they are tearing down the altars of God to be replaced by satanic altars. According to the complaint of prophet Isaiah which says, "... 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life'" **1 Kings 19:10, 14.** Hence, those who are removing the Cross and the Ten Commandments from the public buildings should refrain from this activity.

Types of altar

There are two types of altars, namely the physical and the spiritual altars.

The physical altars: The physical altars are the altars that one can see with natural eyes and touch physically. The physical altars can also be subdivided into two namely: the altar of God and the altar of demons (or contrary altars). **The primary aim of the satanic altars is to obstruct and destroy the work of God. These contrary altars were erected to ensnare and enslave the children of God.**

Nowadays, many satanic altars are disguised to look like the altar of God in order to confuse the believers. So, beware of demonic altars that are imitating the activities of the altar of God to mislead the Christians. You can distinguish between the altar of God and altar of demons by the contents of the altar and mode of worship. **The contents of the altar of God may consist of any or all of these items, the hymn book, the Holy Bible, the bell of Salvation and the Cross. They will be blessing people in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and plead to**

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God with the grace received through Christ. They will never call on any other name during services except the name of Jesus Christ and the numerous names of the Almighty God. Whereas at any contrary altar, you may find mutilated animals, human parts, kola nuts, bitter kola, charms, palm oil, edible things and other voodoo materials. You may see participants dancing around the altar chanting incantation at times half nude or naked. Sometime they may be pouring palm oil and or alcohol on the altar. Occasionally they may be pouring blood on the altar. The common occurrence among the participants is that they always go into frenzy whenever they are chanting incantations to their demons/gods.

Beware, do not bow or worship before any altar that you are doubting due to its location or have reservations because of the mode of worship. Be cautious and alert to the danger of worshipping contrary spirits/demons; so demolish the altars of the Gentiles where they worship their gods; break their sacred stones and cut down their symbols. If it is against the law in your country to demolish these altars because of privacy issue or property damage, then find a legal and spiritual ways to curtail their activities; according to the directive of God which says “But thus you shall deal with them’ you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire” Deuteronomy 7:5. You must curtail their activities before they corrupt your descendants, and do not give opportunity to the spiritual tribe of Balaam (the wolf in sheep’s clothing) who instructed Balak to build altars to curse and cause the downfall of the people of Israel; according to the Book of Numbers which says “Then Balaam said to Balak, ‘Build seven altars for me here, and prepare for me seven bulls and seven rams”’ Numbers 23:1. Appearance can be deceiving, be on the lookout; do not worship at any Church that they are cursing people at the altar instead of blessing.

For this reason, tear down demonic altars where people are worshipping their gods, and **wipe out the name of their gods from such places so that they will never be worshipped again at such locations. It is your**

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duty to abolish the names of idols/deities from your community, else they will thrive and corrupt the community, and then they will dominate the area and put people in spiritual bondage. As it is written “And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy the names from that place” **Deuteronomy 12:3.** **Do not forget to destroy the satanic altars and completely erase the names of their gods, if you do not want the darkness to dominate your community.**

The spiritual altars: The spiritual altars too can be subdivided into two namely: the spiritual altar of God and that of the devil. The spiritual altar can neither be seen by natural eyes nor touched. **However, if your spiritual eyes are opened, you will see the activities going on in the altar of God and that of Satan. The sanctification and ordination of Isaiah as a prophet is one of the best illustrations of the spiritual altar of God.** The scripture stated that Isaiah saw God in a vision sitting on a throne in the temple with the seraphim that surrounded the throne shouting the praising of God. **He was afraid because he was a sinner living among a people of unclean lips whose every word of their mouths is sinful, yet he was given the grace to see Almighty God in a trance. Then one of the seraphim flew to him, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. And he touched his mouth with it, and said “Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away and your sin purged” Isaiah 6:1-7. We can deduce from the passage that the coal from the spiritual altar of God is potent enough to make your guilt to be removed and your sins to be forgiven. For this reason, all the priests/pastors must never joke with their ordination.** In addition, the Bible stated that the martyrs will be accommodated temporarily under the altar of God. **The souls of everyone who had been killed for proclaiming the Gospel will be under the altar of God until the judgment day.** As it is written “When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held” **Revelation 6:9.** **Continue to spread the messages of God through evangelism, and do not consider the challenges that are confronting you because of your**

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loyalty to God and Jesus Christ, because your present persecution and affliction are incomparable to the joy that is awaiting you in heaven, if you qualify to be one of the martyrs. Have the assurance that if you do not stray from the righteous path and you never cease from propagating the Gospel, even if you sleep in the Lord before the judgment day, you will be admitted to stay under the heavenly altar of God temporarily before the time to reign with Jesus Christ comes. You have the guarantee of a celebrated home-coming waiting for you in heaven inconformity with the scripture which says “And I heard another from the altar saying, ‘Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments” **Revelation 16:7.**

The spiritual altar of the darkness can be found in the firmament, in the ocean/sea, in the breeze, in the rocky mountain or granite formations, in the ground, in the forest or wilderness, in the grave and on the land. If your spiritual eyes are opened, you will see the satanic activities that are being performed on these altars. In a nutshell, whenever any tragedy occurs, it is the work of one of these altars or combination of these altars of the darkness, because nothing good can ever proceed from these altars except wickedness and evil, since they were established to recruit people into their kingdom of eternal perdition.

Topic: Do not desecrate the Altar of God - Part 2

Bible Reading: Genesis 8: 20-22

We shall continue our discussions with the importance of the altar of God to humans, and how the ignorance of the Christians is preventing them from using this opportunity.

