

GOD ORDAINED
LEADERSHIP

By Paul M Hanssen

ZIMBABWE SEVEN PILLARS CHURCH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

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INTRODUCTION:

I want to open this Leadership Summit by reading to you a few words from a Bible Teacher named Charles Swindoll. Speaking of King David, he wrote:

David grew up in obscurity. That's another way God trains His best personnel—in obscurity. Men and women of God, servant-leaders in the making, are first unknown, unseen, unappreciated, and unapplauded. In the relentless demands of obscurity, character is built. Strange as it may seem, those who first accept the silence of obscurity are best qualified to handle the applause of popularity. (obscurity means to be unknown, in the dark, inconspicuous, and unimportant).

David was the *youngest* in his family and was often treated as *insignificant*. He spent a lot of *time alone* on the hillsides of Judea, tending *his father's sheep*. It was here that he learned *to worship*; it was here that he learned to *overcome enemies like a lion and a bear*; it was here that he *skillfully learned to play the harp*; it was here that he learned how to remain watchful at night; and it was here that David was *groomed to become the king of Israel*.

Many people run from obscure places as they strive to become known, popular, and recognized in their roles, seeking the spotlight in church activities and leadership. Unfortunately, during my travels around the world, visiting numerous churches and connecting with various religious leaders, I have discovered that few truly grasp the obscure, lonely, and isolated places that God uses as coaching and training grounds—areas where character, humility, discipleship, discipline, and Christlikeness are cultivated.

Throughout history, God has always searched for leaders who will be responsible for guiding, protecting, feeding, and watching over His flock.

And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. (Ezekiel 22:30)

Ezekiel wrote these words at a time when Israel's spiritual awareness was in decline. The spiritual leaders and prophets were backslidden and turned away from God.

Read Ezekiel 22:24-29

Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. (Ezekiel 22:26)

This reflects the spiritual leadership of God's people. They did not distinguish between what is clean and pure and what is unholy and defiled. To profane means to "make common"; in other words, the holy things of God—the presence of God, the word of God, the majesty, and sovereignty of God—were simply treated as ordinary, lacking the reverence and honor they deserve.

It was then that God announced through Ezekiel that He was searching for a man to make up the hedge (*meaning to repair and enclose the protective fence*) and to stand in the gap (*meaning to repair the break and breach in the wall*). God continues to seek out such men and women. While God looks for those whom His heart desires, more importantly, He is searching for those whose hearts yearn for Him and who actively pursue Him, like David.

And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. (Acts 13:22)

God is searching for men and women in this generation who are numbered in the chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people (1 Peter 2:9). Who is this chosen generation?

This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah. (Psalm 24:6)

The chosen generation seeks after God. They pursue Him and aspire to be like Him; He is their example. They crave His presence and deeply long for Him. Their desire to pursue Him is intense.

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? (Psalm 42:1-2)

Until this is your experience, you will not grow to become a good leader. Why? Because you will pursue the satisfactions of your own appetites rather than the will and desire of God.

Returning to Acts 13:22, God states, "I found David," which suggests He was searching for someone. What was He searching for? A man after His own heart, signifying someone whose heart is aligned with His. David was considered a man after God's heart because his heart actively pursued God. What does a man after God's heart truly look like? It is someone who is committed to "do all of God's will", not his own will, not his own purpose, and not his own desires, but God's. Such men and women are rare.

Following God's will starts with a personal relationship and a walk with Him. Enoch walked with God (Genesis 5:22), Noah walked with God (Genesis 6:9), Moses walked with God, Abraham walked with God, Daniel walked with God, and Paul walked with God—many biblical figures walked with God, guiding them in fulfilling His will. It all begins with walking with God!

Adam was the first man who ever walked with God.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (Genesis 3:8-10)

Adam recognized the sound of God's voice walking in the garden during the cool of the day because he had walked with God many times before; He was familiar with the sound of His steps and the rhythm of His walk. Therefore, when Adam, male and female, had sinned, they hid from the voice they had once walked with. Adam was the first man God sought. He was the first man God ever called, saying, "Adam, where are you?" Sin causes us to lose our walk with God and to hide from Him, yet God still calls, "Where are you? I want you; I'm calling you."

