

**BROKEN ALTARS, BROKEN
GOSPEL:**

A Biblical Analysis

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Dedication

I hope that through these pages, you discover the liberating truth that Christ alone is sufficient—that His completed work has truly guaranteed your freedom, and that no stronghold established by an enemy can withstand the One seated at the right hand of God.

To the pastors and teachers who have served so faithfully to preach the Word, to examine every doctrine against Scripture, and to direct God's people away from spiritual techniques and toward the Savior—may you receive the strength to continue contending for the faith once entrusted to the saints, knowing that your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

To the deliverance ministers who truly care for those who are suffering—may this book challenge you to view your practices through the lens of apostolic teaching. I pray it assists you in distinguishing between biblical spiritual warfare and mere human speculation, guiding those under your care to rest in the finished work of Christ rather than becoming trapped in endless cycles of deliverance.

To my family, who have supported this work with such incredible patience and love—may God bless you as much as you have blessed me.

And above all, to Jesus Christ—the author and finisher of our faith, the perfect Sacrifice, our Great High Priest, the victorious King, and the true Altar for every believer. To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through every generation, forever and ever. Amen.

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Preface

The author writes this book out of a profound concern regarding the global proliferation of "altar theology," a doctrine asserting that believers must identify and dismantle ancestral or evil altars to achieve spiritual freedom. This teaching has moved from niche deliverance circles into mainstream Pentecostal and Charismatic communities, often leaving believers consumed by fear of unknown ancestral covenants and driving them to spend significant resources on prophecies and deliverance sessions. The central question driving this critique is whether these practices are actually supported by the New Testament.

The author argues that widespread acceptance of this doctrine requires intense scrutiny because its theological implications are potentially dangerous. If invisible ancestral altars still dictate the lives of Christians, it implies that the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross is insufficient for complete deliverance. To address this, the book establishes clear boundaries: it is not an attack on individual ministers or denominations, nor does it deny the reality of spiritual warfare or the necessity of deliverance ministry. Instead, it questions whether contemporary altar-breaking practices align with the apostolic model established in Scripture.

The author's approach is rooted in three foundational principles: the supreme authority of the Bible, the sufficiency of Christ's completed work, and the application of sound hermeneutics to ensure Old Testament metaphors are not misapplied to modern Christian practice. The book serves as an invitation to readers to test all teachings against the standard of Scripture and to shift their confidence away from their own ability to break spiritual chains and toward the victory already secured by Christ. Ultimately, the work aims to provide clarity and peace to those confused by these doctrines, reminding believers that the gospel is truly good news because Christ has already triumphed over every spiritual power.

Acknowledgments

I am profoundly grateful to the various pastors, theologians, and believers who provided their research and insights to this project. A special thanks is extended to those who posed difficult, meaningful questions about modern altar theology and aimed to align their spiritual warfare practices with the clear teachings of Scripture. I also wish to honor the faithful witness of the Reformers, the Puritan divines, and the evangelical scholars who have steadily called the church back to the sufficiency of the Bible and the completed work of Jesus Christ. Above all, I thank God, who has revealed Himself fully through His Word and most supremely in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him be glory in the church forever.

Introduction

In recent decades, a significant theological trend has emerged within global charismatic and deliverance ministries centered on the concept of "evil altars." These teachings suggest that invisible, demonic altars—established through ancestral sins, occultism, or family bloodlines—continue to exert control over the lives of believers, manifesting as sickness, poverty, or misfortune. To combat these alleged structures, many Christians engage in intense cycles of spiritual warfare, including fasting, prophetic declarations, and specific rituals aimed at "breaking" these altars. While these doctrines are often propagated with sincere intentions to help people overcome spiritual oppression, this work argues that they represent a profound departure from sound biblical interpretation and the finished work of Jesus Christ.

The central argument of this study is that the notion of invisible demonic altars controlling a Christian's life is inconsistent with the New Testament. While the Old Testament describes physical altars used for worship and covenant-making, the New Testament directs believers toward the total victory already achieved by Christ through His death and resurrection. The author contends that much of modern altar theology relies on a misuse of Scripture, specifically through flawed hermeneutics. This involves stripping Old Testament narratives—such as Gideon destroying the altar of Baal—from their historical and covenantal contexts and applying them as universal, prescriptive commands for the modern Church.

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Additionally, the movement often suffers from syncretism, where traditional cultural beliefs regarding ancestors and territorial spirits are blended with Christian vocabulary, creating a system of spiritual mechanics not found in the Bible.

Throughout the book, a systematic investigation is conducted to address the roots and implications of this theology. The text explores how the concept of the altar has shifted from physical structures in the Old Testament to the spiritualized "evil altars" of contemporary deliverance movements, noting that African Neo-Pentecostalism has been a primary breeding ground for these ideas. The study tackles controversial sub-topics such as "generational curses," "spiritual legal rights," and "territorial spirits," questioning whether demons actually hold legal authority over those redeemed by Christ. By examining the distinction between descriptive biblical history and prescriptive doctrine, the work seeks to demonstrate that the "altar warfare" practiced today lacks genuine biblical warrant.

A significant pastoral concern is raised regarding the impact of these teachings on the believer's psyche. Rather than providing true liberation, the doctrine of evil altars often fuels fear, superstition, and a sense of perpetual bondage. Believers may find themselves trapped in a loop of endless investigations into their family trees or repetitive deliverance sessions, always searching for the "hidden" cause of their struggles. The author posits that this creates a cycle of anxiety that obscures the Gospel of grace. Instead of focusing on the destruction of unseen

platforms, the author calls for a return to the sufficiency of Christ. Because Jesus has already paid the debt of sin, stripped the powers of darkness of their authority, and secured eternal redemption, the believer's confidence should rest in His finished work rather than in their own ability to dismantle spiritual structures.

