

Christ Apostolic Miracle Ministry Sunday School

Week 30: July 23, 2017

Topic: The Vow - Part 1

Bible Reading: Psalm 116: 1-14

Introduction

The vow is a solemn promise that was made to perform specific thing/things. Vow can be made in the presence of God, before a priest or secretly by saying that “if God answer my prayer then I will do certain things to show appreciation”.

The vow is the secret key for prayers to be answered quickly because it acts like a catalyst which increases the rate of a chemical reaction without itself undergoing any permanent chemical change. So **it is vow that fastens the rate at which your prayer is answered.**

Though, not all vows bring positives result or promote the work of the Lord. Since evil vows will never produce acceptable outcomes in the presence of God, therefore, you need to be careful about the vow you will make. Make sure that all your vows are in accordance with the Biblical teachings and doctrines.

You must realize that any vow made to the Lord is **binding upon you.** So you must fulfill your vows to Him, render praises and thank offerings to Him for all His assistance/help **Psalm 56: 12.** You must keep all your vows, no matter how small or immaterial it may seem to you. Learn from the episode of the vow made by Paul. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken **Acts 18: 18.** If your vow is to sing or shout Alleluia to the Lord, do not forget to fulfill it when your prayer is answered.

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Advise concerning the Vow

It is not a sin if you choose to refrain from making a vow and God will not count it as a sin against you. Remember that if you never make a sacred/solemn promise called vow, then you cannot be guilty of breaking it. As it is written "If you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you" **Deuteronomy 23: 22**. Since it is a snare for anyone to utter a vow without careful consideration of the possible consequences, and afterwards consider or inquire whether he/she can fulfill it. It is a deadly trap for anyone to make a vow to the Lord then retract his/her vow. Therefore, don't fall into the trap of making vows to God before you think **Proverbs 20: 25**. Beware so that you will not fall into the category of Christians that entrap themselves through vows. Those who are quick to make a vow and later reconsider their vows because they will not be guiltless in the sight of the Lord. However, give the offerings and donations that befit the Lord to Him, bearing in mind that "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" **2 Corinthians 9: 6**. Whenever you are in the house of the Lord do not belittle your God, but give Him what is due to Him and present Him with your best.

It is better if you do not vow than making a vow without fulfilling it. Don't let your vows make you guilty by saying it is a mistake. Why do you want to give God a reason to be angry at what you say and destroy what you have accomplished **Ecclesiastes 5: 5**. So it is better to say nothing than to make a vow (solemn promise) and not keep it.

Never delay to fulfill your vow

Whenever you make a vow to the Lord your God, fulfill it as soon as you can because God will certainly be expecting it from you and delaying would make you to be guilty. Therefore, when you make a vow to the Lord, do not be slack in paying it, for the Lord will surely require it of you and you will be guilty of sin **Deuteronomy 23: 21**. So do not delay or

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postpone the fulfillment of your vow else it will be counted as sin. Do not defer the payment of any vow you made to the Lord because He has no pleasure in fools; so pay what you vow. The scripture says “When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it, for He has no pleasure in fools, so pay what you have vowed” **Ecclesiastes 5: 4.** Do not be slow or tarry to keep your vows to the Lord.

“Make vows to the Lord your God and pay them, let all who are around Him bring presents to Him who ought to be feared” **Psalms 76: 11.** Always fulfill promptly your vows to the Lord and bring tribute to the Awesome One. Let everyone that is called by His name bring gifts to Him who is worthy to be praised and nobody must appear before the Lord empty-handed **Deuteronomy 16: 16.**

Necessity to keep/pay your vow

Since vow is the secret key of quick response to your prayer, so whenever you pray to God and add a vow to it, He will hear your prayer and give you a favourable reply, but you have to keep/pay your vow promptly. The Book of Job affirmed this statement by saying “You will make your prayers to Him, He will hear you, and you will pay your vows” **Job 22: 27.** Therefore, be careful to keep and perform whatever comes from your lips because you have willingly and freely vowed what you promised to the Lord your God. The Bible stated that “That which has gone from your lips you shall keep and perform, for you voluntarily vowed to the Lord your God what you have promised with your mouth” **Deuteronomy 23: 23.** So once you voluntarily made a vow, be careful to fulfill your promise to the Lord your God.

