

## THE ALTAR #2

### THE ALTAR DEMANDS A SACRIFICE

1Kings 18<sup>31</sup> And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name:<sup>32</sup> And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.<sup>33</sup> And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.<sup>34</sup> And he said, Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time.<sup>35</sup> And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. KJV

Once Elijah repairs the altar and now he must prepare the sacrifice.

#### I. He put the wood in order

##### A. Wood in scripture represents Christian activities and service.

1Co. 3<sup>12</sup> Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;<sup>13</sup> Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. KJV

##### B. Elijah methodically and meticulously arranged the wood.

He put the wood (Christian activities) in an order that they could catch fire. **We find ourselves doing many things that God has not asked us to do and we become frustrated because God does not bless it.**

He will not put his fire on things that he has not approved or commanded.

The purpose of our lives work must be prioritized.

Pro. 3<sup>6</sup> In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

## **II. He put the flesh on the altar**

<sup>33</sup> And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood,...

### **A. An altar demands a sacrifice**

Psa. 118 27.... Take the sacrifice and bind it with cords on the altar. NLT

V33.... cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood..

Bullocks were animals used **for a sin offering**. Elijah was making a sacrifice for the sins of the nations. Sin must be dealt with.

**Sin is what keeps God's power and presence from being revealed in our life.**

### **B. We are to be a “living sacrifice” on the altar.**

Romans 12 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

<sup>2</sup> Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. NLT

We are to be dead to ourselves but alive in Christ. God wants to use our body as a testimony to the world.

### **C. God is drawn to “dead flesh”**

**Gen. 8** <sup>20</sup> And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake; for the imagination of man’s heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. **KJV**

God enters into covenant with Noah and mankind when man humbled himself. We are on a path to the power of God when we deny ourselves and acknowledge the Lordship of God over our lives.

Matt. 16 <sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. NLT

The **selfless life** will get God’s attention.

### **III. He commands that everything on the altar be soaked with water to excess.**

V 33.... Fill four barrels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. <sup>34</sup> And he said, Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time. <sup>35</sup> And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

#### **A. He first cuts a trench.**

\* The trench was to hold the excess.

V32... and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

Some estimate that to be approximately **3 feet**.

- The trench is a line in the sand that states that **everything inside this circle will be dealt with by God.**
- It was a trench of separation.

### **B. Elijah has people get involved in doing the work.**

Three times he tells them to fill four barrels with water and put it on the sacrifice. **Twelve barrels** represents one for **each tribe of Israel**; One for each stone on the altar.

Elijah would not do this work alone. He would have the people help him prepare for what God was about to do. That is why we have corporate worship, fasting, prayer, giving, and etc.

When the people have “a mind to work” (Neh. 4:6) great things will happen.

### **C. The people were to bring water.**

For three years there has been no rain. Carmel is close to the Mediterranean Sea. It took some work to get it and bring it to the mountain.

#### **1. Water represents prayer**

Yes there is a sovereign element to all moves of God, but God has already decreed that man can help to bring about a move of God. For example, "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Prayer is hard work (hard on the flesh, hard on pride, hard on the carnal mind).

God help us to soak everything we plan, our activities, our work, etc. with prayer.

## 2. The water represents the Word.

V32... and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain **two measures of seed**.

See in scripture is a type or symbol for the word of God.

This shows us how vitally connected the preaching of the word is with prayer. If we would see preaching that results in changed lives we must saturate the word with prayer.

**Acts 6:4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.**

**This is speaking of a deep work of the spirit, more than a touch, it is a transformation.**

It is a soaking saturation of the word of God. You can't just hear the word preached.

You have got to let it soak into your life until dirt becomes mud. **A symbol of the natural in submission to the divine** .

Jesus, the Word, spit into the dirt and made mud, and put it on the blind mans eyes, and he received sight.

Because Elijah knew the Word he could build an altar and offer a proper sacrifice that God would accept.

When the **sacrifice** (your life) **the wood** (our activities) has been drenched with a **surplus of water** ( prayer and Word) look out!