The importance of the Altar of God

The Altar of God is an indispensable part of the believers, because of its benefits. It is also a way of preparing the Christians for the great worship before the heavenly throne of God; according to the scripture

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which ways “After these things I looked, and behold a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!' ” **Revelation 7:9-10.**

God renews and/or make new covenant at the Altar: When God destroyed the ancient world with flood, then Noah built an altar to the Lord and he offered various kinds of acceptable animals and birds as sacrifice on the altar. The flame went up toward heaven and the smoke of the sacrifice ascended, then the Lord smelled the sweet scent of the sacrifice and He was pleased with the aroma of sacrifice. **This conduct of Noah prompted God to make a covenant with mankind and every living thing.** As it is written “Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean birds, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma. Then the Lord said in His heart, 'I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease’” **Genesis 8:20-22.** **Keep the altar of God holy, if you want Him to make a new covenant with you. You must not defile the altar of God, if you want Him to erase the satanic covenants that are spiritually waging war against you. Let holiness be your watchword so that God can renew His covenant in Your life.**

Abraham appreciated the Lord: Our ancestor Abraham was not an ingrate, when the Lord appeared to him and commanded him to leave his country to a land that He the Almighty God will show him. He obeyed the Lord not only because of the promises but because He has faith in Lord. After Abraham, Sarah and Lot together with all their possessions and the people whom they had acquired departed from Haran and came to the Land of Canaan. Then the Lord appeared to Abraham and said 'To your descendants I will give this land.' So, Abraham built on altar there and dedicated it to the Lord who had appeared to him **Genesis 12:1-8.** **Our**

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father Abraham through the inspiration of the Spirit of God built an altar to honor and show appreciation to the Lord. When was the last time that you showed appreciation to God for all his benefits in your life? Or are you among the ingrates who forgets that God is the One who satisfies them with good things of life? Learn from the experience of our forefather Abraham who understood clearly the importance of an altar. The Bible testified to this fact by saying "Then He said, 'Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you'" **Genesis 22:2**. **Though God did not instructed Abraham to build an altar, but because he knew the significance of an altar, he built an altar to sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering upon it;** according to the scripture which says "Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood" **Genesis 22:9**. **Start using the altar in your church in acceptable way to reap the benefits.** Inasmuch as Abraham was justified because of his faith and his works of obedience by offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice on the altar, **you too will be justified if you follow the steps of Abraham.** As it is written "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? **James 2:21**. **As long as you use the altar of your church in a manner that pleases the Lord, every prayer that people offer around or close to the altar will be answered promptly and every worthy person will be justified.**

Prayers are answer faster at the altar: The altar is the place where the angels and the hosts of heaven will first descend before the congregation can witness the manifestation and wonders of God. Which means, any prayer offered at the altar or close to it will be answered promptly. Hence, build the altar of God in your churches for His name to be honored and remembered, so that He will come to you and bless you; according to the Bible passage which says "An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I record My name I will come to you and bless you" **Exodus 20:24**. **Since the churches and the holy mountains are the places that**

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God set aside for people to worship Him, then it is inevitable for you to keep the altars in your churches and holy mountain sacred, if you want God to reveal His glory in your midst and display His awesome power among you. Jesus Christ also lay emphasis on the process that will make one's prayer to be answered promptly at the altar. He enlightened us by saying "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift" Matthew 5:23-24. Keeping the altar consecrated is not enough, but you must not have grudges against anyone for your prayers to be answered promptly. Which means, if you keep a clear conscience at the altar you will be blessed. It is for this reason that God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit told David to go and set up an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite where he saw the angel that was causing destruction of the people of Israel, due to the sin committed by David. After David built the altar and sacrificed on it, the Lord was moved to compassion by David's prayer for the land of Israel, and the plague against the people of Israel came to an end. The scripture confirmed this fact by saying "... And David built there an altar to the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the Lord heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel" 2 Samuel 24:10-25. **For God to stop the epidemic in your country/community, build altars in your churches and pray regularly to God. If you want your prayers to be answered, pray to God with a clear conscience at the altar. Have no grudges against anyone, if you want God to hear your requests and respond quickly to your pleas.**

Prayer alone must be offered at the Altar

We must admit that the first testament which God made with His people was defective, so there is a need for a new testament. It should be noted that if there had been nothing wrong with the first covenant, there would have been no need for a second one. The scripture testified to this fact by saying "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, He says:

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'Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord”

Hebrews 8:7-9. We need to realize that the first covenant was given through Moses; it had rules for the priests, regulations for divine worship and a holy place called the sanctuary here on earth. As it is written “Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary” **Hebrews 9:1.** Do not forget that the first covenant between God and Israel had regulations for worship and a place of worship here on earth, however, it involves various kinds of gifts, sacrifices and ceremonies which deal only with clean and unclean foods/meats, and drinks with different washings that are mere external regulations for the body, imposed to help worshipers until the time of reformation. The time of new order when Jesus Christ the Messiah will establish the reality of what these things potend with a new covenant. According to the Book of Hebrews which says “Concerning only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation” **Hebrews 9:10.** **During that era, various animals and birds were killed and sacrificed on the altar, but since the great sacrifice made by Jesus Christ on the Cross, the sacrifice of animals and birds at the altar of God had became obsolete and forbidden. Inasmuch as the blood of animals and birds is powerless to take sins away;** according to the scripture which says “For it is not impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” **Hebrews 10:4.** **The only blood that can take/wash away sins is the Blood of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Therefore, do not kill any animal or bird to sacrifice on the altar for God, because it is an abomination. Which means, no more blood at the altar but only prayers.**

In addition, there must be no eating or drinking at the altar except the Holy Communion. The only acceptable eating and drinking that is acceptable at the Lord's table which is the altar, is the Last Supper that was instituted by Jesus Christ Himself. The Book of Luke says “And He took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them,

