



**BUILDING  
PRAYER  
ALTARS**

TIMOTHY JAMES GIBSON

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*“Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.”*

1 Kings 18:30

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# PREFACE

This booklet is based on the book “Prayer Altars” by John Mulinde and Mark Daniel, published by World Trumpet Mission Publishing, Orlando, FL, USA. It is my summary of the teachings and lessons in that book plus additional insights we have been learning in our church as we take this journey together. I have also used significant parts of the “Prayer Altar” booklet developed by Pastor Doctor Lew Lee Choo of SIB KL to whom I am eternally grateful. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a basic understanding of what it means to build prayer altars in the Singaporean context.

There’s no one right way of “doing prayer altars” but there are principles and suggestions presented here that work and are based firmly in Scripture. This booklet helps to answer some of the common questions such as “what is a prayer altar?” and “How does a prayer altar differ from my normal time of prayer?”

I humbly submit these chapters in the hope that they help in answering your questions and help you build strong and effective prayer altars here in Singapore that will transform you, this nation and launch Singapore into its destiny as an Antioch of Asia.

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# **Building Strong Prayer Altars**

This book will help you build strong prayer altars that will transform your life and network you with others to bring transformation in the land!

**Saturating in His Word  
Transformed by His Presence.  
Refined by His Fire.  
Operating in His Spirit.  
Nourishing Lives and Land.  
Glory of God coming down.**

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# INTRODUCTION

**T**he building of prayer altars is not a program. It is a necessity for Christians and for Christian communities to live victoriously and in the purposes of God. This booklet aims to help you on your journey of understanding what they truly are so that you will build them to be strong and effective.

The purpose of this section is to show the Biblical basis of prayer altars and how they differ from ordinary prayer times. It outlines the importance and power of prayer altars and how they fit into God's strategy of pushing back the Kingdom of Darkness and ushering in the Kingdom of Light. This section shows that the prayer altar is a lifestyle and not just a time and place and it reveals how the prayer altar transforms people and places. In a nutshell, it aims to give practical help and understanding on how to live the prayer altar lifestyle in your life, your family, your church, your school, your workplace and your nation.

The purpose for us in Singapore is about building altars of prayer where we have a deep walk with God and our spirits are transformed from fear to faith, from being lukewarm to burning with passionate love and from being people of convenience to people of commitment. We'll be revived so that our sacrifices keep the altar burning day and night and, as we offer ourselves on that altar, it ignites the fire of God within

us and we become that pillar of fire that carries Him into our homes, our communities, our nation and into the nations. It is this fire that will drive out the darkness in our land and usher in His Kingdom.

This section will help you see the need to build prayer altars all over Singapore so that the:

1. **Priority in our lives** is to walk in His ways, wisdom and will.
2. **Presence** of God pushes away the darkness.
3. **People's lives** (Family, church and marketplace) are transformed.
4. **Pattern of our lives** and churches will be Jesus.
5. **Prayer lifestyles** are Effective, Engaging and Empowering.
6. **Prevailing priesthood** of the church will have authority over the society and land in Singapore.
7. **Prophetic destiny** of Singapore as an Antioch of Asia will be fulfilled.

The key to success in building a Personal Prayer Altar requires daily (DISC):

- **Discipline** as a disciple of Christ.
- **Intentional** action and the need to make time.
- **Sacrifice** of time and inconvenience.
- **Commitment** to spiritual disciplines and growth.

A black and white photograph of a bonfire. The fire is bright and intense, with flames rising from a pile of logs and branches. The background is dark, making the fire stand out. In the center of the image, there is a white rectangular box with a thin black border. Inside this box, the text "PART 1" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. Below "PART 1", the words "WHY PRAYER" and "ALTARS?" are stacked on two lines, also in a bold, sans-serif font. The overall composition is centered and balanced.

**PART 1**

**WHY PRAYER  
ALTARS?**

**T**he words “*prayer altar*” can be understood from meaning a dry, stone monument in a cold and dead church, to a place of connecting with a god or with our ancestors where we make offerings and prayers.

However, we need to realize that the prayer altar originated with God Himself and, though it has been abused and misunderstood, it still has a proper place in Christian life today.

Because of the misuse of altars in the past many Christians feel the altar is an Old Testament relic that has no place in our lives today and so has been replaced by largely ineffective times of prayer, whether individual or corporate.

As we shall see, prayer altars are the BEST way as they are...

**Biblical**

**Engaging**

**Strategic**

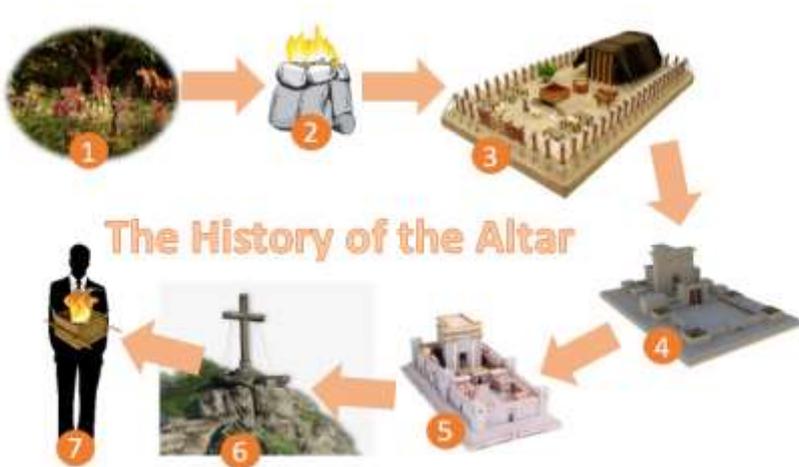
**Transforming**

## **Prayer Altars Are Biblical**

The word ‘*altar*’ occurs 402 times in the Old Testament and 23 times in the New Testament and means “*place of slaughter*”.

As the Bible is God’s inspired Word to us (2 Timothy 3:16) we need to look and see what relevance it ascribes to the altar for us as New Testament Christians. Just because there are counterfeit altars today it does not mean that we must throw out the real thing!

The following chart shows the history of the altar through the Bible...



### Point One: The Garden of Eden

The Garden of Eden is the first place where God dwells with man and is, as such, the first temple, possibly with walls around it and a gate in the east with guarding Cherubim (Genesis 3:24). It is in the garden that God first spoke destiny over Adam and Eve as we see in Genesis 1:27-28:

*<sup>27</sup>So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. <sup>28</sup>Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

When God created man, and put him in the Garden of Eden, He gave him dominion over the earth and its resources. But the

entry of sin changed all that. The devil deceived mankind into surrendering our God given legal rights of the earth to him. The devil has no legal rights over the earth so he must get it by deception.

When sin entered the world, man was banished from the presence of God and only allowed back through sacrifice. Indeed, God initiated altar sacrifice by slaying an animal to clothe Adam and Eve after they sinned (Genesis 3:21) so they could be accepted back into His presence and purposes.

### **Point Two: Altars of the Godly line.**

Adam and Eve would have taught their children to build altars to God to enter once again into His presence. However, only Abel offered a blood sacrifice as shown by God and was accepted back into His presence and purposes. Cain offered the fruit of a cursed ground, the work of His own hands and was rejected, hence showing us the difference between true and false altars.

After this we see the building of true prayer altars through the Godly line from Enosh where *“men began to call on the name of the Lord”* (Genesis 4:26) until Noah (Genesis 8:20). This then continued from the time of Abraham until Jacob where they built altars to God and walked in His ways (Gen 35:11-15).

### **Points Three to Five: Moses’ Tabernacle, Solomon’s Temple and the Second Temple.**

*“And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.”* Exodus 25:8

From Moses onwards God showed the blueprint of His Temple, His dwelling place that His people could enter through sacrifice to be a house of “*prayer for all nations*” (Isaiah 56:7). It was the place where the manifest presence of God would come (Leviticus 9:23-24; 2 Chronicles 7:1).

The Second temple did not have the glory of God come into it and the fire falling from heaven because a greater glory was coming - The Messiah.

### **Point Six: Jesus and the Cross.**

Jesus Himself came as the fulfillment (a rabbinical term meaning “*correct interpretation*”) of the Old Testament Law (Matthew 5:17) including the Ceremonial Law concerning the Temple (John 2:21) and the Cross became the ultimate altar of sacrifice for the sins of mankind (Hebrews 13:10) with Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice (John 1:29). This made the way for us to come back into the presence of God, only through Christ (Romans 5:1-2).

