

SPIRITUAL WARFARE 101

- “Satan looks for weakness, and exploits places in our life where our vital defenses are in shambles. The art of turning oneself over to God is at the heart of Spiritual Warfare. Paul’s “**living sacrifice**” (**Romans 12:1**) is where daily 'spiritual warfare' begins. The Believer / spiritual Warrior accepts the rulership of Christ in his/her life, yielding the throne of Self to Jesus.”

Spiritual Warfare and the Brazen Altar

INTRODUCTION

This Lesson will walk you through a **Biblical exegesis of the Brazen Altar** as it relates to the vital *cornerstone* of a Christian’s own Spiritual Warfare.

PURPOSE:

This Lesson will...

- 1) Review the salient points of the Laver as it pertains to the Human Spirit and unequivocal yielding to the Ruler-ship of Christ in one’s life.;
- 2) Require that you study the compact exegesis of the Brazen Altar / the Five Sacrifices;
- 3) Encourage you to look at "**living sacrifice**" as something that can be done, both deliberately and realistically, on a day-by-day / hour-by-hour basis;
- 4) Explore **emotion, mind, will** ...both as to their "candidacy" for the **living sacrifice**, and ~~ as the *bedrock strategy* in Spiritual Warfare.

LEARNING HINTS:

As you read the Sources, look for the following:

- 1) The "constructive logic" of {A} through {E} in the Lesson Three Review;
- 2) The many instances of the **“number five-factor”** in the exegesis of the Brazen Altar;
- 3) The Mentor's reasoning (both Biblical and Psychological) as to **the distinction between Soul and Self**;

4) Illustrations as to how a day with Soul and Self on the Altar becomes the "Front-Line" battle of Spiritual Warfare.

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Spiritual Warfare and the Brazen Altar

1. Review of Lesson Three

A) While the Lord has vowed that **we will find Him when we seek Him with all our heart**, the vow cannot be fulfilled (by Him) if there is **unconfessed sin** in a life: **"If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear"** (Psalm 66:18);

B) A **me** with three faces cannot come before the Lord as a spiritual priest offering spiritual sacrifices. **"The Lord desires truth in the innermost being"** (Psalm 51:6). The three faces of **me** cannot be a "spiritual temple". Furthermore, it is **"truth in the innermost being"** that is, in large part, **the truth** in, **"...must worship Him in spirit and in truth"** ... of which Jesus spoke to the Woman at the Well (cf. **John 4:24**);

C) If it were possible to deal with sin -- as removed from Self -- there would be no problem. But **sin is always entwined with the Self**. The Holy Spirit, however, can deal with sin while not destroying the Self. His *dealing* is called "convicting power". It acts like a *laser*, working cleanly and quickly. However, **His convicting power requires the willingness and cooperation of the Sinner**;

D) The words of **Psalm 139: 23** are a perfect form of cooperation. The Holy Spirit is "a Gentleman". **Only as** He sees us willing and ready to have sin dealt-with will He move to burn it out of our lives. **Psalm 139:23** is the precise *exercise* needed as the Seeker stands before the Laver (i.e. in his "sanctified imagination");

E) When **conviction** comes, pride and unbelief will be revealed as the root of my sinfulness. They were the twin prongs of Satan's attack in the Garden.* They were at the heart of Israel's sin and failure (read the **Book of Judges**, for instance). They are the root of every man's sin.

* **"... Did God say...?"** was a probe-at / appeal-to *un- belief*; **"... ye shall be as God ..."** was a probe-at / appeal-to *pride*.

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**"An island in this world are the words of prayer.
Each time, when arriving at the shore,
we face the same hazards, the same
strain, tension and risk."** (Abraham Joshua Heschel)



2. "... make an altar of acacia wood ... overlay it with brass" (Ex. 27:1, 2)

The Altar of Burnt Sacrifice stood directly in front of the door of the Tabernacle. All sacrifices were offered at this Altar.

Note: The position of this Altar at the very threshold distinctly taught that man has **no access to Jehovah except as a sinner atoned by blood**. The year-old lambs which were to be offered "day by day continually" (**Exodus 29:38**) were sacrificed at Nine o'clock in the morning and at Three o'clock in the afternoon. Jesus (whom John declared to be **"the Lamb of God"**) was lifted up on the Cross at the time of the Temple morning sacrifice (9 A.M.) and taken down from the Cross as the Temple's evening sacrifice of the lamb was being offered (3 P.M.).

There were **five sacrifices** assigned by Yahweh for the Brazen Altar. They were of two categories: **Fellowship** offerings (three); **Broken Fellowship** offerings (two).

The Fellowship Offerings ("Burnt" / "Meal" / "Peace") were presented to Yahweh voluntarily; the Broken Fellowship Offerings ("Trespass" / "Sin") were required of any Israelite who had violated the Covenant.

The slaughter place was to be **five cubits square**: five all the way around. It is not without significance (as we shall point out later) that Jesus suffered **five wounds** (two in the **hands**, two in His **feet**, one in His **side**). Jesus also suffered **five kinds of wounds** (i.e. every type of flesh wound known to medical science):

bruising / laceration / penetration / incision / bursting.