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saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' Likewise He took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you'" **Luke 22:19-20**. **It is essential for churches to be having Holy Communion according to the instruction of Jesus Christ stated in the previously read passages, else they will be disobeying the command of the Lord and no disobedient person will enter the kingdom of God. When was the last time that you participated in the Holy Communion? In addition, it is good if there is no eating at all in the church of God.** Those churches who can afford it should build halls/cafeteria where their congregation can eat and drink, because churches are house of prayers, and no other activity must take place in the Lord's house except prayers. Jesus Christ laid this example when He drove away the people who are trading in the Temple in Jerusalem. The Bible described the event by saying, "Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, 'It is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer," but you have made it a den of thieves'" **Matthew 21:12-13**. For this reason, **it will be beneficial to all churches that stop their congregations from eating and drinking in the church, and those churches will be richly blessed. It is an abomination for people to eat, drink or transact business in the church. We must also use the premises of the church in a clean and holy manner that is be acceptable to God, else the wrath of the angels assigned to such churches will come upon the offenders.**

Topic: Do not desecrate the Altar of God - Part 3

Bible Reading: Genesis 8: 20-22

We shall continue our discussions by mentioning the commandments of the Lord concerning the altar, and the mobile altars of God.

The commandments of the Lord

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God commanded Jacob after he returned to the Land of Canaan to go to Bethel and live there. And build an altar there to God who appeared to him in a distinct manifestation when he fled from Esau. **This commandment is not limited to Jacob our forefather, but it is for all believers. We must build altars for God who has been nice and kind to us. The Almighty God who delivers us from our adversaries and gives us our daily bread. He who forgives our iniquities and heal us of our illnesses. It is essential to build altars to show appreciation to God who redeems our lives from destruction and satisfies us with good things of life. The gracious God who preserve and protected us to see this day in joy and peace.** Hence, it is inevitable to build altar for God; according to His commandment which says “Then God said to Jacob, 'Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother’” **Genesis 35:1. We congratulate the churches that have Bethel land, and encourage them to keep the altars on those lands holy to maximize their benefits.**

In addition, we must find legal ways to destroy any altar where people are worshiping idols, and cut down whatever symbol that is dedicated to their gods/deities; according to what God commanded Gideon after he met the angel of God, “Now it came to pass the same night that the Lord said to him, 'Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, **and tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that is beside it;** and build an altar to the Lord your God on top of this rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image which you shall cut down’” **Judges 6:25-26. If it is not against the law of your state, you can replace the destroyed contrary altar with a proper altar of God, where people can worship Him in beauty of holiness. If you are spiritually attacked for destroying the contrary altars of the idols, God will empower you to defeat and disgrace them. If you are verbally challenged, tell them that they should allow their worthless idols to defend themselves and take revenge on you if they are gods;** according to the comments made by Gideon's father which says, “But Joash said to all who stood against him, 'Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who plead for him be put to death by morning! If

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he is god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down! Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying 'Let Baal plead against him, because he has torn down his altar'" **Judges 6:31-32**. For this reason, **do not be afraid to follow the directive of the Lord to destroy the contrary altars**, since the gods/deities have mouths but they do not speak, they have eyes but they do not see, they have hands, but they do not handle. **They are worthless things that cannot harm you Psalm 115:4-7**.

Other altars of God

There are two other altars that are acceptable to the Lord if we keep them holy. These altars are not stationary like the altars in the churches or the mountains.

The mobile altars of God: The two mobile altars of God are the Cross of Christ and our hearts. Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself on the altar called the Cross to redeem mankind. He died so that we can live, He became accursed so that we will be free of curses, He was counted with the criminals so that we can be saints, and His death on the Cross brought remission of sins to human race. The Bible described the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ by saying "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit" **Matthew 27:50. Do not forget that Jesus Christ voluntarily released His spirit from His body in submission to His Father's plan to save this world on the altar called the Cross.**

The Bible stated that **we have a precious altar from which those who serve and worship in the churches have no right eat. Even the priests who serve in the place of worship have no right to eat any of the sacrifice on this special altar called the heart**; according to the scripture which says "We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat" **Hebrews 13:10**. The Bible expatiate further by saying "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" **1 Corinthians 3:16**. **We have confirmed that our body is the temple of God where the Spirit of God lives, however, we can**

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identify the part of our body that is the altar of God from the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ which says, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth comes from the heart, and they defile a man” **Matthew 15:18.** **We can deduce from the passage that whatever comes out of the mouth comes from the heart. Inasmuch as the songs of praise and thanksgiving that are being sung in the churches proceeds from the heart, then the heart is the mobile altar of God which is in our body.** The scripture corroborated this fact by saying “I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord” **Psalm 116:17.** **So, whenever you are singing or praying to God, whether audible or inaudible, you are sacrificing to Him in your heart which is your mobile altar.**

Cross the Altar of Christ: **Jesus Christ knew beforehand that the Cross will be the altar on which He will sacrifice Himself, so He laid emphasis on the cross during His lifetime.** When a rich young ruler came to Him and asked Him what he can do to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him to keep the commandments but the man replied that he has been keeping them from his youth. Then Jesus said “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; **and come, take up the cross, and follow Me**” **Mark 10:17-21.** **Jesus made the statement “Take up the cross” because of the significance of the cross, He was not referring to the physical cross, but what He meant was that the man must make sacrifices and walk in the path of life.** On another occasion, He said, “And he who does not take his **cross** and follow Me is not worthy of Me” **Matthew 10:38.** **If you desire to be worthy of Christ you must take your cross by expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come in your Christianity journey. And follow Him by believing in Him, conforming to His example in living righteously. And whatever the circumstance, cleave steadfastly to Him, and if need be, you must suffer for His name or perhaps die because of your faith in Him.** For this reason, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his **cross** and follow Me” **Matthew 16:24.** **Hence, if you want to be a follower of Christ, you must give up your own way and follow the way of the Lord. You must set aside your own interests and begin to**

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pursue the interests of God. You must put away selfish interests and start chasing selfless interests/righteousness.