By Christ’s death and resurrection Satan’s plans to deny us of both our rights and our access to God was defeated at Calvary. Through the blood of Christ, we have been reconciled to God, have gained the legal right to stand before Him and have an open heaven (Ephesians 2:13). We have been given all authority to wage warfare against spiritual forces of darkness over our land to bring souls into His Kingdom (Ephesians 6:11-12).

*“<sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the*

*name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*  
Matthew 28:18-19

The basis of our prayers is the finished work of Christ on the Cross, the ultimate altar...

*“We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.”* Hebrews 13:10.

**Point Seven: Christians are the Temple of the Holy Spirit.**

*“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”* 1 Corinthians 6:19

The early Christians, after Pentecost, lived the altar lifestyle (Acts 2:46) and so should we. Altar language continues throughout the New Testament, showing we now have a spiritual altar not a physical one, offering up spiritual sacrifices (Hebrew 13:10-16). Indeed, if our body is the temple then our heart is the altar where we must daily apply the ultimate altar, the Cross, as Jesus said in Luke 9:23.

*Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and **take up his cross daily**, and follow Me.”*

So, as we have seen from Scripture, prayer altars continue now as a spiritual fulfillment of the physical pattern given in the Old Testament. Indeed, the Old Testament Temple is a “*copy and shadow of the heavenly*” one (Hebrews 8:5) and so all Old

Testament references to altars are useful in giving us spiritual principles and patterns for prayer altars today.

## **Prayer Altars Are Engaging**

Often our prayer times can become dry and sluggish, but true prayer altars engage us so that the time flies past and we are filled with great excitement. Prayer altars include set times with God in a set place (Daniel had three such times a day coinciding with the times of the morning, noon and evening Temple Sacrifices – Daniel 6:10) but also carries over into every aspect of our lives 24/7.

Prayer altars are simple on paper but require much more commitment and sacrifice than other types of prayer.

Prayer altars engage us in God's presence, seeking His face and not His hand, through deep times of soaking in His Word, deep hallowing of His name, deep repentance and consecration and deep intercession, spiritual warfare and declaration. These times can last much longer than normal prayer times but will seem to finish in no time at all as they engage us deeply in meaningful and fulfilling times of prayer.

## **Prayer Altars Are Strategic**

Raising prayer altars is the enactment on earth of what Christ has gained for us in the heavenly realms. It is claiming back our legal right to carry on God's original plan for every nation to come into their prophetic destiny (Acts 17:26). Prayer altars ensures our part in this destiny.

Prayer altars bring all the elements of spiritual disciplines together under God's big purpose and brings us to the place of being part of God's united network in our nation and the nations. This network's purpose is to push back the darkness and possess people and places for His Kingdom. It connects us together with others building prayer altars and plugs us, all with our own gifts and callings, into the bigger picture of what God is doing in our nation and beyond.

Prayer altars form spiritual gateways through which heaven comes to earth, His Kingdom comes, His will is done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10).

## **Prayer Altars Are Transforming**

True prayer altars bring transformation to people and places, lives and lands.

They transform our lives so that we become more passionate and hungrier for God's presence as we hallow His name, more holy as we repent and consecrate our lives and more compassionate for others as we identify with them in repentance and intercession. Through the prayer altar lifestyle, we bear more spiritual fruit, enter more into our personal calling and destiny and become more active and effective for His Kingdom and not ours.

Prayer altars also transform the places and lands we live in by transforming the atmosphere to be full of God's presence (joy, peace etc.). This leads to many more people coming to the

Lord and brings the land (family, church, school, workplace, nation) into God's destiny and purposes.

*“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and **heal their land.**” 2 Chronicles 7:14*

Personal prayer altars transform our life.

Family prayer altars transform our families.

Church prayer altars transform our Church.

Marketplace prayer altars transform our workplace.

National prayer altars transform our nation.

That's why prayer altars are the BEST!

They are...

**Biblical, Engaging, Strategic, Transforming.**

## Why Prayer Altars?

### Questions for discussion and reflection.

1. *Before reading this chapter, what was the feeling when you heard the word 'altar'? After reading what is your understanding of this concept now as revealed in the Bible?*
2. *What does the following verse mean to you now?*  
  
***"We have an altar** from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat."* Hebrews 13:10.
3. *Rate your normal personal prayer times from 0 to 10. 0 is non-existent, 1 is very boring and 10 is very engaging and exciting. Why is this so? What's needed to make such times more engaging and exciting?*
4. *Why are prayer altars strategic? What is the main strategy for building strong and effective prayer altars?*
5. *When you normally pray do you see any transformation in yourself? What transformations happen when you build a strong and effective prayer altar?*

### Activity

Take a blank piece of paper and draw a pictorial representation of the state of your personal prayer altar. Show it to a Christian friend, explain it to them, and ask them to pray for you to build a strong and effective prayer altar. Pray for them too.

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*When Jesus taught His disciples to pray He said to them, “When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”*

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A black and white photograph of a bonfire. The fire is bright and intense, with large flames rising from a pile of logs. The background is dark, making the fire stand out. In the center of the image, there is a semi-transparent rectangular box with a thin white border. Inside this box, the text "PART 2" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. Below it, the words "PRAYER ALTARS" and "PRAYER MEETINGS" are written in a larger, bold, sans-serif font, with "VS" centered between them.

**PART 2**

**PRAYER ALTARS  
VS  
PRAYER MEETINGS**

**S**o what exactly are the main differences between prayer altars and other prayer meetings or your personal quiet time? During this section, we will see the differences between the key elements of each and how the prayer altar is more like the vision of the holy altar in Scripture.

## **The Key Elements of a Prayer Altar**

### **1) The Focus of the Altar – *The Presence of God***

The focus of prayer meetings and most personal prayer is our needs and our problems. There is nothing wrong with that and God does want to meet our needs. But when our needs become the focus of our prayer time it turns God into a prayer answering machine and delivers many prayers He will not answer as they are not His will (James 4:3). It both dishonours Him and discourages us.

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He said to them, *“When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be Your name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”*

Jesus’ prayer was centred around God the Father, on hallowing Him and desiring His will, His kingdom more than anything else. Hence, the main difference between a prayer meeting and a prayer altar is the focus. One focuses on our needs and the other focuses on the Father and the omnipotence of our Maker. A prayer altar is a place to encounter with the presence of God, to walk with Him and understand His heart. At the prayer altar methods and styles of prayer should not matter. What matters is the connection to God Himself.

## **2) The Agenda of the Altar – *His agenda not ours***

The prayer altar's agenda is God's agenda. It asks, "*What is God's will?*".

In most of our prayer meetings we have our own agenda and what we are seeking for is God's endorsement of our agendas and plans which may be totally out of alignment with His. How then can our prayers be answered?

In the Lord's prayer, we are asked to seek His will. How does this happen?

The altar is where we offer Him our love, devotion and our minds to be renewed (Romans 12:1-2). Only then can we know God's will and truly pray "*His will be done on earth as it is in heaven*". Heaven and earth are simply not the same! For His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). If we are to influence the world we cannot think like the world.

## **3) The Activity at the Altar – *Integrated disciplines***

In most prayer meetings, we sing a few songs and then go through a list of prayer needs. This can be extremely tedious and unfruitful.

The main activities at the altar in the Old Testament were offering sacrifices and making intercession. It's the same with prayer altars now. We come before the altar with sacrifices of praise and worship, hallowing His name. This is best done after reading the revelation of Himself in the Word, the Bible. We

have found that reading at least 10 chapters each day leads to a holy adoration and hallowing His name.

The main sacrifice we offer is of ourselves in worship to Him. We cannot come into His presence without being cleansed (Psalm 24:3-4; Matthew 5:8). We need to “*purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God*” (2 Corinthians 7:1). This is done through deep repentance and consecration, which normally comes after a time of praising Him.

After repentance, we are cleansed (1 John 1:9) so we can perform the priestly function of intercession, which is standing in the gap for others, our nation and the nations. This is all led by the Spirit who leads us into times of identificational repentance where we bear the burdens of others (Daniel 9:20-21). This will take us deep into the Holy of Holies where we will seek His face and He will show us great and wonderful things and we can declare His prophetic purposes on earth.

We will touch more on these things later.