Adam was the first priest, prophet, and king on earth. He was the first *son of God* among men. (Luke 3:38)

At this time and season, God is searching and calling for the generation of "the seekers of God"—those who will stand in the gap, respond to His call, walk with Him, and fulfill "all" of His will! Will you be one of them? ***God is searching for those who are searching for Him!*** Are you a seeker, are you pursuing God, and is He the one you breathe after and long for? If so, in you He will find a man/woman after His own heart; one who desires to do all of His will!

LESSON 1: You know Them by their Fruit

Many ministers claim to be ministers simply because they say they are. However, you are not a minister of God unless God says you are.

The Apostle Paul began eight of his epistles with phrases such as: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God" (1 Corinthians 1:1). Paul was not an apostle merely because he claimed to be; he was an apostle because God called him. There is a significant difference between God-ordained ministers and self-proclaimed ministers. How can we tell the difference?

When God plants a tree, He gives it a purpose and a mandate to bear a specific kind of fruit. A tree is recognized by its fruit, just as ministers are known by theirs.

*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. **Ye shall know them by their fruits.** Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:15-23)*

I never listen to what people say about who they are. Instead, I observe the fruit of their lives and their service to the Lord. The fruit you bear, whether good or bad, reveals your true identity. Simply saying "Lord, Lord" doesn't define you. Prophesying or casting out demons doesn't make you anything that you may profess to be. *Self-proclamations* do not reveal your calling and purpose. It is God's call and proclamation that impart a mantle and anointing upon your shoulders—a mantle that distinguishes you from others in the fulfilling of God's intended purpose for your life. This is what the Bible refers to as being "*ordained by God.*" It is also your personal relationship with God that maintains the mantle and anointing he places upon you. Without a relationship with Him, your mantle will decay and become corrupted.

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. (1 Timothy 2:7)

Ordained means to be purposed, set forth, appointed, committed, and placed in a horizontal posture. A horizontal posture signifies a position of sacrifice and self-giving. The world is filled with self-made ministers who have never been ordained by God. How do I know?—they live their lives seeking to have others serve them rather than serving others. They have never submitted their will in a horizontal position before God. They treat the brethren as subjects to their kingship. This is ungodly leadership! Every leader who behaves in this manner produces evil fruit and will ultimately reap the harvest of God's judgment. You recognize them by the fruit they bear.

LESSON 2: False Leaders

Therefore the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed. (Isaiah 9:14-16)

- THE HEAD - Roshe / the captain, chief, forefront, priest, principle ruler
- THE TAIL - zaw-nawb / what follows behind

The mature ones are the head, the example; the ones who have gone before. The tail are they who follow behind and learn from example. These are the leaders of the people of God.

The leaders erred by leading God's people astray with their lies, even while they despised the Truth themselves. They guided them not toward God, but instead away from Him and toward themselves. They did not provide the people with the knowledge of God, the understanding that brings spiritual enlightenment, awareness, awakening, and discernment.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame. (Hosea 4:6-7)

This is the destruction we witness within the mainstream church today.

- To be destroyed means to perish, to be cut down, to remain mute and silent, and to fail.

Due to a lack of genuine spiritual knowledge, God's people are weakened by enemy forces that aim to render the church mute, silent, ineffective in the spiritual realm, and destined for failure.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. (Matthew 22:29)

- *To err* means to stray from the truth, to mislead, to seduce, to deceive, to cause someone to stagger, and to lead one off the path.

Do not err, my beloved brethren. (James 1:16)

What is the main root cause of erring? What causes the leaders of God's people to go astray and to lead others astray?

When the leaders of God's people are unaware of and do not understand God's Word, they can easily be deceived and, in turn, deceive others. Furthermore, when leaders are not

familiar with the power of God at work in their own lives, they cannot demonstrate the life-giving power of deliverance to the saints of God. If it doesn't work in you, it cannot work through you!

Today, we stand amid a generation that does not know the Word and the power of God! There is a famine of God's Word among the mainstream churches today.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. (Amos 8:11-12)

Why did God send a famine of His Word? Because His people were not hungry for Him; they craved feasts, frivolity, and entertainment. In the days of Amos, Israel's religious system was in complete disarray. The temple of God lay in ruins. The priesthood was corrupt, and the prophets spoke falsely in the name of the LORD, giving the people the words they wanted to hear.