You cannot be a disciple of Christ unless you carry your own cross by making the fore-mentioned sacrifices. Let it be clear to you that whoever is claiming to be a believer without making those sacrifices is deceiving himself or herself; according to the Bible passage which says “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple” Luke 14:27. You need to know that you can neither please the Lord nor inherit the kingdom of heaven, unless you carry your cross by making sacrifices and follow Christ's steps. If Jesus Christ can bear His own cross by making the ultimate sacrifice when He died on the cross, then you too must bear your cross to live eternally with Him.

The significance of the Cross: The cross is the identity of the Christians, it is a symbol to make people to recognize you as a believer, if you add virtue to your way of life. However, many people in the world today are living as enemies of the cross of Christ. Countless people across the globe are rejecting and opposing the Lord's way of Salvation. Apostle Paul warned this Philippians about this fact by saying “For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ” Philippians 3:18. Are you one of those whose lifestyle make them enemies of Christ's death on the cross? Does your conduct shows that you are enemy of the cross of Christ? We need to realize that the message of the cross is absurd, illogical and meaningless, to the enemies of the cross of Christ. And the only way to prove that you are neither spiritually dead nor enemy of the cross is to be morally upright, and be honest in all your ways. So, unless the message of the cross make sense to you, and you believe in it, you will certainly perish says the scripture; according to the Bible passage which says “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” 1 Corinthians 1:18. Is the message about Christ's death on the cross rubbish to you? If not, you must prove that you are not heading for destruction by

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embracing this message and proclaiming to the world that it is the manifestation of the power of God.

Many people in the world adorn themselves on daily basis with wristwatches, rings, necklaces and bangles, but majority of them always forget to add the cross of Christ to their daily adornment whenever you are going for any occasion. Those who did not forget are ashamed to include the cross of Christ in their adornment for fear of rejection or persecution. While numerous people consider it useless or worthless to add it to their decorative process. The Book of John stated that “Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF JEWS” John 19:19. The Cross of Christ is a potent instrument against the forces of darkness, if sanctified and used in acceptable manner. However, the inscription 'INRI' must be on the cross, because it is the abbreviation of 'JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS' in Latin. It is this sign that distinguishes the Cross of Christ from the cross of the criminals on His right and left hands during His crucifixion. For this reason, it is your obligation to bear the branding marks of Jesus Christ like: wounds, scars, cross and other physical evidence of persecution on your body, which testify to His ownership of your life. As it is written “From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” Galatians 6:17. Do you have on your body the scars that show you belong to Jesus Christ? Are you ready to utilize the benefit of using the Cross of Christ for deliverance and salvation purposes?

Topic: Do not desecrate the Altar of God - Part 4

Bible Reading: Genesis 8: 20-22

We shall continue with our discussions by mentioning the acceptable conducts at the altar of God.

Conducts at the altar

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Inasmuch as Jesus Christ did not abolish the altar, but He only made the veil which was concealing the altar to tear in order for us to have unrestricted access to the presence of God, so any conduct that is neither in conformity with the commandments of the Lord nor obey the law of righteousness is not acceptable at the altar of God. Whatever that is against the doctrines and the tenets of Christianity is improper at the altar; which means no sin or unrighteousness will be tolerated at the altar of God.

Altar: The residence of angels: We need to be aware that all the living churches that neither stray from the righteous path, nor deny the truth have angel/angels assigned to them by God, to serve as communication channel between such churches and their husband (Jesus Christ). Every church that did not betray the covenant of God or deny the existence of the Holy Spirit have angel/angels that were designated by the Lord to be in charge of the activities of the church and report back to God. The Book of Revelation demonstrated this fact by saying “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands’” **Revelation 2:1. Jesus Christ our Lord sent messages to the angels in charge of the seven churches, and this fact was contained in the Book of Revelation, chapters two and three. **Have you ever been sent to the angel/angels of your church or any other church? Do you think you are worthy to be sent with messages to the churches? You need to beware so that you will not provoke the angel/angels in charge of your church.****

The angels are the heavenly messengers of God just like the priests/prophets who are earthly messengers; according to the statement of the angel who restrained John from bowing down and worshipping him, which says; “Then he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God’” **Revelation 22:9**. **It is clear from the passage that angels are the heavenly messengers and they are the ones serving at the altar that is before the heavenly throne of God;** according to the scripture which says “Then another angel,

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having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne” **Revelation 8:3**. **It is evident that the altar is the residence of the angels in any church.**

Humble yourself at the altar: You must display humility and repentance at the altar of the Lord; since you cannot deceive God because He knows the content of your heart. So, you cannot receive anything from God even if you are shedding ‘crocodile tears’. Unless your expression of sorrow is sincere, your sacrifice will not be acceptable to God. Hence, let humility and repentance, be your watchword.

