

ALTERS AND ROOTS OF RELIGIOUS BONDAGE

by Gerda Leithg b

(South African intercessory prayer leader who oversees Herald Ministry-a ministry that focuses on equipping the church with tools for spiritual warfare and spiritual mapping. Throughout the 1990s, Gerda mobilised thousands to pray for the 10/40 Window.)

Altars play an integral part in all religions and usually have the following ingredients:

1. they produce in visitors a deeply religious, symbolic and emotional experience;
2. sacrifices and worship are offered;
3. a location may be hallowed by the divine presence;
4. contact and communication with deities and other spirits are experienced;
5. an altar may be a consecrated place where people draw spiritual strength.

According to the Bible, God established a witness in the nations and the altar that Jesus raised up through HIS sacrificial death on the Cross speaks for us because we are in covenant with that altar!

To understand the nature of altars we need to recognise that:

1. altars are serviced and strengthened;
2. power is drawn from the altar-people visit places like the pyramids, because "big" powers are unleashed;
3. every idolatrous altar has a demonic power appointed to it;
4. when people come to an altar they partake of the events at the altar and are potentially influenced by demonic powers;
5. altars "speak" (Rev. 16:7);
6. altars are a meeting point between men and spirits;
7. they are a gate or link between the earth and the spirit world-heaven or hell;
8. altars have eternal value ("This altar will stand here forever," Judges 6:24);
9. altars can be exported into a new area.

These "new" altars can usher in a totally new religion, idea, concept, and cultural event. Altars can also "hook" themselves onto the old established altars (seedbed or womb) or are drawn there by their "demonic family" and can thus strengthen the older altar or bring a new dimension of spiritual operation into the existing scenario. Through these factors the hearts of men are controlled or manipulated. This helps to explain why people from a tribal group behave in a like manner.

Biblical Examples

When Abraham came into the Promised Land he built an altar to the God who had appeared to him (Gen 12:7). This act of devotion demonstrated to the spiritual realm that the demigods of his past did not influence him anymore. Since altars establish territorial authority, the new altar determined who was in control of the land and it established the destiny of Abraham's offspring. The second altar at Bethel (Gen 12:8) had a profound influence on Abraham's descendants. Jacob slept there, met the Lord, received a promise, and said something awesome, "This is the gate of heaven."

When altars are raised, they touch generations. If we service the altar, we procure the destiny of our progeny. By establishing altars to the Lord, we can set the course of this generation in the right way. Through altars erected by faithful Christian ancestors, our lives were enriched. They opened the gates of heaven and the ministry of angels was released over nations. On the other side, altars of offence can open the gates of hell, cast veils of blindness over people, and nations can fall prey to demonic oppression.

Occultic Invasion

How do altars of offence become established in a nation? Basically, the principalities and powers of the air get a legal right into nation through immorality, idolatry, injustices (e.g., broken covenants, agreements, treaties) or blood guilt. When researching to uncover these thrones of iniquity, it is important to list the root of these altars in writing and indicate them on maps (e.g., regional, national).

A land without people of God is like a virgin womb. Certain seeds come into the womb (land) by "prophetic" utterance. These seeds cause certain spiritual children to be born-holy, unholy, and mixed children. God warns in Leviticus 19:19 that we must not plant two kinds of seeds in our garden. Altars of offence are created by the words and actions of false prophets and serviced by a "priesthood" with a demonic anointing. These altars will be the power base of thrones and seats in the spiritual realm.

A "priesthood" can either have a Holy Spirit anointing, a mixed anointing (i.e., Balaam), or a demonic anointing. In 1 Kings 13 we see a demonic priesthood with a demonic anointing opens the gates of hell over a nation. Priests like this will cause thrones and seats of iniquity to be erected over areas. As soon as a territory is influenced by a demonic throne, which is in alliance with other smaller demonic seats, a territory of wickedness is created (Mal 1:4b). Some altars may influence big regions as seen in Acts 19 where Diana was worshipped throughout all of Asia. Paul needed a strategy that took at least three years to weaken this territorial spirit.

As another example, we see how Pharaoh was a king with a demonic anointing. Moses and Aaron confronted him with a godly anointing. God then changed Aaron's rod of authority into a snake. Around Pharaoh's throne were the priests-magicians and sorcerers, who could do the same, because they carried a high demonic anointing. But the big snake of Aaron's rod devoured the magicians snakes. In this, God attacked the demonic power by the rod of HIS authority. Gradually, God rendered powerless the authority of the demonic "priesthood" and the throne fell. The powerless magical rituals, the weakened altar could not sustain the throne of the Pharaoh anymore.

If we know where the practitioners of darkness are and we pray and remove them out of the way, break their powers and ask Jesus to save them, the demonic ruling authority will fall!

Breaking Down Altars of Offence

God gives us an explicit command to break down altars. Gideon is an amazing example (Judges 6: 25, 26) of being called by the Lord to break down a national altar in his father's backyard. The altar affected the family and the nation. Once he broke it down, the family and the nation were released from Baal worship. The principality connected to the altar of Baal was disempowered and the establishment of a new altar to the Lord influenced the nation profoundly! On a practical level, don't demolish objects, monuments, images, etc., unless it belongs to you or you have received the permission from the authorities to do so.

Raising Altars to the Lord

When we pray at the sites of offence we repent for what sin has done to us and to God. We remove the legal base of operation by repentance. Remember the principles of research, strategy, and prayer...and only then attack! We are in a spiritual war and are fighting in a spiritual dimension. WAIT on the leading of the Holy Spirit! If we research "with" the Spirit intelligently, the altars of offence will be exposed step by step. Each one will have its own particular strategy, because the spiritual realm is different. Be careful of presumption. God said in Deuteronomy 1:42-43 that the Israelites were not to go into the mountain, but they went in presumption and were chased by the enemy. Joshua's experience at Ai is another example of fighting in presumption. We must only go and break down spiritual powers by the leading of the Spirit of God.

There is a place in Austria called Mariazell. Four years ago God told me and my sister-in-law to go there. At Mariazell is a beautiful solid silver altar. The idol is a beautifully clad, ugly doll with a baby. The Lord gave us a word from 1 Kings 13. It was our only strategy. That scripture says, "A man of God went on the word of God and he prophesied against the altar." We prophesied against this altar. I said, "Altar, you will burst apart in the name of Jesus." At that time I didn't realise that the building was full of people. But we spoke the word of God. After awhile we left. Later, my sister-in-law phoned me and said, "You do not know what happened." I said, "What?" She said, "I am sending you a fax." About three or four days after we left, that place was hit by an earthquake with two more earthquakes following. God showed us if we go in authority and the diplomatic anointing of the Almighty Son of God, we will see altars tremble.