#### **4) The Purpose of the Altar – *Changing the spiritual atmosphere***

The main aim of the prayer altar is to see change in the spiritual atmosphere. In prayer meetings, we rejoice when situations change, and the danger is that we think all is well. However, at prayer altars we go beyond that to change the spiritual dominion of our land and our people. We “*tarry*” until we see that the spirits controlling our land are replaced with God’s

Holy Spirit. When that happens, our nation is restored to its God given prophetic destiny. That is the ultimate aim of building prayer altars.

## **Summary**

The price of building prayer altars is far more than that of prayer meetings. But the effect on our congregations is far wider and deeper. Prayer altars help Christians develop a deeper love for God and it causes us to know that the end goal of the time at the altar is not meeting our needs but the glory of God coming down. This is the passion that drives the prayers.

In churches where we have invested time to build altars, we have seen a change in the spiritual atmospheres of our homes and churches. We have seen transformed lives, reconciliation between friends and families, salvations and regular healing and deliverance. This is all the result of an open heaven where His presence becomes tangible and honoured. Our hearts too begin to have a burden for our nation, and we start to grow a compassion for people groups we previously did not have. We begin to understand what Jesus meant when He said, *“My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations”*.

Building prayer altars allows prayer to be an integral part of church life. It is not just having prayer as one of the ministries of the church but rather that every program and ministry of the church overflows from the atmosphere of the prayer altars and our encounter with Him.

Below is a table summary that highlights the differences between prayer meetings and prayer altars.

	Prayer Altars	Prayer Meetings
<b>Focus</b>	The Presence of God	Petitioning God
<b>Agenda</b>	God's agenda	Our Agenda
<b>Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 Chapters a day.</li> <li>- Hallowing His name.</li> <li>- Deep repentance.</li> <li>- Identificational repentance.</li> <li>- Seek His face not hand.</li> </ul>	Singing some songs and then going through a list of prayer points.
<b>What to expect?</b>	Change in spiritual atmosphere over people and land. Transformation.	Change in situations.
<b>Time needed</b>	Needs commitment and consistency no matter what.	May stop once problems solved.
<b>Attitude needed</b>	Humility and hunger for God's desires.	Hope for answers.

## **Prayer Altars vs Prayer Meetings.**

### **Questions for discussion and reflection.**

1. *What has been the focus of your prayer times? What should be the focus? How will this change the way you pray daily?*
2. Read the following verse.

*“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” 1 John 5:14*

*At the Prayer Altar, we seek God’s agenda, His will, not ours. How will this change the way you pray?*

3. *What changes are needed in what you have been doing in your prayer times? What activities do you need to drop and what do you need to add?*
4. *What attitudes and expectations are needed to build a prayer altar that are not needed for a normal prayer meeting or quiet time? How can you cultivate these attitudes and expectations more and more?*

### **Activity**

Write down what you normally do in your quiet time (if you have not been having a quiet time leave the paper blank). Now write down what you need to be doing and when you can do it daily. Pray for your prayer times to shift from being ‘*prayer meeting*’ times to ‘*prayer altar*’ times.

A black and white photograph of a bonfire. The fire is bright and intense, with a large plume of flames rising from a pile of logs and branches. The background is dark, making the fire stand out. In the center of the image, there is a semi-transparent rectangular box with a thin white border. Inside this box, the text "PART 3" is written in a bold, sans-serif font at the top, and "WHAT ARE PRAYER ALTARS?" is written in a larger, bold, sans-serif font below it. The overall mood is dramatic and powerful.

**PART 3**

**WHAT ARE  
PRAYER  
ALTARS?**

*‘Whenever someone builds an altar of sacrifice in a land that person enters into a covenant relationship with the god or deity they are worshipping and the land comes under the influence and control of the deity/spirits to whom the altar is raised. The god worshipped now has access to the land, inhabitants and activities in that land.’ Julius Subii – Healing the Land*

True and effective prayer altars follow the pattern that God has laid down in Scripture.

*“An altar of earth you shall make for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you. <sup>25</sup> And if you make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone; for if you use your tool on it, you have profaned it. <sup>26</sup> Nor shall you go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.” Exodus 20:24-26 (NKJV)*

Interpreting this into the New Testament context we can say that the altar not being made of hewn stones (beautified with human tools) means our prayer altars must not be man-made or done in man’s strength. We offer our selves as living stones (1 Peter 2:5), just as we are before the Lord. The fact that there were to be no steps leading to the altar that would expose flesh means that there are no fleshly steps to a successful prayer altar, but we must be led by the Spirit and His Word.

Prayer altars are both a specific time and place and a lifestyle. We recommend getting up early (5 or 6am) to have a 1 or 2-hour time of reading the Word, worshipping and praying to start the day on the right note. Then you can allocate one or

two other times during the day to come before Him. These times will launch you out to carry His presence wherever you go and live the prayer altar lifestyle.

There are certain things a true prayer altar will have. Putting them together makes the prayer altar truly effective. The prayer altar is a place of:

**A**doring

**L**istening

**T**urning

**A**greement

**R**evival

**S**piritual Gateway

## **1. Place of Adoring:**

The prayer altar is a place of *intimate communion*. It's the place God appears to us (Genesis 12:7, James 2:23) and records His name (Exodus 20:24) that we Praise and hallow (Matthew 6:8). It's a place where we create an atmosphere where the presence of God will be drawn so that darkness is broken over our lives and land.

Unholy altars are places where people commune with unholy spirits.

## **2. Place of Listening:**

The prayer altar is our *heart*. It is a place of offering our hearts fully to the Lord (Romans 12:1) so we humbly and hungrily listen **with** our heart and not **to** our heart which is wicked and deceptive (Jeremiah 17:9). It's a place for allowing the seed of

God's Word to fall on good soil so we will hear His will and obey. This means that prayer altar times are not times of us telling God what to do but of God telling us what to do.

As we read His Word, we listen for His name to hallow and our sins to confess (“*What do I learn about Him?*”, “*What do I see about me that I must change?*”).

### **3. Place of Turning:**

The prayer altar is the place of *sacrifice*. It's the place we turn from our wicked ways. A place of deep humility, of acknowledging we need help (2 Chronicles 7:14). It's the place of consecrating our life to the Lord, offering ourselves as costly sacrifices (Romans 12:1). During our prayer altar times, we need times of deep personal repentance (turning from sin to be cleansed – 1 John 1:9) so we can go to the place of deep identificational repentance so that, as cleansed priests, we can be in the place of bearing the burdens of others (Galatians 6:2), helping others to turn to God and away from all darkness.

### **4. Place of Agreement:**

The prayer altar is the place of *covenant*. It's the place where God speaks afresh His covenant and destiny over us. Here we renew and affirm our agreement with God concerning His covenant, exchanging our strength for His and allowing Him to fight our battles. It's here we agree with and declare His destiny for our life and our '*land*' (Exodus 6:6-8). It's the place of moving in His Kingdom authority, a lifestyle priority of seeking His Kingdom and living in covenant relationship no matter what (Matthew 6:33).

## 5. Place of Revival:

The prayer altar is a place of *continuous fire* that must be tended daily (Leviticus 6:13). As we encounter God at the prayer altar, His fire will fall on us (2 Chronicles 7:1; Acts 2:3). This raging fire of God's presence will cause dramatic transformation, from a glow to an all-consuming flame.

## 6. A Spiritual Gateway:

The prayer altar is about *possessing the land* by possessing the spiritual atmosphere over that land. This is done as the prayer altar is the place of open heavens – a gateway to heaven and a place of angelic activity (Genesis 28:12,17; John 1:51). Prayer altars are spiritual gateways between the physical and spiritual realm. In unholy altars, a spiritual gateway is opened into the realm of darkness but in our holy altars it is a gateway to heaven, where the pillar of God's light comes to push away darkness and possess the land by changing the spiritual atmosphere for His glory.

*“On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David\*, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; **That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Gentiles who are called by My name,**” Says the LORD who does this thing.”*  
Amos 9:11-12

*\*The Tabernacle of David was an interim place of worship where the Ark of the Covenant (the culmination of the altar revelation) was placed in a tent before the Temple of Solomon was built. The term can speak of the kingly line of David and the place of worship where sacrifices and worship were offered (2 Samuel 6:17). Today it is spiritually being rebuilt and is referring to the Prayer Altar! (Acts 15:16).*

## **What are Prayer Altars?**

### **Questions for discussion and reflection.**

For each letter of the acronym ALTARS ask:

1. **Adore:** *Who and how are you to adore?*
2. **Listen:** *What are you to listen to and how are you to listen?*
3. **Turn:** *What are you to turn from and how will you know what to turn from?*
4. **Agree:** *Who and what are you to agree with and how will this be worked out in practice?*
5. **Revival:** *What signs will there be that you are having a personal revival?*
6. **Spiritual Gateway:** *How will you know that this spiritual gateway is open? What will be some key indicators?*

### **Activity**

Pray alone or with someone for a breakthrough in each of the above areas.