Whenever you are at the altar, let your heart be broken down with sorrow for your sins and exhibit regret for everything that you have done wrong. You must humble yourself and be thoroughly penitent at the altar for your sacrifice to be acceptable to the Lord. As it is written “The sacrifice of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise” **Psalms 51:17**. **If you want your sacrifice to be acceptable to the Lord, then humble yourself at His altar. If you desire a favorable answer to your prayers and a quick response to your supplication, you must not misuse the altar, but show remorse for your iniquities.**

Any time that you come before the altar of God with a pure heart and a clear conscience, the angel (s) will ascend with your prayers to heaven for a favorable and quick response. The event which occurred to Manoah and his wife corroborated this fact by saying; “It happened as the flame went up toward heaven from the altar—the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar! When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell on their faces to the ground” **Judges 13:20**. **If your spiritual eyes are opened, you will see the angels ascending to heaven with requests of the believers and descending with the response of God. Do you think your requests will merit the ascension of the angel (s) to heaven? If not, it is time to change in order to receive endless goodness from Your heavenly Father.**

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Glory will manifest only if the altar is holy: Prayer requests can only be answered, if and only if, the altar is kept holy, and the person that is offering the prayer also have a pure heart, and clear conscience. Invariably, for the prayer of the congregation to be answered by the Lord and for Him to reveal His glory, the altar must be properly arranged and sanctified. The choir must sanctify themselves and praise the Lord with all their strength in manner that will motivate the hosts of heaven to descend into their midst and reveal the awesome power of God among the congregation. The event which occurred during the dedication of the temple by King Solomon is a typical example. The Bible stated that “And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions) and the Levites who were singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priest sounding with trumpets—indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord saying: ‘For He is good, for His mercy endures forever,’ that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God” **2 Chronicles 5:11-14.** We need to realize that it is not how expensive your musical instruments or how melodious your songs are, that will prompt the Lord to reveal His glory in your midst, but it will be based on how organized and holy the altar of your church. So, if you want God to reveal His glory and power in your midst, keep the altar holy, inform the parishioners to sanctify themselves and be in one accord.

Clean yourself and dress conservatively: The commandment of God to Moses was that, Himself, Aaron and his sons must wash their hands, and feet with water. However, this commandment is for all the priests who minister at the altar. It is their duty to take their bath/shower and clear

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their conscience whenever they are coming to the altar. According to the scripture which says “And Moses, Aaron, and his sons would wash their hand and their feet with water from it. Whenever they went into tabernacle of meeting, and when they came near the altar, they washed, as the Lord had commanded Moses” **Exodus 40:31-32**. **Do you always clean yourself before going to the altar? Or you are among those who are daring/defying God by going to the altar with a dirty/defiled body.**

Always adorn yourself moderately and conservatively when you are going to the altar. Anoint yourself and do not wear garment that can expose or reveal your body, else you will be guilty and may die. As it is written “For Aaron’s sons you shall make tunics, and you shall make sashes for them. And you shall make hats for them, for glory and beauty. So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests. And you shall make for them linen trousers to cover their nakedness; they shall reach from the waist to the thighs. They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they come into the tabernacles of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place, that they do not incur iniquity and die. It shall be a statute forever to him and his descendants after him” **Exodus 28:40-43**. **It is a perpetual law, do not wear any revealing garment whenever you approach the altar to perform your priestly duties, else you may die. For this reason, wash your hands in innocence before your start performing your duties at the altar of God. It is important that you wash your hands from sins to show that you are innocent, then, you can approach the altar of the Lord to worship Him** according to the Bible passage which says “I will wash my hands in innocence; so I will go about Your altar, O Lord” **Psalms 26:6**. **It is inevitable for you to abstain from wrongdoing, and wash your hands to declare your innocence before you approach the altar of God, else you will be guilty.**

Do not bring abominable things to the altar: The Bible stated that the payoff of sin is death. **The only thing that you can earn from sins is death;** according to the scripture which says; “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” **Romans**

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6:23. Hence, **do not bring abominable things to the altar, or as sacrifice on the altar of God; else you may lose your life. Learn from the experience of the children of Aaron who brought desecrated fire before the Lord, and died instantly, because of their disobedience and sin.** As it is written “Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. And Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the Lord spoke, saying: “By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.”’ So Aaron held his peace.” **Leviticus 10:1-3.** **Have you ever presented any strange thing before the Lord? Are you among those who are bringing and offering unholy things at the altar of the Lord? Do not know that God demand respect and obedience from His priests? Have you forgotten that God always display His holiness through those who come near Him? So, all the priests who are serving God must demonstrate respect for His holiness.**

We must be aware that it is not how large or expensive your sacrifice is that it will make it to be acceptable to the Lord. You may be the highest donor of any church activity/service and your donation may not be acceptable to God, because of the source of your fund. God is disgusted with blood-stained money; He does not condone money realized from embezzlement of the funds of your nation/community. It is detestable to bring wages of exploitation, oppression and fraud into the presence of God. Whatever money that you earn from fraud, or drug (narcotics) transaction, or rituals, or stealing, must not be brought as offering, or donation, or to redeem a vow in the presence of God, because they are abhorrence to Him. The Bible warned by saying “You shall not bring the wages of harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the Lord your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God” **Deuteronomy 23:18. **Are you among those who are bringing money realized from fornication or adultery as offering? Do you think you can bribe God with dishonest funds, so that He will overlook your atrocities? Time has come for you to know that whatever that you earn honestly is the sacrifice that is acceptable****

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at the altar of God. For this reason, learn from the experience of King Manasseh who repented and repaired the altar of God; according to the Bible passages which says "... He also repaired the altar of the Lord, sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel" **2 Chronicles 33:10-16.** **Repent of your past mistakes before it is too late, and stop desecrating the altar of God by bringing contrary things and dirty money into the presence of God.**

Topic: Do not desecrate the Altar of God - Part 5

Bible Reading: Genesis 8: 20-22

We shall continue with our discussions with the services which the priests must render at the altar according to the instructions of the Lord.

The priests and the altar

The priests and the altar are inseparable, since the priests are the ones in charge of the altar, so they have to follow the regulations of the Lord to perform their services at the altar; else their services will not be acceptable to the Lord.