Many understand belief systems or theology, but few grasp the truth. Many recognize religion and its forms of godliness, but few experience the power that accompanies it (2 Timothy 3:5: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"). The church world is filled with blind leaders guiding the blind into a ditch of deception.

Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. (Matthew 15:14)

The role of true godly leadership, including the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher, is to present unadulterated truth to the body of Christ. However, Jesus warned us that the first sign of the end times would be deception.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. (Matthew 24:4-5)

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. (Matthew 24:11-12)

We are now living in the days that Jesus warned us about. Deception is one of the biggest and strongest weapons of the devil. The highest form of deception is a mixture of truth and error.

But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. (2 Timothy 3:13)

These words are prophetic of the end times.

- Deception is an attempt to make someone believe a lie or untruth as if it were the truth.

Your role as a leader is to seek the truth at all costs and guide God's people along the path of truth! This endeavor comes at a price; it will require sacrifices from you!

LESSON 3: True Spiritual Leaders

True spiritual leaders share one common trait: they nourish the flock of God with His Word of Truth.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. (Acts 20:28-30)

To be able to successfully feed God's people with the Living Word, a true spiritual leader must first and foremost "take heed" of themselves. True spiritual leaders, above all, take heed to their own lives rather than primarily focusing on the flock they are sent to serve.

The term "take heed" appears nearly 130 times in the Bible. To take heed originates from the Hebrew word *shaw-mar*, which means to hedge about (as with thorns); that is, to guard, protect, attend to, beware of, be circumspect, take heed to oneself, keep oneself, mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, reserve, and be a watchman.

Sahw-mar is the same word God used when He commanded Adam to dress and *keep* the garden. Had Adam done as God commanded, mankind would not be in the position he is today. (Genesis 2:15)

A true servant of God will guard his heart and protect it from worldly influences and temptations. A true servant of God will reflect on himself and the state of his own spirit before trying to guide others along the path he needs to follow.

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (Luke 21:34-36)

Before feeding the flock of God, it is required that a true servant of God take heed to him/herself. After that, feeding the flock that is purchased by the blood of Calvary is an

important task. As pastors, teachers, and leaders of God's people, it cannot be stressed enough that feeding the flock is a priority. However, the food must be *pure, unadulterated, and holy* revelation. Always consider that you are feeding God's possession, not your own. You will answer to God for every word you have ever spoken to His flock!

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. (James 3:1 ESV)

LESSON 4: To Effectively Lead, One Must First Follow

True spiritual leaders become exceptionally effective and powerful when they have learned to submit to authority themselves. You will only possess as much authority in your life and ministry as the level to which you have submitted.

Godly power and authority is not simply handed to you on a silver platter; *it is earned*. God will never entrust *authority* over the domain of His Kingdom into the hands of the immature and the unfaithful.

For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. (Matthew 8:9)

The level of authority you are entrusted with is measured by the level of authority under which you succumb and submit yourself. In other words, the authority under which you submit yourself will match the level of authority entrusted to you. The Roman centurion quoted in the above verse understood this principle. Soldiers have limited power. However, as a centurion, he carried a greater responsibility. Centurions had authority over a military unit consisting of one hundred legionaries; these military units were called centuries (from the Latin word *centuria*). Legionaries were soldiers dedicated to conquering and defending the territories of Ancient Rome; hence, the reason the centurion was in Israel.

A centurion moved up in the military ranks because he had learned to come under authority. These military leaders were given the same authority under which they themselves had submitted. The centurion's position under His Roman governors, therefore, endowed him with dominion authority. This same principle works in the spiritual world!

When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. (Matthew 8:10)

Jesus admired the centurion's faith. He had not found this level of faith and persuasion among his own people. Do you have this level of faith? Are you willing to not only be a soldier

with limited power but also to become a spiritual centurion, as it were, endowed with rulership authority? If you do, you must first submit to godly leadership and authority. You must follow before you can lead.

DISCIPLED:

Being a disciple is not what most people imagine or have been taught. Let's take another look at the meaning of the word disciple.