Note: a total of **five tools** / instruments were used at this Altar!

Copper overlaid the wood of the "offering place". The distinct *message* of this metal is connected to that episode when the Israelites complained against Moses in the Wilderness (i.e. tired of wandering, they wanted to return to Egypt). God sent serpents among them as punishment for those murmurings. Those bitten grew weak and saw their bodies swelling; they cried to Moses for a remedy to the venom of the serpent bite. Moses called upon God who gave him instructions to **make a fiery serpent out of copper**, place it upon a pole, and then command the Israelites to look upon it. Moses did, the Israelites did, and God did (i.e. heal). **The copper serpent, as a symbol of sin, pointed to the day when Jesus would be the cosmic Sin Offering.**

3. "... present your bodies a living sacrifice by reasonable service" (Romans 12:1)

What is this **"reasonable service"** ?

How do we offer our body **as a living sacrifice** ?

Note: "body" here comes from the Greek *s o m a*, designating **the whole person (i.e. Body / Soul / Spirit)**. Thus, in using the word **soma**, Paul asks for a sacrifice that goes to **the very core of our being**.

What is **"reasonable service"**? **Let us reason together ...:**

There were **three** Fellowship Offerings. The soul is "tri-partate" (i.e. **emotions, intellect, will**). Further, the soul of man is not evil: it was made to reflect the image and likeness of God to the outside world. The soul, **by itself**, is in *fellowship* with God.

Is Self a proper candidate for a "Broken Fellowship Offering"?

There were two Broken Fellowship offerings. **Self** (not soul) **is the author of sin**, and it is sin that makes a separation between us and our God (see **Isaiah 59:2**). There are two genetic ("**Adamic**") deformities in Self which are at the root of all sin: **pride and unbelief**. These two enemies of the soul (whatever the form of vice by which they express / manifest themselves) simmer near boiling point and all-but rampage in Self continually. Self (i.e. **my pride** and **my unbelief**) must be my daily "Broken Fellowship Offering".

Is Soul a proper candidate for a "Fellowship Offering"?

If "Body" (*soma*) be the Greek word that describes the very core of our being, and if the distinction between Soul and Self be seen as **reasonable**, then **a Biblical, reasonable, living ("Fellowship") sacrifice would be that of yielding my**

rights (i.e. this day, hour by hour) to the free exercise of (my) mind, (my) will and (my) emotions.

Note the reasonableness of this distinction between Soul (as good) & Self (as bad):

A) A yielded & sanctified intellect can "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10: 5); a yielded heart (i.e. emotions) will recognize that, "... the issues of life flow from it " (Proverbs 4:23); a yielded will modifies a person's attitude / priorities towards his time, his relationships, his possessions.

In a word, Soul is in fellowship with God provided it is yielded.

B) "Self" is a very different matter. The following manifestations of Self will always break fellowship with God: self-energy; self-complacency; self-indulgence; self-pity; self-defense; self-consciousness; self-service (which are all expressions of Pride.) Unbelief, as expressed in fear, worry, reserve ... will also break fellowship with God.

In a word, un-repentant "Self" can never be in fellowship with God.

4. "Thou ... keep him in perfect peace whose heart is stayed on Thee" (Isaiah 26:3)

Having moved from the Laver to the Altar of Burnt Sacrifice, the Seeker of God simply needs to consciously and deliberately yield (i.e. lay before the Lord) rights ("just for today") to his mind, will, emotions, and (most difficult of all) rights over his pride and his unbelief.

The activity can be fairly simple: you simply engage sanctified imagination / see yourself laying each of the five offerings on the burning altar...

... the repercussions through a day will be of a different nature:

"We can say 'yes' to the invitation of love and begin to open up and reach out again.

Each time we say 'yes' we upset our stability.

We sacrifice our serenity. We risk our safety.

We become vulnerable to being hurt. And creation shines more brightly." (Gerald May, M.D.)

The living sacrifice, walked out on a given day, will upset our stability ... but if it didn't, where would the reasonable service be?

Once we wholeheartedly offer our body as a living sacrifice, the ensuing day will often, and in the twinkling of an eye, thrust us into a wilderness, God's saving wilderness..:

Emotions will want to respond to a conflict or a power struggle which it sees itself as winning ... but **Soul will remember** to Whom has been given rights for the day over these emotions;

Intellect will see disadvantage in remaining true to a conviction ... but **Soul will remember** it has ceded rights over these decisions to Someone greater;

Will shall express a loving gesture to a stranger without the initial certainty of being loved in return ... for **Soul knows** that this is the way of Him who has rights, "just for today", over its' will.

The one who offers his body as a living sacrifice will find himself slipping into the *Hasidic* commitment to "**joy in the world as it is, in life as it is, in every hour of life in this world, as that hour is...**" and, he will smoothly and quickly move towards the Holy Place of His Presence.

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