Only the priests can sacrifice at the altar: Priests alone can make sacrifices at the altar. They are the ones who can take the possessions that are surrendered willingly or collect the donations that are cheerfully given as offerings to God, and then take it to the altar as sacrifice. Only the priests are authorized to perform sacred rites at the altar of the Lord. The fact that you are a monarch, or the president of a country, or a governor, or a senator, or a celebrity, or a philanthropist does not mean you can perform any service at the altar of God. If you are not a priest, you have no business to be at the altar, not to speak of performing any activity at the altar.

King Saul offered burnt offering and peace offerings at the altar of God because Samuel delayed his coming to Gilgal. Saul was rebuked

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by Samuel for his action and he was penalized by God. The Bible stated that “Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him that he might greet him. And Samuel said, ‘What have you done?’ Saul said, “When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered together at Michmash, then I said, ‘The Philistines will now come down on me at Gilgal, and I have not made supplication to the Lord.’ Therefore, I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering.” And Samuel said to Saul, ‘You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you’” **1 Samuel 13:10-14.** **Though Saul had good intention, but he brought the wrath of God upon himself instead of blessings because he trespassed, and his sacrifice is not acceptable to the Lord. Do not be stupid, instead you must realize that your post or position in the world does not give you the authority to perform any service at the altar. If you do not want to be removed and replaced from your distinguished post/position, do not go near the altar unless you are invited or permitted.**

The workers of the church must be careful not to approach the altar under the guise of cleaning it, unless they are given the permission; according to the Book of Chronicles which says “And they gathered their brethren, sanctified themselves, and went according to the commandment of the king, at the words of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord. Then the priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temples of the Lord to the court of the house of the Lord. And the Levites took it out and carried it to the Brook Kidron.” **2 Chronicles 29:15-16.** **It is clear from the passage that the workers can clean the church if they sanctify themselves, but only the priests can clean the inner part of the church including the altar. Therefore, learn from the mistake of King Saul and do not be like King Uzziah whose pride prevented him from paying**

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attention to the blunder of King Saul. So, he paid dearly for his mistake; according to the scripture which says “But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God by entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the Lord—valiant men. And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him ‘**It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You shall have no honor from the Lord God.**’ Then Uzziah became furious; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense and while he was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead, before the priests in the house of the Lord, beside the incense altar” **2 Chronicles 26:16-19**. **If you do not want similar fate to befall you, do not perform the work of the priests at the altar. Anyone who is not a priest that is performing any service at the altar is trespassing. It is an offense to perform the duties of the ordained priests at the altar, and it can neither earn you any credit nor blessing from the Lord.**

There must be light at the altar: It is the duty of the priests to see that there is lamp, which consistently and continuously gives light to the altar, so that the altar of God will not be in darkness. The lamp may be of electrical source like cable, holder and bulb; or the lamp may be burning gas [like camping gas lamp]; or liquid fuel like kerosene with a burning wick [like lantern]; inasmuch as light will clearly reveal the true nature of things. When anything is exposed and reprovved by the light, it is made visible and clear, and where everything is visible and clear, there is light. As it is written “But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light”

Ephesians 5:13. It should be clear to us that evil intentions of humans will be exposed when the light of God shines on them. Therefore, we can deduce that the light of God will reveal the secret things that are hidden in the spiritual darkness, and disclosed the motives of human hearts. Inasmuch as the light of God is potent enough to show what is hidden in the dark and expose the hidden purposes of people’s minds, God commanded light to shine out of darkness in the

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beginning; according to the Book of Genesis which says “Then God said, ‘Let there be light;’ and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness” **Genesis 1:3-4**. Hence, **light is needed at the altar of God, to expose the secret aims, and private motives of our priests who are working at the altar.**

The Bible stated that the **Christians belong to the light and live in the day** according to the scripture which says “You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness” **1 Thessalonians 5:5**. **If believers are indeed the children of light, and they do not belong to darkness, don’t you think we ought to have lamp/lamps at the altar? It is the obligation of the congregation to make provision for the lamp at the altar, and also contribute toward its maintenance;** according to the commandment of the Lord to Moses, which says, “Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olive for the light, to make the lamps burn continually” **Leviticus 24:2**. **It is the directives of God that Aaron and his descendants who are priests must keep the lamp in working order, and take care of the lamp, to make sure that there is light continuously at the altar of God.** As it is written, “He shall be in charge of the lamps on the pure gold lampstand before the Lord continually” **Leviticus 24:4**. **Two of the major work of the priests apart from sacrificing, are the cleaning of the altar and taking care of the lamp (s).**

Many priests are not worthy to work at the altar

What the priests are doing in secret is not hidden before the Lord. God knows what they are doing privately that is against His commandments. The detestable practices of numerous priests can make it impossible for God to manifest His awesome power in their churches. The disgusting things that the priests are doing at the altar can make the hosts of heaven to desert and reject their churches; according to what God revealed to Ezekiel “Then He said to me, ‘Son of man, lift your eyes now toward the north.’ So I lifted my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, was this image of jealousy in the entrance. Furthermore, He said to me ‘**Son of man, do you see what**

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they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary? Now turn again, you will see greater abominations” Ezekiel 8:5-6. Are you one of those whose repulsive acts are driving away the angels from the altar? Are you one of the priests who will do abominable things and then proceed to the altar of God? Have you ever offered any defiled item at the altar? Have you ever desecrated the altar since your priesthood began? Have you ever worship any idol or contrary thing, while using the altar of God to conceal or disguised your acts? Can your conducts prove that you have not turned your back on your Creator? As it is written “So He brought me into the inner court of the Lord’s house; and there, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the Lord and their faces toward the east, and they were worshipping the sun toward the east” Ezekiel 8:16. **Stop desecrating the altar of God, else you will be punished.**

Nowadays, priests are not seeking God; instead they are seeking the vanities of this world. Those who knew the law are denying the existence of God by their conducts and countless of them are conniving with the politicians/rulers to rebel against their Creator, and break the law of God. Those who are prophets among them are speaking the tongues/languages of the satanic kingdoms, and they are following the demonic doctrines, that can neither help nor benefit them. As it is written “The priests did not say, ‘Where is the Lord?’ And those who handle the law did not know Me; The rulers also transgressed against Me; The prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit” Jeremiah 2:8. Are you one of those who are teaching the word of God but ignore Him? Are you wasting your time on worthless things instead of pursuing the knowledge and the kingdom of God? Hence, you must neither defile the altar of God nor desecrate His temple; else you will be guilty.

Judgment will come on the erring priests

The scripture says that our God is very patient, absolutely loyal and

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rich in grace, forgiving our sins and rebellion. However, He will not leave the guilty unpunished, bringing the consequences of the father's sins on their descendants. As it is written "The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation" **Numbers 14:18.** **It is clear that God will not excuse your guilt if you desecrate His altar, so beware. Since God will not fail to punish your offspring for your wickedness, why not sanctify yourself and keep His altar holy? Remember, if one man wrongs another, God will mediate for him; but if a man commits a crime against the Lord who will intercede for such person?** According to the Book of Samuel which says, "If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?....." **1 Samuel 2:25.** **Do not dare God by desecrating His altar, because Jesus Christ our Mediator will not intercede on your behalf, unless you genuinely repent and obey the commandments of God.**

Learn from the experience of Eli, and admit that there is no one that cannot be deserted by the Holy Spirit, or rejected by the heavens, if such person fails to obey the statutes of God; according to the Bible passages which says, "Therefore the Lord God of Israel says: 'I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the Lord says: 'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. And you will see an enemy in my dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever. But any of your men whom I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age'" **1 Samuel 2:30-33.** **Pay attention to this warning, and listen to the voice of God, so that similar fate will not befall you. If God can revoke the covenant of priesthood which He had with Aaron, then He can rescind His covenant with you unless you quickly repent and turn to Him.**

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The benefits of working at the altar

There are numerous benefits both physically and spiritually that will accrue to those who are working at the altar. However, we will only mention few of them.

Merging with the heavenly beings: The priests who are serving at the altar will have the grace of mingling with the hosts of heaven, and the angels who are residing at the altar; which is in conformity with the grace bestowed upon Joshua the high priest, in the Book of Zechariah which says “Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My command, then you shall also judge My house, and likewise have charge of My courts; I will give you places to walk among these who stand here’” Zechariah 3:7. You must sanctify yourself and keep the altar holy, if you want God to give you access to His presence, and also blend with the heavenly beings.

The welfare of priests: God in His infinite mercy established the offering as a form of support, for the welfare of the priests. The Bible says “And the Lord spoke to Aaron: ‘Here, I Myself have also given you charge of My heave offerings, all the holy gifts of the children of Israel; I have given them as a portion to you and your sons, as an ordinance forever’” Numbers 18:8. Though offerings are continual allowance of the priests, but you must follow the guidelines or the constitutions of your church. You must never defraud the church under the guise of claiming offerings as your portion or allotment. Do not be greedy, but be honest and transparent whenever you are taking your share of the offering, else you will be guilty. The congregation must also be notified that the people who work in the temple make their living from what is brought to the temple, and the priests who serve at the altar should get part of what is offered at the altar, as salary or wages. As it is written “Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offering of the altar?” 1 Corinthians 9:13. For you to be physically blessed and spiritually endowed, you must not desecrate the altar of

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God.

Topic: Do not desecrate the Altar of God - Part 6

Bible Reading: Genesis 8: 20-22

We shall continue with our discussions by mentioning those who were knowledgeable and have the grace to build altars for the Lord during their lifetime. We will also mention some of the people who built altars for idols and how they end their lives.

The people who built altars for the Lord

There are many people who built altars for the Lord and serve Him faithfully during their lifetime. We will observe what the Lord did in their lives and how He fulfilled His promise which says "I will not fail you or abandon you." **God did not disappoint those people who obeyed His commands, but He supported and strengthened them during their ordeal**; according to His word that was stated in the Bible which says "And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed" **Deuteronomy 31:8**. **Since you have the assurance from God, do not be depressed or unnerved with alarm because of what you are passing through. As long as you sanctify yourself and keep His altar holy, you must neither be afraid, discourage, or show signs of cowardice because God will be with you.**

Abram built an altar at Hebron: After Abram and Lot separated from each other, then Abram moved his camp and went to live at Hebron. Because Abram knew the importance of an altar, he built an altar at Hebron to honor and worship the Lord. As it is written "... Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwell by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the Lord." **Genesis 13:10-18**. **This conduct of Abram prompted the Lord to change his name to Abraham; he was blessed and became father of nations. Therefore, build an altar in your church and maintain it properly if you want to be blessed and**

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called by a new name.