- Disciple is translated from the **Greek** word *math-ey-tes'* and means a learner, a pupil, to grow in understanding.
- In **Hebrew**, "disciple" is derived from "lim-mood," which means instructed and taught. It comes from the root word "law-mad," which means to goad (provoke someone) with a rod, with an incentive to stimulate action or reaction, to be diligent, and to become an expert, instructed, and skillful

A disciple is a *student, a learner, and a follower*. The goal of those who make disciples is to see excellence and skill developed in the lives of the learners. A true disciple-maker will work diligently to ensure that the disciple becomes more skilled than himself or herself. A teacher's goal is to produce disciples who are as skillful as themselves and even excel above and beyond to become proficient in the subject they are being taught.

In biblical times, it was common for rabbis and other religious teachers and leaders to have disciples. Disciples would listen, learn, watch, and follow their teachers' examples, becoming skilled in what they were taught. Therefore, it was neither strange nor out of the ordinary for Jesus to have His own disciples. Jesus continuously taught His disciples to follow His example and to do as He had done.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. (John 13:15)

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (1 Peter 2:21)

When Jesus called His disciples, He did so with two words: FOLLOW ME

- And he saith unto them, **Follow me**, and I will make you fishers of men. (Matthew 4:19)
- But Jesus said unto him, **Follow me**; and let the dead bury their dead. (Matthew 8:22)
- And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, **Follow me**. And he arose, and followed him. (Matthew 9:9)

- The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, **Follow me.** (John 1:43)

Two words stand out in the Master's call for disciples: Follow me. To follow means to be together in the same way, to accompany as a disciple. It connotes fashioning oneself after the likeness of the one followed. Becoming like the master tops the agenda of a follower. To be a true disciple is to be a copy of the Master. Therefore, to pursue Christlikeness is the goal of a disciple of Christ.

A disciple's goal is not ministry, even though ministry may be part of becoming a disciple. Rather, discipleship is pursuing the likeness of the Master. Becoming like the Son of God is the high pursuit of a disciple. Adopting the character, nature, and integrity of Jesus is true discipleship. As such, we are also called to make disciples.

As a leader, my goal is to make disciples. The apostle Paul said:

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:1)

In other words, Paul pursued Christlikeness that he could portray to his followers as they followed him. Leaders have a tremendous responsibility to showcase Christ's character to their disciples. However, no human on earth is just like Christ. I have always been amazed at how quickly "followers" point out one's failures but never encourage or appreciate one's strengths. That's the nature of fallen man in action. This type of pushback should not discourage anyone from making disciples, something we are all called to do. However, it cannot be overstated that making disciples can never be effective unless one is first a disciple and in hot pursuit of the likeness of the teacher.

*Wherefore I beseech you, be ye **followers of me.** For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. (1 Corinthians 4:16-17)*

*Brethren, be **followers together of me,** and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (Philippians 3:17)*

*Those things, which ye have both **learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me,** do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Philippians 4:9)*

*And ye became **followers of us,** and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. (1 Thessalonians 1:6-7)*

Becoming a "maker of disciples" and an apostle who follows in the footsteps of Jesus toward Christlikeness starts with becoming a disciple. Over the years, I have noticed how fearful

people can be of emulating an example. Most individuals desire to be "original," not realizing that their identity and the choices they make are influenced by others, which makes them followers of someone, often without their awareness. Being conformed to the likeness of Christ means distancing oneself from the idea of "originality." Only God is original—He created humanity to embody His image and likeness, fulfilling His purpose and will. This isn't originality! Instead, it signifies the discovery and realization of God's original purpose for humankind—the image and likeness of God.

However, consciously choosing to follow as a disciple means submitting to someone else's authority, which in turn makes one accountable. Trust me when I say that few choose to come under another's authority and be subject to oversight. Nevertheless, this is what it truly means to be a disciple.

Being a disciple means *following, learning from, and conforming to an example*. To make this a living experience, we should examine what Jesus taught about discipleship. Many of the verses we will explore are often cited at different times to illustrate various principles of truth. However, when we view Jesus through the lens of discipleship, a different perspective emerges that is frequently overlooked.