A black and white photograph of a bonfire. The fire is the central focus, with bright, intense flames rising into the dark night sky. In the foreground, the dark silhouette of a person is visible, looking towards the fire. The overall atmosphere is dramatic and high-contrast.

**PART 4**

**PRAYER ALTAR  
STRATEGY**

## The Abrahamic Prayer Altar

**A**braham gives us the strategy of God concerning building prayer altars. He came from a family of idol worshippers (Joshua 24:2) in a pagan land and was called to be an overcomer in God's purposes and enter the land promised to him.

Following are four principles we see that enabled Abraham to claim the promise of God and see the initial fulfilment of that promise in the form of the promised son, Isaac.

### **Principle One: Abraham built Altars in the context of loving obedience to God.**

*“So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.”* Genesis 12:4

What had the Lord spoken to Abraham? He had told him to separate himself from his old world (Genesis 12:1), just as we should do (2 Corinthians 6:17). He had covenanted a land to Abraham with covenant blessings (Genesis 12:2-3) as He has spiritually done for us (Ephesians 1:3-12). Abraham obeyed in faith, which is hearing the Word of God, believing it and doing it (Romans 10:17). He obeyed out of love for God and not dead obligation, which is what we should do (John 14:15).

We are not to build prayer altars because we have to, out of a legalistic obligation, but because we want to, out of loving, passionate obedience. We build them not to be loved but because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

## **Principle Two: Altars are all about Possession of Lives and Land.**

As he moved into the promised land it was under the influence of evil and darkness where the Canaanites even practiced child sacrifice (Genesis 12:6). The prevailing altars in the land were those offered to evil.

*“Wherever Abraham went he setup an altar and called on the name of the Lord. This means that he contended with the spiritual forces of darkness in that area. Then he would go to another place and contend with another spiritual force. Why? Because one of the effects of raising a prayer altar is that it draws the presence of God and breaks the powers of darkness.”*  
Prayer Altars p.38

We have the same call today –

*“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”* 1 Peter 2:9

Building prayer altars was a necessity for Abraham as it ushered in God’s Presence to transform him and the land, driving out inner and outer darkness to let God have possession.

Throughout Abraham’s life we see God calling him to be separate, to be holy. This process happened as he lived the altar lifestyle. God was transforming his life at the altar. This is what happens to us as He takes us on a process of separation as we live the altar lifestyle. As 2 Corinthians 6:17 says

*“Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.”*

The following chart shows us the things God separated Abraham from (his personal darkness) and how it relates to us now:

<b>Separated from:</b>	<b>Abraham</b>	<b>Us</b>
<b>Idols of the World</b>	Joshua 24:2-3	1 Thessalonians 1:9
<b>Bondage to family</b>	Genesis 12:1	Matthew 10:37
<b>Wrong relationships</b>	Genesis 13:6-13	1 Corinthians 15:33
<b>Possessions</b>	Genesis 14:17-24	1 Timothy 6:10-11
<b>Unbelief</b>	Genesis 15:6	Mark 9:24
<b>Our own way</b>	Genesis 16:2	Luke 22:42
<b>Our flesh life</b>	Genesis 17:24	Romans 2:29
<b>Trusting the Promise</b>	Genesis 22	Hebrews 11:17

The more God possesses us in our consecration to Him the more he gives us of the land to possess. This is all part of the prayer altar strategy.

**Principle Three: Altars must be built in the right order and cover the land.**

As Abraham entered the land, he built altars at:

**Shechem:**

*“Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh, and the Canaanites were then in the land. Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” And there he built*

*an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.” Genesis 12:6-7*

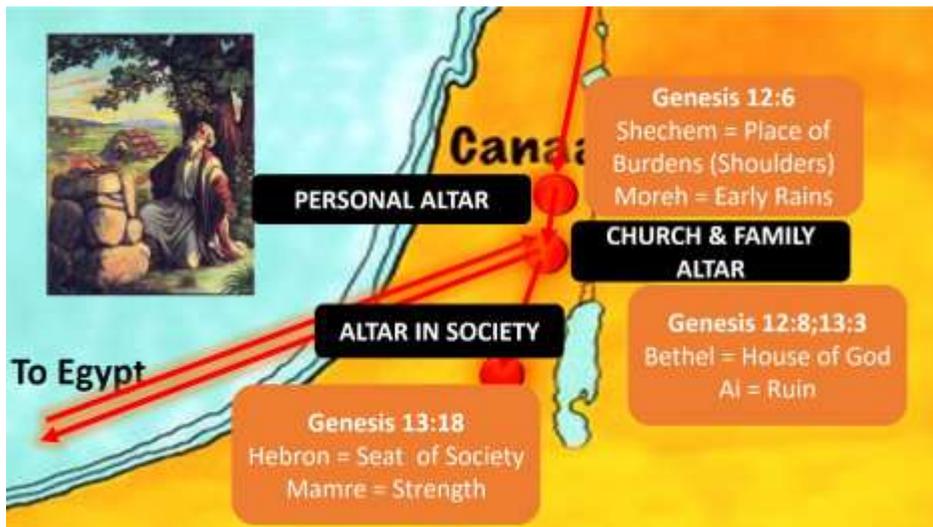
### **Bethel:**

*“And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.” Genesis 12:8 (see also 13:3).*

### **Hebron:**

*“Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.” Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.” Genesis 13:17-18*

Looking at the following picture we see that this covered a large part of the promised land.



Interestingly, the name meanings of the places where Abraham built altars point to them representing different altar types. Shechem represents **personal prayer altars**, the place of casting our burdens on the Lord and receiving His early rain every day. The altar at Bethel represents the *'house of God'* altars, our **family and church altars**, which keep us from spiritual ruin. And the altar at Hebron represents altars in society that strengthen our witness against the darkness in the land. This represents **marketplace and national altars**.

Notice the order in which they were built. The personal altar must be built first before the family and church altars otherwise worship at family and church will be dead and ineffective. In the same way altars in society (marketplace altars) will be ineffective if individuals do not have strong personal, family and church altars.

Abraham built prayer altars across the length of the promised land to break the powers of darkness and claim the land as the Lord's possession. At each altar he offered sacrifices, ministered to the Lord and covenanted the place to God. We are to do the same in our land, multiplying altars all over Singapore so that the darkness will be pushed into the sea!

**Principle Four: Altars must be maintained individually and through the generations.**

What happens if we neglect the prayer altar? Abraham's nephew Lot represents a believer who leaves the prayer altar and neglects to maintain it. There are a lot of Lots in the Church today! Lot shows us what happens if we neglect the prayer altar lifestyle:

### **1. We become compromised.**

Lot left Abraham and the place of the altar at Bethel to live in a place he thought would be like the Garden of Eden (Genesis 13:10), but it became a place of danger, sin and compromise (Genesis 13-14). Wicked Sodom, where Lot and his family had moved to, was in bondage for twelve years (Genesis 14:4) and was eventually attacked and Lot and his family taken away as slaves (Genesis 14:12). If we leave the prayer altar, we too will become slaves to this world (Galatians 4:9).

### **2. We become critical.**

Lot was righteous (but not holy) and upset by the defiled land around him (2 Peter 2:7-8) but was powerless to overcome the situation and lived in negative distress. He became self-righteous and was judgmental but powerless to make any difference to the wickedness of Sodom (Genesis 19:9 – “*he keeps acting as a judge*”). If we leave the prayer altar, we will become self-righteous and hypocritical judges of the world around us (Matthew 7:1) rather than agents of change.

### **3. We become crushed.**

Lot came to his breaking point when the Angels came (Genesis 19). God will allow situations to come to a breaking point to awaken us once more and deliver us. When the Angels came all hell broke loose around Lot’s house and they were about to crush him when the angels stepped in to deliver him and strike the wicked (Genesis 19:9-11). In the same way God will allow situations to seemingly be crushing us but will deliver us as we cry out to him so we can come back to the prayer altar (2 Corinthians 4:8).

#### **4. We become contaminated.**

Lot himself had become defiled by the spiritual darkness even to the point of being willing to offer his daughters to be molested by the crowd. He was setting himself up as a judge of the wickedness in the world around him but actually had the same wickedness deep in his heart as he was not going to the prayer altar to consecrate himself and be cleansed. The same can happen to us if we neglect the prayer altar (2 Peter 2:20).

#### **5. We become crippled.**

Lot was unable to deal with the wicked crowds and even his own family. There was no power in his witness and even his own son-in-law's thought he was joking when he warned them of the judgment to come (Genesis 19:14). He was crippled in his witness and he had no influence. If we leave the prayer altar, we'll lose our power to influence and witness for Christ (1 Corinthians 4:20).

#### **6. We become castaways.**

His family and later generations suffered and lost their inheritance due to leaving the prayer altar. Lot's wife turned to a pillar of salt as she desired the things of Sodom more than the things of God (Genesis 19:26). Lot's daughters were corrupted and went to lie with their father (19:31-35). Their later generations were Ammon and Moab who had no inheritance with Israel. In the same way, if we neglect the prayer altar, we will be castaways from the full inheritance of God (1 Corinthians 3:15; 9:27).

Abraham, on the other hand, remained at the altar and lived a life of influence and power. He was able to prevail against the enemies that came against him. He could set Lot free from bondage (Genesis 14:14-16) and resist the King of Sodom (Genesis 14:21-23), the spirit that controlled Sodom and Gomorrah, and he had victory over the kings of that land. Later he interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah and saved Lot and his daughters through his prayers.

Indeed, Abraham's prayer altars had far reaching impact even down through his generations, beyond his own lifetime. Many years later when Jacob was running away from his brother and came to rest at Bethel (where Abraham, his grandfather, had built an altar) he encountered an open heaven and the Presence of God was still evident.

*"Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it."* Genesis 28:12

Indeed, Jacob returned after his encounter with God at Penuel (Genesis 32:31) to build fresh altars at Shechem (33:18-20), Bethel (Genesis 35:1) and Hebron (Genesis 35:27) in that order. His life was transformed because of his grandfather's prayer altar lifestyle.

We are to be like Abraham and build strong and effective prayer altars that will transform our life, our land and our generations.

## **Prayer Altar Strategy.**

### **Questions for discussion and reflection.**

- 1. Principle One: Abraham built Altars in the context of loving obedience to God.**

*What's some wrong ways of building a prayer altar?  
How do you know you're building in loving obedience?*

- 2. Principle Two: Altars are all about Possession of Lives and Land.**

*In what ways do prayer altars call for possession of lives and land?*

- 3. Principle Three: Altars must be built in the right order and cover the land.**

*What's the right order of building prayer altars and how can they cover the land?*

- 4. Principle Four: Altars must be maintained individually and through the generations.**

*What are some disastrous consequences of not maintaining a prayer altar? How can a prayer altar be sustained and what will be the results?*

### **Activity**

Take a blank piece of paper and write your hopes and desires for each of the above principles. Pray alone or with others for these principles to be correctly outworked in your life.

Take time to go through each point on the table on page 35 and ask the Lord to cleanse you from each.

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*“If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14*

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**PART 5**

**PUSHING BACK THE  
DARKNESS**

“**D**arkness is the spiritual force *that comes when people reject the will of God. It gives legal authority to the devil to influence our lives negatively....*” Prayer Altars p.62

*“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.”* Colossians 1:13

*“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”* Ephesians 2:1-3

Spiritual darkness surrounds us more that we realise. It affects many facets of our daily life. When the apostle John wrote that the whole world is under the control of the evil one (1 John 5:19) he was not just talking about the spiritual world but that all the cosmic world systems are under his influence. Whenever we surrender ourselves to darkness the “*ruler of the kingdom of the air*” will be “*at work in those who are disobedient.*” The result is that our minds and our worldviews become contrary to God (2 Corinthians 10:5-6). We adopt lifestyles that follow the desires of our flesh and thoughts.

*“Our minds are the gateways that allows darkness in or keeps it out.”* Prayer Altars pg.67

There are three types of darkness.

# 1. Personal Darkness

- Disobedience to God brings more layers of darkness and separates us from God.
- When we choose darkness, we not only invite darkness to come into the spiritual atmosphere but also to affect our way of life.
- When we choose to live outside God's will we lose the power to love according to His will. We become driven by the lies and deceptions of darkness and the pressures and demands of the people around us push us to live according to the world's ways, denying God's ways.
- This darkness blinds us, deceives us and hardens us, weakening us in our fight against sin. Darkness comes in through our minds and our minds can become strongholds of belief systems that are in opposition to God (2 Corinthians 10:4-6).
- Obedience leads to light, disobedience to darkness.

*"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."* 1 John 1:6

*"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."* 1 John 1:7

*"As I began to build my prayer altar and to seek the presence of God, I found that when the light comes in, darkness is exposed. I didn't realize how much darkness was stealing my spiritual strength, fidelity and oneness of heart with God."*  
Prayer Altars p.66

We must arise, awaken and build a strong personal altar to remain in the light and push back the darkness in our own lives first before we can see darkness pushed back in our families, and society (1 Thessalonians 5:4-8; Isaiah 60:2; Ephesians 5:14).

## **2. Societal Darkness**

This is the darkness that has penetrated the culture of a group of people and affects the values and way of life in a society. Even as believers who worship God, we can feel impotent as most of society has embraced this, or we may even be influenced by this darkness ourselves.

The 7 Mountains of society – Business, Government, Family, Religion, Media, Education and Entertainment – can all be affected by the darkness.

*“The belief system is what a society embraces and submits to as a way of life in the land... when darkness comes into society it contaminates and corrupts every sphere of that society.”*  
Prayer Altars p.69,70

Therefore, today many of us feel absolutely helpless to address the issues of abortion, pornography, homosexuality and even racial prejudice.

To push back this darkness, we need to build strong and effective altars in the workplaces of all these seven mountains (marketplace altars).

### 3. Territorial Darkness

This is the spiritual realm: the rulers of darkness, and principalities, the powers that rule over a territory (Ephesians 1:21; 6:12). Darkness can rule when there is an unholy altar with unholy priests ministering and inviting these spirits to possess the spiritual realm over a territory.

The land cannot be taken by mere words and preaching. The land is taken by force through spiritual warfare. What we do not destroy will destroy us. As we build our altars, we begin to penetrate the spiritual realm and contend with the powers of darkness. Therefore, when we build prayer altars that draw the Presence of God into a land *“the light comes and reveals to us our personal darkness ... and the darkness that is in the land (societal darkness). He will reveal to us areas we have compromised and ... he wants us to break free from ... the customs and practices of society ... He will help us understand the principalities and powers that are ruling our territory so that we can take authority as the Body of Christ to deal with those powers over cities and nations”* (excerpts from Prayer Altars pg. 219-228).

For us to break free from these cultural strongholds we need to erect altars in as many spheres of influence as possible. We need our families to come under the influence of God’s presence. Our workplaces and our public institutions are places where the culture of the world dominates. Unless we invite God’s holy Presence there, we will not be able to resist the practices that have become acceptable. This is why we often

give in and live compromised lives in our workplaces and among our friends.

## The Balance of Power

Below is a table that shows the similarities and differences between an unholy altar and a holy altar. The altar that is the most active – holy or unholy – will control the territory.

Unholy Altars	Holy Altars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need unholy priesthood.</li><li>• Connection with evil spirits.</li><li>• Offers false sacrifices and devotion.</li><li>• False worship.</li><li>• Inviting and invoking spirits to come and live in their midst.</li><li>• Surrenders will.</li><li>• Form unholy covenant with spirits.</li><li>• Leads to desecration and unholy living.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need holy priesthood.</li><li>• Connection with Holy Spirit.</li><li>• Offers sacrifices of love and devotion.</li><li>• True worship.</li><li>• Invites His presence for God to come and dwell in our midst.</li><li>• Surrender of our will.</li><li>• Renews and reinforces our covenant with God.</li><li>• Leads to consecration and holy living.</li></ul>

Holy altars with holy priests bring in the Kingdom of Light. Unholy altars with unholy priests bring in the Kingdom of Darkness. The one that tips the balance will define the overall atmosphere in the land and be the prevailing priesthood.

What you do not overcome will overcome you. If we don't take the land by force, we will be taken by force!

## Principles of Cleansing and Defiling

- Cleansed altars cleanse the land and the lives of the people (Exodus 29:36; Leviticus 16:30, 1 Corinthians 7:1).  
Defiled altars defile the land and the lives of the people (Exodus 20:25; Jeremiah 3:1; Titus 1:15).

Our altars become defiled when we allow sin to remain in our hearts but are cleansed when we come humbly before Him in daily repentance. Then we can be a prevailing priest.

- How a land becomes defiled:

*“Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. <sup>25</sup> For the land is defiled; therefore, I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants ...<sup>27</sup> (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled.” Leviticus 18:24-27.*

A land becomes defiled when false altars are set up and the people sin through the generations, committing abominations to the spirits behind these altars and polluting the land with darkness.

- How a land becomes cleansed:

*“Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, you who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you were dug. Look to*

*Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.” For the LORD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; Joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.” Isaiah 51:1-3*

To cleanse a land, we must look to the Rock, Jesus, who has hewn us with divine hands, not the work of men, but the work of God. We are living stones to be made into effective altars, just like the altars Abraham built that covered the land. These altars cleansed the land, driving out the darkness, making it eventually into a garden of Eden (especially during King Solomon’s time).

We can see Singapore truly be transformed from Garden City to Garden of Eden City as we see holy altars built all over the land.

## **Pushing Back the Darkness.**

### **Questions for discussion and reflection.**

1. *What is the “darkness” we are speaking about here?*
2. *Summarize in your own words the three types of spiritual darkness. How are they related? How does this effect you personally? What are some practical examples from your own life?*
3. *What are some examples of unholy altars and what must we do to tear these altars down?*
4. *Explain the principles of cleansing and defiling in your own words. How does this relate to your own life and that of your family, your workplace, your church and your society?*

### **Activity**

Take a blank piece of paper and draw four weighing scales for your own life, your family, your workplace and your nation. Draw them with holy altars on one side and unholy altars on the other with the weights you think to be the current condition. Explain these to others and pray for the balance to shift so that the holy altars outweigh the unholy altars in every area.  
*What must practically be done for this to be so in each area?*

A black and white photograph of a campfire. The fire is bright and intense, with flames rising from a pile of logs. In the foreground, the dark silhouette of a person is visible, looking towards the fire. The background is dark, with some small white specks, possibly stars or distant lights. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

**PART 6**

**USHERING IN THE  
PRESENCE  
OF GOD**

*“The essence of a prayer altar is to come into the Presence of God.” Prayer Altars pg.105.*

## **His Presence is at the Prayer Altar**

As we have seen, in the Old Testament the Temple was the place where God’s presence resided. Now our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and our hearts are the altars, but if these altars are not tended properly then the fire of God’s presence will not fall.

At the prayer altar His presence brings transformation, blessing, destiny and covenantal authority (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:19-20).

Away from the prayer altar is a lack of God’s manifest presence, broken communion, curses and lack of spiritual authority (Genesis 3:1-13).

However, as we have seen, communion is restored only through Christ (Matthew 27:51-54; Hebrews 4:16):



Many times, our condition is far from where our position in Christ should be as in the previous picture. Our position in Christ is to be in His Presence, moving under an open heaven with great authority. We regain this position at the prayer altar.

What then is the Presence of God and what do we need to do to enable the very Presence of God to dwell among us?

## **Facts about God's Presence**

- God desires to dwell among men. Our task is to invite Him in: *“And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them”* Exodus 25:8.
- The presence of God is something tangible. Even our enemies will be aware of His presence.  
*“And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, <sup>24</sup> and fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”* Leviticus 9:23-24
- In the OT whenever the Presence of God came down it was manifested in the form of fire and is repeated in the NT at Pentecost (2 Chronicles 7:1, Acts 2:3).
- The Presence of the Lord is what distinguishes the people of God from all other peoples and is needed to walk in His ways.

*“Then he said to Him, “If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. <sup>16</sup> For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.” Exodus 33:15-16.*

- The Presence of God is the nature of God, His very name. When His Presence comes, we experience His mercy and compassion. Signs and wonders are manifestations of this compassion, God healing the broken hearted and setting the captives free.

*“Then He said, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” Exodus 33:19.*

The call to build prayer altars today is to draw in His Presence. But how do we do this?

### **What attracts God’s Presence?**

1. Humility (Psalm 34:18; 2 Chronicles 7:1).
2. The Word of God (John 1:14).
3. Praise and Worship (Psalm 22:3).
4. Repentance and Holiness (James 4:8; Hebrews 12:14).
5. Hungry, seeking prayer (Jeremiah 29:13).
6. Perseverance (Psalm 105:4; 1 Chronicles 16:11).
7. Unity (Acts 2:1).

## **Abiding in His Presence.**

*“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.” John 15:3-8*

Here we see abiding in the Lord’s Presence is facilitated by abiding in His Word, adoring the Lord, seeking cleansing and longing after His desires (in fact all seven elements above can be found in here). The results will be fruitfulness and answered prayers so that we can “...live in the abiding presence of God where angels and all of heaven are available to serve man in the purposes of God.” Prayer Altars pg.46

Building prayer altars is not a program. It is creating an atmosphere for God to abide in us and us in Him and through us to transform the spiritual atmosphere around us. It is also a time when we connect with Him and commune with Him so that we can partner with Him and His people living the altar lifestyle in the restoration and redemption of our land.

## **Ushering in the Presence of God.**

### **Questions for discussion and reflection.**

- 1. If coming to the prayer altar is coming back to the Garden of Eden, where the presence of the Lord is manifest, what are the blessings we come into? (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:19-20).*
- 2. Which of these blessings have you experienced? Which have you not experienced? What must you do to experience them more?*
- 3. What happens when you do not come to the prayer altar daily? How is your condition compared to your position? (use the picture on page 53 to answer).*
- 4. Read aloud John 15:3-8. What does it mean to abide in Him? What must you do to abide in Him?*

### **Activity**

On a blank piece of paper list out as many of the seven things that draw the presence of God as you can without looking at the book. Besides each put a number from 1 to 10 showing your present level of engagement in that area (1 being not at all and 10 being very much so).

*For each area, what must you do to increase the number? What are other things that draw the presence of God not listed here?*

Pray alone or with others for more of each.

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*The prayer altar is a  
place of:  
**A**doring  
**L**istening  
**T**urning  
**A**greement  
**R**evival  
**S**piritual Gateway*

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**PART 7**

**THE PRAYER ALTAR  
LIFESTYLE**

**T**he key person at the altar is the Priest. He is the one who ministers to God and becomes the connection between heaven and earth. We are called to be holy priests (Exodus 19:6; Revelation 1:5b-6). Through Christ we are the sacrifice (Romans 12:1), the priest, the altar and we are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19)! As we function as holy temples with holy altars we will shine forth with His light and love as we walk in obedience and cleansing.

*“Understanding that your heart is your personal altar causes you to pay close attention to keep a careful and attentive watch over your heart. When you think of your altar as just a time and a place rather than a lifestyle then you will believe you are finished communing with God when that time is over. But when you realize your heart is the altar then you can live in a state of unbroken communion with God”.* Prayer Altars pg.231

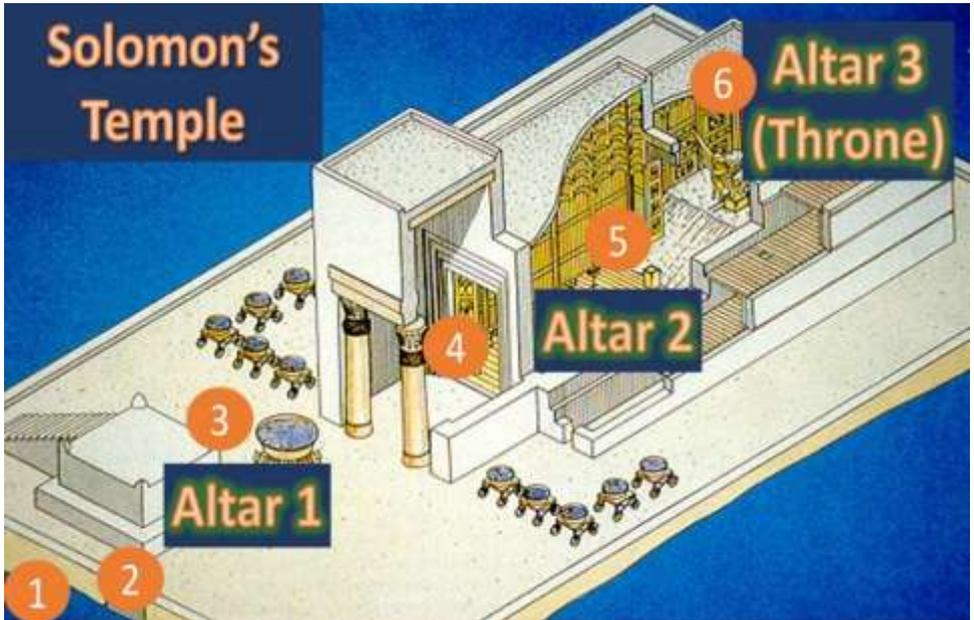
From the Tabernacle onwards, there is a revelation of 3 altars – the Brazen Altar outside, the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place and the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies (where the altar becomes the throne). In the Scripture, it appears that the Brazen Altar is our heart (Hebrews 13:10) where we offer ourselves as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1). The Altar of Incense is a heavenly place of intercession (Revelation 8:1-4) and the Mercy Seat is God’s throne in heaven (Hebrews 4:16).