Isaac built an altar to worship the Lord: Isaac the promised child built an altar at Beersheba and worshipped the Lord who appeared to him. The Lord established His covenant in Isaac's life because he feared Him and built an altar to honor and worship Him; according to the scripture which says, "...So, he built an altar there and called on the name of the Lord and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servant dug a well" **Genesis 26:23-25.** **You must never desecrate the altar of God if you want to inherit the covenant of goodness which the Lord had for your ancestors.**

Jacob made a vow and built an altar at Bethel: Jacob made a vow at Bethel, when he ran away from his brother Esau. He dreamt that there was a ladder like a stairway placed on earth and its top reached to heaven, and the angels of God are using it to ascend to heaven and descend from heaven. The Lord stood above the ladder, introduced Himself and promised to give the land on which he was lying/sleeping to him and his descendants. **Then the Lord blessed him and transferred the blessings of Abraham to him with a promise that all the families/nations of the earth shall be blessed through him and his descendants, and the Lord also gave him the guarantee that he will return safely from his exile.** When Jacob woke up, he admitted that the presence of God is in that place, afterwards, he promised to build the house of God in that location and pay tithe of all his possessions, if God provides for his needs and bring him safely to his father's house. **Genesis 28:10-22.**

When Jacob returned to Canaan, he settled in Shechem; according to the Bible passages, which says, "Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. And he bought the parcel of land, where he pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money/silver. **Then, he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel**" **Genesis 33:18-20.** **Though Jacob built an altar to honor and worship the Lord, yet God instructed him to go to Bethel and live there; and also build an altar to the Lord; as it**

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is written “Then God said to Jacob ‘Arise and go to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother’” **Genesis 35:1**. **It is clear from the passage that God commanded Jacob to go to Bethel because of his vow, so that Satan will not use it to petition Jacob in the presence of God, in manner that will make Jacob to be guilt and unworthy before the Lord.**

Learn from this event by paying your vow to the Lord on time, and redeem your pledges in a timely fashion. When Jacob complied with the directive of the Lord, he was blessed and the promises of God came to pass in his life; according to the Book of Genesis which says “So, Jacob came to Luz (that is Bethel) which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother” **Genesis 35:6-7**. **Building the altar is one thing, paying your vow is another thing. So, do not delay or refuse to redeem any of your pending pledges.**

Moses built an altar to commemorate victory: Moses built an altar to honor the Lord who made it possible for the people of Israel to defeat the Amalekites; as it is written “Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.’ And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; for he said ‘Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation’” **Exodus 17:14-16**. **God will give you victory over your adversaries if you do not desecrate His altar and He will forever be at war with those that are angry at your existence.**

Joshua built an altar to renew the covenant: Joshua built an altar at Mount Ebal to renew the covenant which the Lord had with the people of Israel; according to the Book of Joshua which says “Now Joshua built an altar to the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: ‘an altar of whole stones over which no man has

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wielded an iron tool.' And they offered on it burnt offerings to the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings." **Joshua 8:30-31**. Henceforth, **Almighty God will renew His covenant in your life, if you do not desecrate His altar.**

Those who destroyed the contrary altars

There were numerous people mentioned in the Bible who destroyed the idolatry altars that were built to lead the children of God astray. However, we will only mention just a few.

The reign of King Asa: The Bible testified that Asa did what was right and acceptable in the sight of God; according to the scripture which says, "Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God, for **he removed the altars of the foreign gods and the high places, and broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images**. He commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and observed the law and the commandment" **2 Chronicles 14:2-4**. **Are you removing the contrary altars in your community or you are supporting your idolatry tradition? Are you teaching people to dedicate their lives to serving the Lord or you are encouraging them to stray from the righteous path?**

King Hezekiah the reformist: The scripture described the acts of King Hezekiah by saying "And **He did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done. He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him**" **2 Kings 18:3-5**. **He was called the reformist because he invited the children of Israel to keep the Passover at the temple in Jerusalem. The Bible described what happened after the Passover by saying "Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and broke the sacred pillars in pieces, cut down the wooden images and threw down the high places and the altars—from**

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all Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh—until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then the children of Israel returned to their own cities, every man to his possession” 2 Chronicles 31:1. Are your conducts making people to love God and seek Him? Are you a good leader/ruler? Can your lifestyle make people to crave for God and rely on Him? Do you put your trust in the Lord or have confidence in your abilities?

If we observe the aforementioned people, we will realize that God did many glorious things in their lives, and they have joy and victory during their lifetime; according to the promise of God which says “The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly” Psalms 118:15. Hence, if you want joy, peace and salvation, emulate those who built altars for the Lord and those who destroyed the satanic altars.

Heed the warning else you will be punished

Many people in the world today are arousing the anger of the Lord on daily basis due to their idolatry affinity and desecration of His holy altar. They are like King Ahab that was mentioned in the Bible. The scripture described him by saying “Now **Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, the King of the Sidonians; and **he went and served Baal and worshiped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal**, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him” 1 Kings 16:30-33. **Do not be like Ahab; abstain from your nauseous ways that are upsetting God. So, you must neither serve other gods nor desecrate the altar of God, else you will be punished.****

God utilized Elijah to demonstrate His awesome power and His

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superiority over the idols/gods. The idol worshippers were disappointed by their idol, they were disgraced and punished; according to the Book of Kings which says, “So, Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. And Elijah came to all the people and said, ‘**How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.**’ But the people answered him not a word. Then Elijah said to the people, ‘I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men”’ **1 Kings 18:20-22**. Then the Baal’s prophets were given one bull and they killed and prepared the bull. They then called on Baal to kindle their sacrifice with fire, but nothing happened from morning till evening. Afterwards **Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down, cut the bull given to him in pieces and asked people to drench the altar with water. Then he called upon the Lord, immediately the fire of the Lord flashed down from heaven and it burned up the sacrifice. The prophets of Baal were seized and executed at Brook Kishon 1 Kings 18:23-40. Beware so that similar or worse fate will not befall you.**

Finally, **you need to know that cleaning the altar of God is very good, because it is a spiritual way of cleaning the debris from your path and sanitizing your life in this sinful world. It can be likened to cleaning your resting place in heaven. Hence, do not desecrate the altar of God but keep it holy, because if you keep the entire law and desecrate the altar of God, you are guilty of breaking all the law. As it is written “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all” James 2:10**

The Seal: Hebrews 2:1: “Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.”