The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? (Matthew 10:24-25)

One of the most important matters to understand about a disciple is this: "It is enough for the disciple to be like his master." In the current church environment, few possess the vision and goal of being like the master; few have a passion for Christlikeness, and few pursue being conformed to the image of Jesus. However, *it is enough*—which means *this is what is required; this is what God desires*.

LESSON 5: A Minister's Personal Life

It is crucial to understand our ministerial callings. Therefore, it is also essential to learn about the ministry itself and the gifts given to us that equip us for the ministerial call on our lives. Every single born-again believer has a ministerial calling. We are all called to the Lord's service in some way or another.

However, many neglect what is truly the most important aspect of our ministries. It is not about how well we can preach or prepare a sermon, how many hard hours we can work, how many programs we can launch, or even how many souls we can bring to salvation. NO, none

of these should be the priority for a minister. Instead, it is our personal and private lives. The ministry of every public servant of God begins and ends with their private life. Our public service, ministerial effectiveness, anointing, and overall work for the Lord are only as powerful as our commitment and dedication to God in our personal and private lives.

Leadership – Service – Ministry – and the Anointing of the Spirit are all expensive commodities (useful or valuable things).

Serving God effectively comes with a price tag! There are no examples in scripture of any effective leader or servant of God who did not pay a significant “personal” price for the powerful manifestation of God’s work through them. A personal price must be paid for God’s anointing. Oil is produced by the olives being crushed and pressed. Without the pressing and crushing, there can be no anointing. We must examine our personal lives, as our private lives will inevitably reflect on our public service. The greatest price for the anointing to flow upon us is not observed by the public but is paid in the personal, private, and secluded depths of our relationship and commitment to God.

And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed. (Luke 5:16)

I like the way the New International Version translates this verse:

New International Version

But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. (Luke 5:16)

- The word *wilderness* means loneliness, desolation, and solitude—in other words, being cut off from all the clutter, clang, bang, sounds, noises, humanity, gadgets, and influences). It is in this place of solitude where:
 - YOU CAN BEGIN TO HEAR THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD
 - GOD CAN SPEAK TO YOU
 - YOU CAN SEE YOURSELF AS HE SEES YOU
 - GOD CAN CRUSH YOU, MOLD YOU, AND FASHION YOUR THOUGHTS
 - HE CAN REPLENISH, REFRESH, AND RESTORE YOU

And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? (Mark 5:30)

- The word *virtue* means power, abundance, strength, force, might, and miracle power

No matter how you serve the Lord, it will draw virtue from you. Sometimes, you offer and pour out virtue in ministerial service; at other times, virtue is drawn out of you. In this instance, when the woman touched Jesus, virtue was drawn out of Him. He sensed it because He felt it leave Him.

Without proper backup and recharging in our personal lives, a servant of God can quickly become drained, exhausted, worn out, burned out, and discouraged. The sin, or the wrong, is not in burning out; rather, the wrong lies in remaining burned out. This can lead to mistakes and even quitting.

There is a secret to revitalizing our virtue and renewing our anointing. We can never depend on the experiences or anointings of the past. Each day must offer a new renewal in our walk with God.

*Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the **law of the burnt offering**: It is the burnt offering, because of the burning upon the altar all **night unto the morning**, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it. And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. (Leviticus 6:9-10)*

The whole burnt offering is a picture of giving one's personal life, one's complete giving of self. It was not given once, but it was given daily, **evening and morning**. (Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 28:2-4.24)

This offering pictured continuous, uninterrupted service and fellowship with God.

- evening – through the night, *private* priestly service to God
- morning – through the day, *public* priestly service to God

The smoke of this offering, offered in its entirety, ascended as a sweet savor in God's nostrils. (Leviticus 1:9)

WHOLE BURNT OFFERING = to ascend (literally go up in smoke), a stairway, rise up, to be restored.

The essence of these offerings and the ongoing ascent of smoke in service and fellowship with God lay not just in placing the sacrifice on the altar, but also in removing the ashes from the previous sacrifice. This was performed every morning!

If the altar was not cleared of the ashes from yesterday's service, those ashes would eventually suffocate the fire because no air, breath, or life could sustain the flame due to blockage. We can burn out when we attempt to live today based on yesterday's experiences, yesterday's blessings, yesterday's service, and yesterday's sacrifices.

