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### **THE ALTAR COMPROMISE**

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We want to take our scripture text from **Numbers 16:1-4**, "Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: and they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face". The word altar simply means a place where men come to meet God. Throughout the entirety of the Old Testament scriptures, we see that men built altars so that they might approach Jehovah and demonstrate their love and devotion toward Him. Regretfully, in this modern church era, men have absolute disdain and contempt when it comes to the altar of God. As a matter of fact, few ministers any longer make appeals for people to come to the altar and seek the face and counsel of God Almighty. We witness very early, even after the flood, that Noah built an altar to the Lord, for we read in **Genesis 8:20**, "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". Truly, there is something deeply innate in mankind that wants to worship a higher deity. Korah and his motley crew demonstrated contempt for the altar of God. The altar was not just some relic but a Holy implement

ordained by God Almighty. We read in **Exodus 20:24-26**, "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shall thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon". This passage of scripture defines exactly what God demanded of Moses. It was to be an altar of earth or of stone. However, no one was to lay a tool upon the stones, which would make them handmade or manmade. If man used tools to create his own altar it symbolized manmade religion, thus allowing man to say he was contributing to his salvation, which is always error. We read in **Ephesians 2:8-9**, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast". Furthermore, God would not allow steps to be made going up to the altar because when men would take steps, like going up stairs, their ankle flesh would be made manifest, or as the scriptures said, "Thy flesh would be discovered". They were to build a ramp up to the altar so when they took their steps upward to the altar the ankle flesh would not be made manifest. That should give each of us an idea as to how God feels toward carnality and man's flesh. Man's flesh remains corrupt to this very day, even though his soul and spirit have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. At Christ's second

coming, all saints dead or alive will receive a glorified body. What a day that will be when we truly become totally like Jesus Christ. We read in **1<sup>st</sup> John 3:2**, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is". The Old Testament altar symbolized Calvary and Pentecost. The shedding of innocent blood at the altar typified Christ going to Calvary and shedding His blood, and the fire at the brazen altar typified Pentecost. Every animal that was ever slain at the altar was a type and shadow of Jesus Christ that would ultimately come and shed His blood for our sins. We read in **Revelation 1:5**, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood". The shedding of the blood of animal sacrifices only covered sin, but the blood of Jesus would take away our sin. Now we understand the prophetic words of John the Baptist found here in **John 1:29**, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world". Korah and his crowd demonstrated absolute contempt for the holy things of God. There was to be a showdown the following day between Moses and Korah, and the outcome would be deadly for the wicked. Moses told Korah and his ungodly crowd to take their censers and put fire in them along, with incense, and tomorrow the Lord would choose those who were holy and those who were not. Truly there is a loss of fear and reverence in the house of God today. We are willing to bring anything into the church of the living God and call it

Godliness, but that is nothing more than self-righteousness. The following day the King of Glory admonished Moses, “separate yourselves from among this congregation”! Let me admonish you to always remain on the side of the Lord. Moses himself rose up and said in **Numbers 16:26**, **“Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins”**. Suddenly, the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up their houses, and all the men that were partakers of Korah’s rebellion. These censers that Korah and his crowd had used in a selfish manner were one time holy, but now they were unholy because of sin and rebellion. These once holy censers which were bronze containers were to now be beaten into bronze plates. These bronze plates were now made to cover the altar of God. These bronze plates which were now fastened to the altar were a perpetual reminder to all who would now demonstrate disdain and contempt for God Almighty. Every time the people saw the altar they were reminded that these rebels who had rebelled and blasphemed God were now dead and eternally separated from God. Truly, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, yet people still profaned God and His hallowedness to this very day. Though God had just demonstrated His judgment among His people, and in His holy camp, some of the people still demonstrated contempt and rebellion for God Almighty. We read here in **Numbers 16:41**, **“But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, ye have killed the people of the Lord”**. In spite of judgment having begun in the house of the Lord, carnal people still do not get it. Again, the wrath of

God was kindled against the rebellious crowd and went forth to consume the rebels. Moses quickly admonished Aaron to gather fire from the altar of the Lord in a censer along with incense and go quickly and make atonement for the rebels who were sinning, for the wrath of God had gone out from His presence and the plague had begun. Regretfully, 14,700 more people died because they took up the spirit of Korah, which was one of rebellion. The altar of compromise always brings death and destruction. Regretfully, many people today have totally abandoned the altar of God and thus making it a place that is totally God forsaken. It is not forsaken on God’s part, but rather on man’s part. What is so tragic concerning this biblical revelation is that men continue to repeat history and never learn from the sins and pit falls of other men. Today’s modern church has all but abandoned and forsaken God. Preachers are more concerned about people having a good life on this side of eternity when they should be preaching there is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun on the other side of eternity. We hear the phrase “your best life now”, but what about life after death? It doesn’t matter what kind of life you have now, if you do not have Jesus Christ in your life you are already lost, undone, and on your way to hell. Eternity is a long time and every man, woman, boy and girl will spend eternity either in the kingdom of God or in a place called hell, which was prepared for the devil and his angels according to **Matthew 25:41**, **“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”**. The choice is yours, you can continue to live a life of rebellion and contempt toward the King of Glory, or you can humble yourselves and take on His nature,

which is one of meekness and lowliness. I choose to humble myself in this present world before the King of Glory so as to hear Him say, “well done thou good and faithful servant”. It will either be those words or these words, “depart from me ye workers of iniquity for I know you not”. I pray that the God of all grace and of all comfort will forever order your steps in His Holy Word. I want to say, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your continued love and support for The Voice of Evangelism. May you endure any hardship or trial that may come your way, because faithful is the Lord who has called and chosen you in a time such as this. Please continue to remain diligent and steadfast in your relationship with Christ our Lord. The crown of life will not be for those who first began the race, neither for those who run the swiftest, but for those that endure unto the end. Until next month, rest assured that we are praying for you, and we trust that you in return will pray for us.

Serving With You All,

Pastor David W. Lankford

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