

REBUILD

By Rev. Will Nelken

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To the Altar

One could say that the history of God's people in the Bible is also a history of altars which they built for the worship of the God who revealed Himself to them.

When the worldwide flood subsided, Noah built an altar to the Lord.

After the Lord appeared and made a covenant with Abram, he built five altars to the Lord.

His son, Isaac, built an altar to the Lord.

Isaac's son, Jacob, built two altars to the Lord.

Moses built two altars to the Lord.

His successor, Joshua, also built an altar to the Lord.

After the people settled in the Promised Land, Gideon built an altar to the Lord. The prophet Samuel built an altar to the Lord. Saul, their first king, built several altars to the Lord. David, the chosen king, built an altar to the Lord, as did his son, Solomon.

To the Temple

Solomon's altar was part of the elaborate Temple, which he built in Jerusalem for the Hebrew nation's worship. From that time forward, it was the only acceptable altar for the worship of Jehovah, because God had chosen it as the place of meeting with His people.

To the Christ

That is, until Jesus came. He is quoted as saying to the religious leaders, "*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up again*" (John 2:19) As John noted, He was speaking figuratively of the "temple" of His own body—of His execution and His resurrection—for He Himself became the everlasting Temple and Altar of God among humankind, the One through whom all men may come to God in prayer and worship. Men blinded by evil desires destroyed God's real Temple, when they crucified Jesus. But three days later, He rebuilt it, better than ever!