You start the "morning-day" public service with an empty altar. You cannot begin a new day thinking you know something or that you are defined by your past actions, the time you've spent with the Lord, how often you've fasted, or how much you've prayed—no, you must approach each day with an empty altar and a renewed sacrifice!

Thus, the ashes of the personal night offering don't exist (they do, but only in God's perspective, not in yours). We need a fresh experience, a renewed encounter with God, a revitalized vision, a new sacrifice, an empty altar as if we had never given anything to God prior to today!

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

The candlestick was ministered to in the same manner – evening to morning.

*In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it **from evening to morning** before the Lord: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel. (Exodus 27:21)*

Oh, many want to ministry of the Word in the day when all eyes see, but few want the evening word, the alone with God Word (as it were), in the night season – in the dark place, as it were.

*And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense **every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. 8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. (Exodus 30:7-8)***

He *dressed*, meaning he trimmed the candlestick in the morning, but he *lighteth*, meaning he restored and revived the lamps at night. It is in the night – from evening to morning, that the light is refreshed and renewed.

The evening to morning concept is a valuable principle for you as ministers. I have always said, and I will undoubtedly always say, that all spiritual principles are somehow contained and revealed in the first three chapters of Genesis – in the story of creation.

- 1. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Genesis 1:5)*
- 2. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. (Genesis 1:8)*
- 3. And the evening and the morning were the third day. (Genesis 1:13)*
- 4. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. (Genesis 1:19)*
- 5. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. (Genesis 1:23)*
- 6. And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. (Genesis 1:31)*

Every new day, each cycle of creation and new beginnings, represents a fresh start. God did not indicate that “the morning and the evening” defined how that cycle unfolds. Instead, it was “evening to morning.”

The Sabbath day does not begin at the break of a new day but rather at the end, at nightfall, of the previous day. As the sun sets on the day that has passed (with regard to the Sabbath, that would be Friday), the Sabbath begins in the evening, continuing through the night to the morning and throughout the day until the next evening.

Jesus was laid in the tomb as evening approached, the beginning of the Sabbath Day. He rose early in the morning on the first day of the week, from evening to morning. Here, we see once more what the transition from evening to morning brings—resurrection life and creative power! He was laid in the tomb in the evening; He rose from the tomb early in the morning!

And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. (Luke 23:53-54)

And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. (Mark 16:2.9)

LESSON 6: God’s will on Earth as it is in Heaven

Whatever God asks of His saints on earth, there is an example of it in heaven. God’s will is for His heavenly Kingdom to come to His people; His will is for what is accomplished in heaven to also be accomplished on earth, and His will is for His people to ask and seek for His Kingdom to come and be established within them at the end, just as His will desired for man in the beginning.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:10)

Understanding how God’s Will is fulfilled in heaven guides us on how it is realized on earth. The prophet Ezekiel is one of three prophets who were invited into heaven and witnessed the throne of God, the Kingdom, and the majesty of God. The other two prophets who experienced heaven were the prophet Isaiah and the prophet John.

And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning. (Ezekiel 1:14)

Here, we witness a live view of heaven and the will of God being fulfilled. The living creatures, servants of the Living God, awaited at God's throne for the movement of His Spirit.

Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; (Ezekiel 1:20)

Whatever the breath of God's Spirit conveyed, and whatever the Spirit of God enacted, the living creatures followed suit and acted accordingly. In other words, they moved in harmony with the Spirit's flow. However, they were always quick to return to the source of their inspiration: the throne and glory of God. Once they returned, they folded their wings and waited upon Him who sits upon the throne of glory. This is how God's will is fulfilled in heaven, and this is how God desires His servants to carry out His will on earth.

And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. (Ezekiel 1:24)

When the living creatures moved in accordance with the Spirit, their wings resonated with the voice and breath of the Almighty, like the sound of many waters. Their service was not a reflection of personal preferences or actions, but rather the sound of truth—the voice and speech of God.

Does this describe your service and ministry? If not, it's time to repent and align your life with God's will and purpose—seeking first His Kingdom, His throne, His glory, and His eternal will and purpose!