So, the prayer altar is the spiritual gateway that lifts us into heavenly places. This should be a daily experience, not just during set times at a set place, but a lifestyle.

The Temple plus these three *altars* gives us a pattern for our prayer altar time and lifestyle.

**NOTE: The following are suggested activities not laws.**

Now we will go through the 6 points marked on the diagram below in our journey through the Temple. Remember that Solomon's literal temple is a "copy and shadow of the heavenly things" (Hebrews 8:5), so it's not a literal journey but a spiritual one.



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**Point 1:** A place we *connect* with God (Coming to the outer gate of the Temple).



**Through the Word of God** (2 Kings 22 – Only when Josiah read the Word of the Lord did he rise up to start restoring temple worship).

*Altar Activity: Reading big chunks of the Word (10 chapters or 40 minutes) at a time so His Word shapes our thinking and our worldview at the start of our prayer altar time.*

Reading the Word is a critical part of our time at the altar. It is the Word that will renew our carnal minds and draw us into union with the Father. Paul speaks about being transformed in our minds (Romans 12:2). Unless this happens, we cannot come into alignment with the desires of our Father's heart. We cannot pray for His will to be done as, more often than not, our wills are tainted with the mind-set of this world. The only way we can find out what is God's will for our lives and for our world is to have our minds renewed by His Word.

In a way, the prayer altar is not the same as what we know as just a quiet time. It is not a time to study the Word or use devotionals where only a couple of verses are read. It is much more than that. It is taking the Word and reading big chunks (we suggest 10 chapters) at a time so that the Word of God shapes our thinking and our worldview. It is literally saturating ourselves with the Word so that we have the mind of Christ. After reading we are equipped for the rest of our prayer altar time to hallow His name and so forth.

During your reading, do not read the titles or any foot notes as they are not the original Word from God but man's additions. Do not stop to reflect on any verse (you can jot down verses that struck you to come back to them later) but read all the way through uninterrupted. All the time be asking the two questions: *"What do I learn about God's character that I can*

*praise and worship Him more?” and “What do I learn about myself that I need to repent of and change?”.*

*Altar Lifestyle: A lifestyle of soaking in God’s Word.*

The aim is to let the Word dwell in us richly (Colossians 3:16), renewing our minds and transforming our hearts to flow in accordance with His will during the whole day. We draw His Presence by saturating in His Word so that His Word abides in us and we abide in Him (John 15:7) as we go about our everyday activities. We can later meditate on passages of Scripture we have read and let His word become flesh in our lives so we live a life in accordance with His Word.

**Point 2:** A place we *commune* with Him (through the outer gate into the courtyard).



**Through Praise and Worship** (Psalm 100:4) – Praising Him until we worship, and His presence comes.

*Altar Activity: Hallowing the name of the Lord as He has revealed Himself in the Word we’ve been reading.*

*“A true heart of worship can only come from saturating in the Word of God...we discover God in the Word...it is out of that discovery that we can praise His Holy Name” (Prayer Altars pp. 151-159)*

After reading the Word use your answer to the question, “*What do I learn about God’s character that I can praise and worship Him more?*” to launch into praise and worship and hallow His

name. You can use songs you know that tell of the characteristic of God that most struck you.

Praise and Worship is central to any altar. When we come to worship Him, we are not just singing. It's about love and devotion. We are allowing our heart to be engaged with the words. That is why closing our eyes to focus on the words of the song is a practical help. Worship is about spending time "*hallowing His name*", adoring Him, exalting Him and loving Him. As we do that we are no longer preoccupied with our needs and our concerns but with Him. Even without music we should come to the prayer altar to offer praise and thanksgiving (Psalm 100:4-5). Declare that "*the Lord is indeed good and His love endures forever.*" When we can hear ourselves speak these truths our hearts will become more and more open to what God has to say.

*Altar Lifestyle: A Lifestyle of Praise and Worship.*

As your prayer altar praise and worship goes deeper it will carry over into Your day and you will radiate the Lord's goodness and live in joy and thanksgiving, carrying His presence wherever you go.

**Point 3:** A place we *consecrate* ourselves to Him (Brazen Altar and Brazen Laver).



**Through deep Personal Repentance** (James 4:8; Psalm 38:18; 2 Chronicles 29:5).

*Altar Activity: Repenting of sins that the Lord has revealed through the reading of His Word. This cleanses us and qualifies us as priest to enter the Holy Place (1 John 1:9).*

Often in God's presence during worship the Lord will convict you as He did Isaiah who said, *"I am a man of unclean lips"* (Isaiah 6:5). After your time of reading the word (asking *"What do I learn about myself that I need to repent of and change?"* – Psalm 119:11) and worshipping, you will find that God highlights sins and wicked ways that you need to repent of. Repentance is true godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10) for breaking His Law and a decision and action to turn away from the wrong deeds and do the right thing. The more you repent the deeper will be your consecration. As you repent use *"forgive me"* and not *"forgive us"* (especially in group settings) as you need to personalize it and take full responsibility for your sins.

*Altar Lifestyle: A Lifestyle of Consecration.*

The more we truly repent and pour out our lives in humility in our prayer altar times the more we will walk in consecration and forgiveness during the day. Consecration is true devotion. It is an intentional act of setting ourselves apart for Him and for His kingdom. It needs to be intentional and not when we feel like it. It is often accompanied by sacrifice that effects our daily lifestyle. Fasting is a very good way towards consecration. Some go further and set aside sleep, daily pursuits, even the busy schedule of ministries to minister to Him at the altar. Consecration leads to surrender. God can only really work through surrendered lives.

**Point 4:** A place we *cross into* the spiritual realm (Entering the Holy Place).



**Through praying in the Spirit** (Ephesians 6:8; Romans 8:26,27).

*Altar activity: Praying in the Spirit, asking for more of Spirit's revelation and receiving His revelation (Menorah) and rhema word (Showbread).*

Once we come to the point of sensing His cleansing and restoring touch after repentance, we will be cleansed priests who can enter the Holy Place. The Holy Place is different to the outer court with the altar and laver. In the court, the lighting is natural but when you go into the Holy place it is lit by the Menorah, the seven-branched lampstand. This represents the sevenfold spirit of God (Isaiah 11:2 – The Spirit of the Lord, wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord). Here you are asking the Lord to fill you with His Spirit and bring divine revelation. Praying in the Spirit helps, or simply crying out for more of His Spirit. Also, in the Holy place is the Table of Showbread – the bread represents the living, *rhema* word of God (Matthew 4:4). It is here the Spirit drops into your spirit revelation as to how to pray, who to intercede for, what to ask and what His will is.

*Altar Lifestyle: A lifestyle of Christ (the Anointing).*

As we are filled by the Spirit and receive His revelation more and more in our prayer altar times it will carry over into our everyday life and the Lord will start giving words of

knowledge about people and situations for you to minister. You will walk more and more in His anointing under an open heaven.

**Point 5:** A place where we *cry out* (The Altar of Incense).



**Through identificational repentance** (Deep Intercession) (Nehemiah 1:6-7; Daniel 9:20; Isaiah 6:5).

*Altar Activity: As led by the Spirit, interceding for individuals or peoples, identifying with them and bearing their burdens – it can go into longer times of carrying the ‘burden’.*

Walking between the Menorah and Table of Showbread the priest would come to the Altar of Incense. This represents the prayers and intercessions of the saints (Revelation 8:4). In the Holy Place God reveals what and who to pray for. As we pray for individuals or groups, we have found it most effective to pray identificational repentance prayers. This is repenting on behalf of the person, bearing their burdens (Galatians 6:2). This is Biblical as Daniel did it on behalf of His nation (Daniel 9:20) and so did Nehemiah and many of the prophets. Here it’s best to use “*forgive us*” and not “*forgive them*” which tends to be a prayer that points the finger and judges others. Ask the Lord to help you identify in prayer with that person and have a sense of what they are going through. This kind of intercession may take a simple session or last days as you carry a “*burden*” to set someone or some group free.

*Altar Lifestyle: A lifestyle of Conciliation.*

Identificational prayer, as I said, can last for some days as you fast for someone or people group, change your lifestyle to identify with others you're interceding for or just carry a groaning in your spirit. This practice touches God's heart and also gives you a tender heart towards others and helps you be less critical and judgmental in your daily life.

**Point 6:** A place where we *claim* His promises (The Ark of the Covenant).



**Through Covenant Declaration** (Psalm 2:7-8; Psalm 25:14; Psalm 50:5,16)

*Altar Activity: The Lord gives greater clarity concerning His covenant destiny that you can declare out in faith.*

This is where you are carried into the Holy of Holies as you are interceding, and the Lord speaks His covenant afresh over you and the people You are interceding for so you can stand on it and declare it.

*“I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD.”*  
Exodus 6:6-8

God acts by Covenant. At the altar, we are renewing our covenant with Him. Many times, when the children of Israel

broke their covenant, what God needed was a covenant partner who would stand in the gap and renew covenant with Him.

When Daniel interceded, he prayed as one who appealed to God's covenant with Israel (Daniel 9:4). We too can come before God's holy throne and appeal to the New Covenant in His blood (Luke 22:20).

The foundation of Christianity is our covenant with God. Each time we come to Him at the altar our covenant is renewed, strengthened and our confidence in it is increased. God comes to us in our altars because of the Covenant.

*“A Covenant is stronger than a promise. He created covenants to bind himself in relationship with man. God only relates to humans in Covenant and the place where the covenant is renewed is at the altar.”* Prayer Altars pg. 180-181

When God can find a covenant partner like Abraham, Moses, Daniel or Ezekiel there is nothing God cannot do. Nations are changed, souls are saved, and the Kingdom of God advances. This is what intercession should lead to.

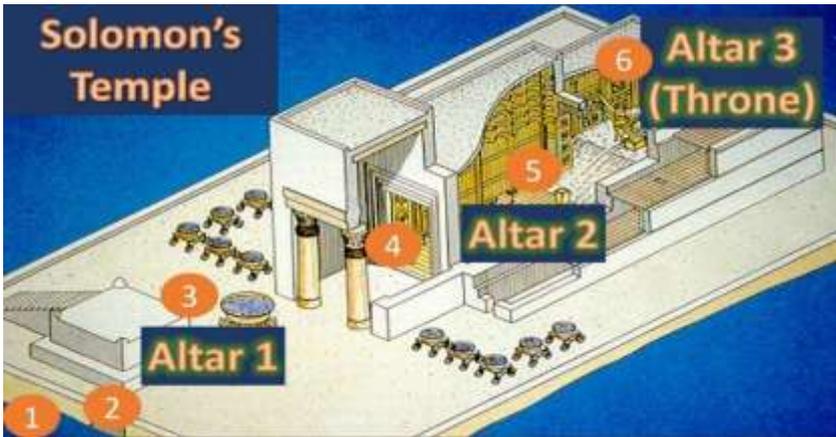
*Altar Lifestyle: A lifestyle of walking in Covenant relationship with God.*

As the Lord speaks more and more of His covenant promises over us and our land then we can live a covenant lifestyle, letting Him fight our battles, exchanging our strength for His, claiming the ground for Him with every step that we take.

## The Prayer Altar Lifestyle.

### Questions for discussion and reflection.

1. Use the picture and, without referring to the book, explain what each point refers to in your prayer altar lifestyle. If you are in a group, you can take one or more points each or split into sub-groups.



2. Go through a practical walkthrough of the temple spending about 5 minutes for each point.

### Activity

Here is where the rubber hits the road! Use pages 72-73 to have a personal prayer altar time tomorrow and then daily thereafter. You may struggle to do all the points at first and you may not even get through them all. That's OK as it is a journey and you will find you'll go further in as you progress daily. At first you may only manage 5 chapters of the Bible a day and only a few minutes of each section, but this will increase and deepen as you persevere.

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*“One thing I have desired of the LORD,  
That will I seek:  
That I may dwell in the house of the  
LORD  
All the days of my life,  
To behold the beauty of the LORD,  
And to inquire in His temple.”  
Psalm 27:4*

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## How to Build a Personal Prayer Altar – A practical guide.

### ***Arise and shine.***



Get up early (to have at least one-hour Prayer Altar time before going into your day’s activities). This may require a change in lifestyle (going to bed earlier, giving up certain activities).



### ***Read the Word.***

Read about 10 chapters of God’s Word (from Genesis to Revelation) for 30 to 40 minutes. Read aloud without stopping – ask “*What do I learn about God that I can praise Him more?*”, “*What do I learn about myself that I need to repent of?*” and “*What verse do I need to memorize and meditate on today?*”.



### ***Hallow His Name.***

Straight after reading God’s word, lift your hands and loudly proclaim His praise (using the Word you have read). Praise until you enter worship and His presence comes. You may worship God with songs available on YouTube.



### ***Personal Repentance and Consecration***

In His presence, ask the Holy Spirit to deal with your sins by going into deep repentance. After repenting, consecrate every part of your body to

Him and receive cleansing from the Lord. Declare that you are a qualified priest and an able minister of the New Covenant.

### ***Praying in the Spirit***



Pray for a fresh infilling of the Spirit and, in whatever way you know, pray fervently for His revelation and wisdom. Wait on Him for His guidance as to what and who to pray for.

### ***Intercession***



As the Lord leads, pray for people – your family, friends, colleagues, leaders, people groups etc. Pray using identificational repentance, praying “*forgive us*” prayers and bearing their burdens.

### ***Declaring and Decreeing***



As you repent on behalf of others and identify with them you will find His authority rising in you to declare and decree His covenant destiny into lives and situations, your own and others.

### ***Go into the world.***



Select a verse and write it down to memorize and meditate on throughout the day. Live out of that revelation – grab times during the day to do any of the above as He leads. Walk in your destiny as revealed at the altar.

## A word about the different types of Prayer Altars.

### Types of Prayer Altars



PERSONAL ALTAR



FAMILY ALTAR



CORPORATE ALTAR  
(Church altar etc..)



MARKETPLACE ALTAR



REGIONAL and NATIONAL ALTAR

The process I have just described will be the same for all prayer altar types. Each will consist of reading chunks of Scripture, hallowing His name, personal repentance, interceding with identificational repentance and declaring His covenant destiny over your life, family, church, workplace and nation. All this done hungrily and humbly before the Lord.

The personal prayer altar is a daily time you have on your own with God that will transform your life and daily walk. Family altars are regular (often weekly) times you have as a family that will transform your family's spiritual atmosphere. Corporate prayer altars (weekly church prayer time or weekly cell groups) will transform your church into His Bride. Marketplace altars (weekly gatherings in your workplace) will transform your workplace, seeing salvations and moral uprightness abound and regional and national prayer altars (every quarter, half or full year) will transform your nation to move in its redemptive gifting and destiny.

# SUMMARY

*“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.”* Ezekiel 22:30

Building prayer altars throughout the land is about laying claim to the land, adopting the land, praying and blessing the land, establishing God’s presence in the land. It is about possessing the land so that forces of darkness cannot take over the spiritual atmosphere of that land. At the altar God is looking for partners in covenant who can do this with Him and others He is raising up. God’s aim is still to show mercy and bring restoration and revival to our land. So, God looks for a man or a woman who will walk not just in communion but also in covenant with Him.

Therefore, we need to build altars in our homes and neighbourhoods, our workplaces, our schools and, above all, our churches. We need to turn the house of God into the very throne of God. Then His kingdom will come, His will be done in our land as it is in heaven, even as He has promised.

Building prayer altars is not a program, it’s bigger than us or our church, it is a lifestyle of God’s holy priesthood. It requires commitment, love and devotion. It requires time. It requires sacrifice. May God use you to ignite the fire of transformational revival in Singapore by building prayer altars. Amen.