Keep your marriage vows: Nowadays, extramarital affairs are widespread in the world. Both the young and the old people are involved in relationships outside their marriage, where an illicit romantic or sexual relationship occurs. People think it is no big deal, but I say this is wrong because it is adultery according to the scripture “You

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shall not commit adultery” says the Bible **Exodus 20: 14, Deuteronomy 5: 18**. Whoever commits adultery lacks understanding and has no sense; such people are destroying their souls **Proverbs 6: 32**. Don't destroy yourself and don't be a fool. So refrain from adultery.

Believers, start keeping your marriage vows, and keep away from adultery since any vow made to the Lord is binding upon you **1 Corinthians 7: 10-11**. For this reason, offer to God thanksgiving for His mercy and grace in your life, and then pay your vows to the Most High **Psalm 50: 14**.

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Week 31: July 30, 2017

Topic: The Vow - Part 2

Bible Reading: Psalm 116: 1-14

We shall continue by focusing on the Biblical laws concerning the vows.

Law Concerning Vows

There are several laws in the Bible that are connected with vows and we shall discuss them in detail.

Redemption of gifts offered to the Lord: You can redeem any gift dedicated to the Lord through/by vow, most especially if the dedicated gift is human being or property.

Redemption of Humans: The Lord instructed Moses to inform the children of Israel that when a man consecrates by a vow certain persons to the Lord according to your valuation, then the following scale of values shall apply to redeem the dedicated person:

- A man between the ages of twenty and sixty will be fifty shekels of silver, measured according to the sanctuary shekel and thirty shekels for a woman of the same age bracket.
- A male between the ages of five and twenty will be twenty shekels of silver and ten shekels of silver for a female.
- A boy between the ages of one month and five years will be five shekels of silver and three shekels of silver if it is a girl.
- A man older than sixty years will be fifteen shekels of silver and ten shekels of silver for a woman older than sixty years.

The previously mentioned funds are what must be paid by anyone who makes a vow to dedicate someone to the Lord by paying the value of

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that person. Nowadays, shekels of silver are not common currency; therefore the money must be paid in the equivalent currency of the Nation **Leviticus 27: 2-7**.

Since our God is a considerate God, who always considers the poor. If you desire to make such a vow but you are poor and cannot afford to pay the required amount, you need to take that person to the priest who shall determine the amount which you will pay based on what you can afford **Leviticus 27: 8**.

Redemption of properties: If someone dedicates a house to the Lord, the priest will come to assess its value. The priest's assessment will be final, whether high or low. If the person who dedicated the house wants to buy it back (or redeem it), he must pay the value set by the priest, plus twenty percent (or one fifth). It is then that the house will again be his property **Leviticus 27: 14-15**.

Nazirite Laws: The Lord commanded Moses to give the following instructions to the children of Israel. If any of the people either men or women, take the vow of a Nazirite, setting themselves apart to the Lord in a special way, they must give up wine and other alcoholic drinks. They must not use vinegar made from wine or from other alcoholic drinks, they must not drink fresh grape juice and they must not eat grapes or raisins. As long as they are bound by their Nazirite vow, they must not eat or drink anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the grape seeds or skins.

They must never cut their hair throughout the time of their vow, for they are holy and set apart to the Lord. Until the time when their vow has been fulfilled, they must let their hair grow long **Numbers 6: 1-5**.

Binding and Invalid Vows

The following are the commandments of the Lord which can either make

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a vow to bind or become invalid.

