

RESURRECTION BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

*Mixlr/
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Topic:

ALTARS AND SACRIFICES

Bible Text: Genesis 35:1-2

Speaker: Nsirim Chibueze

Prayer

Father in the mighty name of JESUS we gather together in this house for your word, I pray that you may teach us mistry about you father, may you impart our preacher or teach with deep revelatory message that will transform us today, I pray that you are going to teach us and we are going to be uplifted by your word, Heavenly father be with us now as we all open our ears to hear your word to night in JESUS MIGHTY name I pray Amen

Study

Welcome everyone, we thank God for his grace to be here at this moment in time.

DEFINITIONS:

According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, an ALTAR is usually a raised structure or place on which sacrifices are offered or incense is burned in WORSHIP.

It also defines SACRIFICE as the following:

A. As a Noun:

I. something offered in sacrifice

II. destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else

B. As a verb:

I. to offer as a sacrifice

II. To kill (a person or animal) in a religious ceremony as an offering to please a God.

III. An act of offering to a deity something precious .

PROLOUGE:

Altars are made for sacrifices to be offered on them, but without a sacrifice the altar does not have use, because its purpose is **solely to bear sacrifices**. We need to also note that altars are usually raised for a **purpose** . Every altar must have a purpose it was raised to achieve. (Genesis 35:1-2) In turn, sacrifices are meant to be offered on altars in order to count or have **potency** . Hence, both altars and sacrifices are **totally dependent** on each other for **relevance**. RIGHT ALTARS (Bible Examples) For an altar to be classified as "right" its purpose has to be right. Only a right altar can be effective and potent in God's sight.

EXAMPLE 1 :

The Prophets of baal raised an altar to their god, while Elijah repaired the altar of God which had been torn down. It goes without saying that the right altar caused God to answer Elijah by fire. 1 Kings 18:30, 32

[30]Then Elijah said to the people, "Come closer to me," and they all gathered round him. He set about repairing the altar of the Lord which had been torn down.

[32]With these stones he rebuilt the altar for the worship of the Lord. He dug a trench round it, large enough to hold almost fourteen litres of water.

EXAMPLE 2:

Balaam asked Balak to build altars for the purpose of cursing the Israelites but since the altars were not right altars, the efforts of balak resulted in futility.

Numbers 23:2,4-5

[2]Balak did as he was told, and he and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

[4]and God met him. Balaam said to him, "I have built the seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each."

[5]The Lord told Balaam what to say and sent him back to Balak to give him his message.

Numbers 24:10

[10]Balak clenched his fists in anger and said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my

enemies, but three times now you have blessed them instead

EXAMPLE 3:

Jacob knew that in order to build a right altar, he and his family had to be separated from all forms of sin.

Genesis 35:1-2,7

[1]God said to Jacob, "Go to Bethel at once, and live there. Build an altar there to me, the God who appeared to you when you were running away from your brother Esau."

[2]So Jacob said to his family and to all who were with him, "Get rid of the foreign gods that you have; purify yourselves and put on clean clothes.

[7]He built an altar there and named the place after the God of Bethel, because God had revealed himself to him there when he was running away from his brother.

RAISING RIGHT ALTARS

As we know, altars are useful in facilitating WORSHIP in different religions. In some cases, altars are found in temples where rituals and WORSHIP takes place.

OLD TESTAMENT VIEW

In the Old Testament, God gave specific instructions for the construction of all things that were used in WORSHIP to him, e.g. The measurements for the ark, tabernacle, temple and also the altar.

Exodus 27:1

[1]"Make an altar out of acacia wood. It is to be square, 2.2 metres long and 2.2 metres wide, and it is to be 1.3 metres high.

NEW TESTAMENT VIEW

In the New Testament we see Jesus talk about a place of WORSHIP and the importance of the power of God's spirit in WORSHIP.

John 4:20-24

[20]"My Samaritan ancestors WORSHIPPED God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should WORSHIP God."

[21]Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time will come when people will not WORSHIP the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem.

[22]You Samaritans do not really know whom you WORSHIP; but we Jews know whom we WORSHIP, because it is from the Jews that salvation comes.

[23]But the time is coming and is already here, when by the power of God's Spirit people will WORSHIP the Father as he really is, offering him the true WORSHIP that he wants.

[24]God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people WORSHIP him as he really is."

THE BODY IS THE TEMPLE

Hence, from what Jesus said, WORSHIP had transcended physical locations and the holy spirit played a big role in achieving TRUE WORSHIP.

TRUE WORSHIP was beyond the physical temple nor altars inside the temple.

This spiritual truth was buttressed by Apostle Paul, when he stated that the human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19

[19]Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God;

At this point, I want us to celebrate God for the privilege he has given us via his spirit to offer **TRUE WORSHIP**

Shout another resounding **Hallelujah!** to his glory

ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICES

It is worthy of note that a sacrifice must not always be of animals, it could also be of time, resources, physical energy and effort.

In our generation, under the new covenant, it is more likely to see believers offer other forms of sacrifices but animal sacrifices.

For a sacrifice to be effective, it has to be acceptable.

OLD TESTAMENT VIEW

In the Old Testament, God gave specific instructions on acceptable sacrifices to be offered in accordance with specific requirements of the law and ceremonies.

NEW TESTAMENT VIEW

Also in the New Testament, Jesus Christ made us understand that acceptable sacrifices were still relevant.

Matthew 5:23-24

[23]So if you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you,

[24]leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God.

ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE SACRIFICES (Bible Examples)

EXAMPLE 1: Abel and Cain

Genesis 4:4-5

[4]Then Abel brought the first lamb born to one of his sheep, killed it, and gave the best parts of it as an offering. The Lord was pleased with Abel and his offering,

[5]but he rejected Cain and his offering. Cain became furious, and he scowled in anger.

EXAMPLE 2: Samuel and Saul

1 Samuel 13:8-9,13

[8]He waited seven days for Samuel, as Samuel had instructed him to do, but Samuel still had not come to Gilgal. The people began to desert Saul,

[9]so he said to them, "Bring me the burnt sacrifices and the fellowship sacrifices." He offered a burnt sacrifice,

[13]"That was a foolish thing to do," Samuel answered. "You have not obeyed the command the Lord your God gave you. If you had obeyed, he would have let you and your descendants rule over Israel for ever.

FACTORS THAT COMPROMISE POTENCY OF SACRIFICES

FACTOR 1: *Disobedience*

1 Samuel 15:22-23

[22]Samuel said, "Which does the Lord prefer: obedience or offerings and sacrifices? It is better to obey him than to sacrifice the best sheep to him.

[23]Rebellion against him is as bad as witchcraft, and arrogance is as sinful as idolatry. Because you rejected the Lord's command, he has rejected you as king."

FACTOR 2: *Inconsistency*

Hosea 6:4,6

[4]But the Lord says, "Israel and Judah, what am I going to do with you? Your love for me disappears as quickly as morning mist; it is like dew, that vanishes early in the day.

[6]I want your constant love, not your animal sacrifices. I would rather have my people know me than burn offerings to me.

SACRIFICIAL ATTITUDE

Jesus Christ showcased sacrificial surrender to God's will by yielding himself to be the ultimate sacrifice for the redemption of mankind.

John 12:23-24

[23]Jesus answered them, "The hour has now come for the Son of Man to receive great glory.

[24]I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains.

The scripture below shows the attitude Jesus had towards making the ultimate sacrifice.

John 10:18

[18]No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do."

THE CHRISTIAN WALK IS ALL ABOUT SACRIFICE

Jesus Christ often taught about the sacrifices involved in following him as his followers. As Christians (christ-like), we ought to follow Jesus Christ's example in absolutely everything.

John 12:25-26

[25]Those who love their own life will lose it; those who hate their own life in this world will keep it for life eternal.

[26]Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honour anyone who serves me.

SACRIFICIAL LIVING TAKES EFFORT

Luke 9:23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross DAILY, and follow Me.

-Crucifying the flesh by taking up the cross is key, Denying the flesh is a sacrifice. Note that this should be done DAILY.

Matthew 24:13

13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

-Enduring is not easy, it may not be pleasant and it definitely takes effort to build up the

strength to endure till the end in order to gain the crown of glory.

SACRIFICE TAKES EFFORT (Bible Examples)

EXAMPLE 1:

WEDDING FEAST

-Many are called, but few are chosen based on extra effort put into appearance.

Matthew 22:12,14

[12]'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' the king asked him. But the man said nothing.

[14]And Jesus concluded, "Many are invited, but few are chosen."

EXAMPLE 2:

FIVE WISE AND FIVE FOOLISH VIRGINS

-Making effort in consciously taking extra oil.

Matthew 25:3-4

[3]The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any extra oil with them,

[4]while the wise ones took containers full of oil for their lamps.

EXAMPLE 3:

PARABLE OF THE MINAS

-He who has, because he made effort to be resourceful, will get more added to him.

Luke 19:24-26

[24]"Then he said to those who were standing there, 'Take the gold coin away from him and give it to the servant who has ten coins.'

[25]But they said to him, 'Sir, he already has ten coins!'

[26]'I tell you,' he replied, 'that to all those who have something, even more will be given; but those who have nothing, even the little that they have will be taken away from them.'

GOD MAKES SACRIFICE FRUITFUL

When God gives you a task, he generously aids you perform it, because he is just that good. He is love personified (1 John 4:8).

-We can not bear the fruits needed for a sacrificial Christian life without being

connected to Christ who aids us bear them.

John 15:5

[5]"I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.

-Note once again that if you make the effort to bear fruit, God prunes you to bear more fruit. Wow!

John 15:2

[2]He breaks off every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and he prunes every branch that does bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit **Good news** , God is probably the only one who will set an examination for you and still generously offer to aid you, so that you in flying colors.

GOD MAKES SACRIFICE FRUITFUL (Relevant Scripture)

Ephesians 2:10 God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do.

Philippians 4:13 I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me.

Matthew 19:26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Mark 9:23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

2 Peter 1:3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

CONCLUSION

Altars and sacrifices are important for worshipping God, but being led by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:14) in TRUE WORSHIP to God is paramount.

We will conclude with this spiritual lifestyle guide given by Apostle Paul.

Romans 12:1

[1]So then, my brothers and sisters, because of God's great mercy to us I appeal to you: OFFER yourselves as a living SACRIFICE to God, dedicated to his SERVICE and pleasing to him. This is the TRUE WORSHIP that you should OFFER . The above scripture encapsulates our existence and purpose as Christians, to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, which is TRUE WORSHIP.

CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, we thank you for your word that has come expressly to our hearts, may it bear fruits in us that will cause us continually offer ourselves as acceptable sacrifices unto you, which is true worship, to your glory, in Jesus mighty name. Amen

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