To provide clarity, the book defines several key terms used in modern discourse. It distinguishes the biblical "altar"—a tangible place of sacrifice—from the contemporary "evil altar," which is a non-biblical concept of an invisible demonic platform. It also clarifies the difference between biblical "spiritual warfare," which involves standing in truth and faith, and modern "deliverance theology," which often includes unscriptural practices like spiritual mapping. Furthermore, the text addresses the concept of "generational curses," noting that while corporate consequences exist within the Mosaic Covenant, the New Covenant emphasizes individual responsibility and redemption from the law's curse through Christ.

Ultimately, this work serves as a call to biblical discernment, encouraging readers to "test everything" as commanded by the Apostle Paul. It does not deny the reality of spiritual opposition or the existence of demonic forces, but it insists that the method of fighting these battles must align with the New Testament model: faith, righteousness, and the proclamation of the Gospel. The intended audience is broad, encompassing pastors, theologians, students, and charismatic believers who seek to ground their understanding of spiritual warfare in the

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absolute sufficiency of Jesus Christ. By shifting the focus from the "altar" to the "Atonement," the book aims to move believers from a state of fear-based ritualism to a state of rest in the victory of the Cross.

Chapter 1

THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF ALTARS IN SCRIPTURE

Chapter Overview

A major misconception in modern altar theology is the notion that altars are mystical spiritual portals for transmitting blessings or curses. Before addressing contemporary views on "evil," "ancestral," or "satanic" altars, we must understand the actual biblical context of an altar. This chapter examines the origins, evolution, and true purpose of altars, beginning at the start of the Bible. By studying their historical and theological roles, we can establish a strong biblical foundation to evaluate modern claims. We will find that biblical altars were physical structures utilized for worship, sacrifice, remembering covenants, thanksgiving, and encountering God. They were never described as

invisible spiritual entities that possess legal authority over individuals, bloodlines, cities, or believers.

1.1 Defining an Altar

The English word "altar" translates the Hebrew word *mizbeach*, which literally means "a place of slaughter" or "a place of sacrifice." Generally, an altar was a physical platform constructed of stone, earth, or bronze where offerings were presented to God. Throughout Scripture, altars fulfilled various roles: they were sites for sacrifice, worship, thanksgiving, confirming covenants, memorializing divine encounters, and dedicating oneself to God. Crucially, altars were visible, tangible objects. They occupied specific physical locations and were built by human hands according to particular instructions. Nowhere in Scripture is an altar described as an invisible spiritual structure that hovers over individuals, cities, bloodlines, or families.

1.2 Altars in the Ancient Near East

The biblical world existed within a broader cultural landscape where altars were common. Ancient

civilizations—such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Canaan, Babylon, and Assyria—all utilized altars in their religious practices. Archaeology has revealed many such structures made of brick, clay, and stone used for offerings to different gods. The existence of altars outside of Israel demonstrates that sacrifice was a universal human instinct in the ancient world. However, Scripture draws a clear distinction between false worship directed toward idols and true worship directed toward the living God. The problem was never the altar itself, but the object being worshiped at it.

1.3 The Earliest Sacrificial Worship

While the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis does not explicitly mention an altar, their offerings suggest an existing pattern of sacrifice. Genesis 4:3–5 tells us that Abel offered the firstborn of his flock, while Cain offered produce from the ground. This account reveals several key truths: worship requires an intentional approach (people recognized the need to approach God through offerings); sacrifice existed long before the Law of Moses; and acceptance

depends on God's standards (God accepted Abel's offering but rejected Cain's). This teaches us that worship must be offered according to the will of God, not human preference.

1.4 Noah's Altar: The First Explicit Altar in Scripture

The first time the Bible specifically names an altar is after the Flood. Genesis 8:20 says, "Then Noah built an altar unto the LORD." This is a highly significant moment. Immediately following a period of deliverance and divine judgment, Noah's first response was worship.

Characteristics of Noah's Altar: It was an expression of gratitude for the protection of God. It acknowledged the mercy and sovereignty of God. Burnt offerings were given as a sacrifice. The altar functioned within a covenant context, occurring just before God's specific promises to humanity.

Importantly, Noah's altar was not mystical or magical. It did not possess inherent power; it was

simply an act of worship that demonstrated his faith in God.

1.5 The Relationship Between Sacrifice and Altars

In Scripture, sacrifices and altars are deeply intertwined, but the altar itself held no supernatural power. Its significance came from what happened on it. An altar was a place of worship, obedience, and sacrifice, but the power always belonged to God—not the structure. This is a vital distinction. Modern altar theology often attempts to assign spiritual power to the altar itself, whereas Scripture consistently places that power in God. The altar was merely a tool used during the act of worship.

1.6 God's Instructions Concerning Altars

Even before the formal establishment of the tabernacle system, God provided principles for how altars should be made. Exodus 20:24–25 says, "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me..." From this, we can see several key principles:

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- **Simplicity:** Altars were not intended to be objects of vanity or admiration.
- **Divine Regulation:** God dictated how worship should take place.
- **Holiness:** The altar was set apart for sacred use.
- **Dependence Upon God:** The altar was meant to point people toward God, rather than toward the structure itself.

This shows that biblical worship was always God-centered, rather than focused on the altar.

1.7 Altars as Places of Divine Encounter

Throughout biblical history, altars often marked the spots where God met His people. These locations became memorials for acts of deliverance, covenant promises, divine revelations, and moments of worship. The altar did not "create" the presence of God; rather, it commemorated the moments when God chose to reveal Himself. This is a foundational distinction: in Scripture, God's presence sanctified the altar; the altar did not generate God's presence.