- If a man makes a vow to the Lord or swears an oath to bind himself by an agreement, he must not break his word; but do according to everything that proceeds out of his mouth.
- If a young woman makes a vow to the Lord or a pledge under oath while she is still a virgin at her father's home and her father hears of the vow or pledge and does not object to it, then all her vows and pledges will stand. But if her father refuses to let her fulfill the vow or pledge on the day he hears of it, then all her vows and pledges will become invalid. The Lord will forgive her because her father would not let her fulfill them.
- If a young woman makes a vow or binds herself with an impulsive pledge and later marries. If her husband learns of her vow or pledge and does not object on the day he hears of it, then her vows and pledges will stand. But if her husband refuses to accept her vow or impulsive pledge on the day he hears of it, he nullifies her commitments and the Lord will forgive her. However, if a woman is a widow or is divorced, she must fulfill all her vows and pledges.
- If a woman is married and living in her husband's home when she makes a vow or binds herself with a pledge. If her husband hears of it and does not object to it, her vow or pledge will stand. But if her husband refuses to accept it on the day he hears of it, her vow or pledge will be nullified and the Lord will forgive her. So her husband may either confirm or nullify the vows or pledges she makes to deny herself. But if he does not object on the day he hears of it, then he is agreeing to all her vows and pledges. If he waits more than a day and then tries to nullify her vow or pledge, he will be punished for her guilt **Numbers 30: 1-15**.

Praise and Thanksgiving must Accompany Vows

Christians should realize that whenever they are paying or fulfilling their vows, it must be accompanied by praises and thanksgiving because

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of what the Lord has done in their lives, most importantly for preserving their lives and making it possible for them to keep or redeem their vows.

I want us to know that whenever anyone makes a vow/pledge before the Lord, Satan and his agents will tempt the person. They will put lots of spiritual stumbling rocks in the path of such person, so that it will be difficult or impossible for the person to pay or fulfill his/her vow. It is the grace of the Lord that always prevails and makes it possible for people to keep or redeem their vows. Therefore, one needs to show appreciation by praising and thanking the Lord whenever you pay or fulfill your vow.

The scripture stated that “For you, O God, have heard my vows; You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name”. If God heard your vows and gives you the inheritance reserved for those who fear His name then you need to praise and thank Him **Psalm 61: 5**. Show appreciation to the Lord by praising and thanking Him because He heard your vows and gave you a favourable reply. So sing praise to His name forever and fulfill your vows day by day because He has endowed you with the blessings of those who worship Him **Psalm 61: 8**. For this reason, declare that praise and thanksgiving is waiting for the Lord your God in His house or the holy mountain whenever you are performing your vows **Psalm 65: 1**.

The Place to Pay Your Vow

The places to pay your vow are the churches or the holy mountains in the midst of the congregation of the people of the Lord. It was written that everyone must bring their offerings and vows to the place where the Lord our God chooses as a dwelling for His Name, the place where His name will be honored and abide forever **Deuteronomy 12: 11**. It is the directive of the Lord to take our sacred gifts and our offerings given to fulfill any vow to the place the Lord chooses. The places chosen by the Lord are the Churches/Temples and the Holy mountains **Deuteronomy**

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12: 26. Therefore, praise and thank the Lord in the great congregation, then pay your vows in the presence of those who fear and worship Him in the Church/Mountain **Psalm 22: 25**. For this reason pay your vows to the Lord **today** in the presence of all His people **Psalm 116: 18**. You must fulfill your vows in the house of the Lord or on the holy mountain in the presence of His people.

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Week 32: August 6, 2017

Topic: The Vow - Part 3

Bible Reading: Psalm 116: 1-14

We shall continue the study by discussing the acceptable and unacceptable vows.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Redemption of Vows

Not all vows paid or fulfilled are acceptable in the presence of God, which means, the fact that you kept your vow, does not mean that it is acceptable. If any vow is unacceptable to the Lord, then the person that made/took the vow shall be guilty of sins.

Defective of blemished thing: The Lord commanded the Israelites that whenever anyone presents a peace offering to the Lord from the herd or the flock to fulfill a vow or a voluntary offering, in order for it to be acceptable to the Lord, it must be a perfect animal without defect of any kind. Any animal that is blind, crippled or injured, or has a wart, a skin sore or scabs. Such animals must never be offered to the Lord or use them to make offering by fire on the altar to the Lord.

If a bull or lamb has a leg that is too long or too short, it may be offered as a voluntary/freewill offering, **but it may not be offered to fulfill a vow else it will not be accepted Leviticus 22: 21-23**. If you want your vow to be acceptable to the Lord do not use defective/blemished item/thing to redeem your vow.

Earnings of prostitution and dishonest money: Anyone who uses the earnings from prostitution and sodomy, together with money realized from drug dealings, bribery and blood money to fulfill a vow to the Lord is deceiving himself or herself because they are unacceptable to

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the Lord. The Bible stated that “You shall not bring the wages of a 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**. Since God detests any dishonest money, do not use them to redeem your vows.

Do not belittle the Lord: Christians must never belittle the Lord their God, but they should always magnify Him. If anyone makes a vow to the Lord, the person must fulfill his/her vow with the best things/items available at that moment of fulfillment. If you think that your God is worthless, then you are cursed and the redemption of your vow is not acceptable to the Lord. It was written that “cursed be the deceiver who has in his flock a male, and takes a vow, but sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished. For I am a great King” says the Lord of Hosts “and My name is to be feared among the nations” **Malachi 1: 14**. For your vow to be acceptable, do not belittle God like Cain, but give Him your best so that you will receive blessings instead of curses.

Examples of People Who Fulfilled Their Vows

There are several examples in the Bible which will be discussed to buttress our study, and edify the faith of the believers.

Jacob: When Jacob was sent to his uncle, he passed the night at Bethel and made a vow saying “If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God. And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You” **Genesis 28: 20-23**.

Because of the vow and the faithfulness of the Lord; God visited and instructed him to leave the foreign land and return to the land of his family **Genesis 31: 13**. Jacob confirmed that God blessed him immensely because he crossed over river Jordan with only his staff and returned

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with wives, children, servants, flocks, herds and great possessions

Genesis 32: 9-12. Jacob returned to Bethel and paid his vow **Genesis 35: 1-7**.

People of Israel: The children of Israel made a vow to the Lord when the King of Arad fought against them and took some of them as prisoners. They vowed that if God delivered the Canaanites into their hand, then they will utterly destroy their cities. God delivered the Canaanites into the hand of the Israelites. They fulfilled their vow by destroying their cities and changed the name of the place to Hormah **Numbers 21: 1-3**.

Jephthah's vow and fulfillment: Jephthah made a vow to the Lord and said "If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands, then it shall be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering".

Jephthah defeated the people of Ammon, but his daughter who is his only child was the first thing that came out of the door of his house to greet him when he returned from the battle. Though it is a difficult situation, but Jephthah fulfilled his vow in the presence of God **Judges 11: 30-39**. Learn from Jephthah and always fulfill your vow no matter how difficult it may be.

Hannah's vow and fulfillment: Hannah made a vow and said "O Lord of Hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head". Eli put the seal on her vow and God quickly answered her prayer.

Hannah became pregnant and delivered a boy named Samuel. She did not travel to Shiloh until the child was weaned. She took Samuel to Shiloh and dedicated him to the Lord, so as to fulfill her vow **1 Samuel 1:**

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9-11, 19-28.

Jonah: Jonah disobeyed the Lord when he was sent to Nineveh. He boarded a ship and was thrown into the sea when he confessed. God provided a whale that swallowed him; he stayed in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. Then he prayed to the Lord and added a vow saying “But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving, I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord”. So God instructed the fish, and Jonah was vomited on dry land **Jonah 1: 1-16, 2: 1-9.**

All the aforementioned people vowed before the Lord, and Almighty God answered without delay, so they all paid/fulfilled their vows. Therefore, if you want your prayer to be answered quickly add a vow and do not delay to redeem your vow.

Every Christian must be able to say that “I’ve just made my peace offerings and fulfilled my vows” **Proverbs 7: 14.** If you are among the group that cannot honestly make this declaration, then fulfill your vow today so that it will not be counted as guilt or sin to you.

Finally “Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace! O Christians, keep your appointed feasts and fulfill your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off” **Nahum 1: 15.**

The Seal: Psalm 66: 13-14: I will go into Your house with burnt offerings; I will pay You my vows. Which my lips have uttered and my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble.