

BUILD ME  
AN  
ARK  
a sermon note



ABRAHAM OSHOKO

# **“BUILD ME AN ARK...”**

*[Biblical Principles of Cultivating Divine Presence]*

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**SERMON NOTE**

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**BUILD ME AN ARK**

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# LESSON ONE

“BRING ME AN OFFERING.” Ex.25:1-9

The sanctuary- God’s temple [human body]

**“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying...”**

**T**his is the very first thing to consider here...it is the Lord who spoke to Moses and it wasn’t Moses who suggested to God that there’s need for an offering. What we are about looking at here is not what we have carefully thought out.

No.

It is the Lord who is speaking to us at such a time as this...

**“...Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering...”**

The Lord ordered that an announcement should be made... He wants an offering and He is *demanding* it of us. He said, “...**that they bring me an offering...**” it is clear who the Owner of this offering is—the Lord Himself! What are we going to present before Him today? Is it unrighteous Mammon? Is it carnal, man-pleasing service or shall we pour out our very lives as a drink offering to the Lord such that men may freely draw from Jesus by merely relating with us...? Gen.4:3-5, Phil.2:17 BBE

What will you bring? 2Cor.8:5, 2Chron.17:16

**“...Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering...”**

There is something He wants that is in our possession...Ps.50:8-12 NLT

**“...Of everyone that giveth it willingly shall ye take My offering...”**

This type of offering is not what we can cajole anyone to give. It must be given willingly. It must be

given only after men have counted the cost, then making a decision based on their conviction. Lk.14:28-33, 2Cor.8:1-5, 2Cor.9:6-7.

**“...And this is the offering you shall take of them...”**

God is specific. There are specific things He wants. We cannot just bring anything and think it will be acceptable to Him. There is what we must bring and it is that actual thing that He needs.

**“...Gold...”**

Gold is the most valuable precious metal in the ancient world. Symbolically, it refers to something that is the *best* of its kind. This is the first thing here that the Master asks for. Gold here means a life that *must* be given to the Lord in its best form. Phil.1:20-21, Jn.13:31.

**“...And silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, Oil for the light, spices for**

**anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.”**

After we have given our lives as tools for Him, the next thing He asks for is all that we have and own. Every talent, skill, money, material possessions and our time. All must be laid at His feet ready for His use whenever He makes a demand of any of them ... Lk.14:25-26, 33; Acts 4:34-37.

**“...And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them...”**

This is the purpose of the offering. God wants us to bring materials that are useful for building a sanctuary-a dwelling place for Him. This sanctuary is our very bodies which is the new temple of God. 2Cor.6:16.

**“...And let them make me a sanctuary...”**

What is a *sanctuary*? Ps.114:2

It is a consecrated place. It is a place set apart from common use to divine use...there is what must happen to our lives if we will become a comfortable home or dwelling place for God.

**“...And let them make me a sanctuary...”**

We must be ready to consecrate our lives for His use. Consecration is what a man does; but sanctification is what God does for us. By consecration, we mean our conscious setting apart of ourselves for the Master’s use [2Tim.2:20-21] while sanctification is God setting us apart for Himself after we have consciously set ourselves apart for His use [Ps.4:3, 1Thes.5:23.]

**“...That I may dwell among them...”**

The reason God asked for this offering is that we may build a sanctuary in our lives where He can live. God doesn’t live just anywhere. Certain conditions *must* of necessity be met. Jn.14:23, 2Tim.2:21, Jn.15:4-6.

**What happens when we become His sanctuary?**

Ps.114:1-8



**“According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.”**

There is a pattern. There is a way. There is how God expects me to build and prepare my life as a sanctuary for Him. That pattern is Christ. Jn.14:6 AUV, Ex33:13, Ps.103:7. The way of God is always hidden. He alone is the one who can make it known to us. Rom.11:33.

# LESSON TWO

“BUILD ME AN ARK.” Ex.25:10-16

The Ark - The human heart, a fitting throne room  
for God

**“And they shall make an ark of shittim wood...”**

**A**nother name for this shittim wood is acacia wood. God specifically asked for this wood because it is highly resistant to wood-eating insects. God asks us to prepare our bodies as a fitting sanctuary for Him then He specifies the type of heart condition we must have. It is not the type of heart that can be easily polluted by the sin, the flesh, Satan and the system of this world.

If any type of wood is okay for building the ark, the Lord wouldn't have specifically asked for the acacia

wood. It is not any type of heart that can serve God according to His pattern. What type of heart do you have? Matt.13:1-9, 18-23

**“...two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.”**

Just as in the construction of the sanctuary, we can see the Master giving detailed instructions on the exact specifications of this ark. In the same way, God does not lower the standard as far as the type or quality of the heart a servant of God must have. It is either we have it or we cannot be used by God. God has detailed specifications of the type, the tastes, the desires and the qualities of the heart that must be in the bosom of God’s servant... Heb.3:12-13, Rom.10:10.

**“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it**

**is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”** Heb.3:12-13  
compare Judg.16:20.

### **Characteristics of a right heart**

**1. Humble** [A heart that doesn't trust itself and yields to every assessment of the Word of God. He understands, accepts and acknowledges that the Lord knows Him far more than he will ever know himself.]- Jer.17:9-10, Jn.2:23-25, Matt.26:31-35, Ps.139:1-6, 23-24, Heb.4:12 AMP.

**2. Contrite and penitent** [A heart that is quick to repent. A heart that is easily bruised and sorrowful for personal sins, mourning until it is cleansed] - 2Sam.24:10, Matt.26:74-75, Ps.51:1-17, Jn.21:15-17 TLB.

**3. Quick to obey** [A heart that doesn't delay in obeying God. Once God speaks, he runs ahead to obey, regardless of the consequences-especially to himself] - Heb.11:7-8, Gen.22:1-3, 9-12; Matt.4:18-22, Matt.9:9.

**“... And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold”**

Having a right heart according to God’s specifications is good. Yet we must cover it with something else. After Moses had made the ark of shittim wood, and according to the specifications, the Lord will have him overlay the prepared ark with pure gold. What does this mean?

Once I have met God’s requirements on the type of heart a servant of God must have, my heart must be covered permanently with the golden rule...Matt.22:36-38. Love for God must outweigh every other considerations, commitments and loyalties. Matt.10:37, Acts 20:24, Lk.14:33.

**“And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it...”**

**“...within and without shalt thou overlay it...”**

This is the next instruction. The Lord is specific about how the golden rule must influence my heart.

It must begin “**...within...**” This is where most people miss it. No work of grace is done in their hearts, the Holy Ghost has not shed abroad the love of God within their hearts, yet they say they want to serve God. By nature, love itself is sacrificial. The level of love you have for God within your heart will determine how much you are willing to sacrifice for God...Mk.7:6-7; Rom.5:5.

It must begin within. Acts 20:24, Acts 21:13, Rom.8:35-39.

**“...within and without shalt thou overlay it...”**

Fierce, passionate love for our Master must begin within... only then can it outflow *without*. When love for Christ is deeply rooted within a man’s heart, every external action that men can see will be wrought in genuine love that comes from within. Acts 2:44-45, Acts 4:32-35.

When love for God doesn’t begin within a man and he expresses it without, then he is a mere hypocrite. Lk.11:39, Matt.23:27.

**“And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings *shall be* in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.” Ex.25:12-15**

The purpose of making rings, poles overlaid with gold, insertion of the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark and permanently retaining them in the rings on the sides of the ark is so that the ark itself will never be touched with human hands.

Our hearts is the very special place God wants to dwell and it must be so hallowed such that nothing can touch it anyhow. For most people who are spiritual, the main problem has always been the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches and

the love of other things. They are thorns that constantly seek to crowd out God's presence by keeping us carnal, distracted and perpetually worried—even over seemingly legitimate needs...Matt.13:7, Mk.4:18-19.

## **A closer look at the things that pollutes our hearts**

### **1. Cares of this world**

These are food, clothing and shelter-Matt.6:25-33, Lk.21:34-36

### **2. Deceitfulness of riches**

The false belief that once there is money, everything will be okay- Lk.12:13-22, 1Tim.6:6-10

### **3. Lust for other things**

The obsessive desire to possess other things first instead of God-1Jn.5:21 AMP, Ex.20:3, 1Cor.10:13-14.



The dangerous thing here is that just as thorns use up the very nutrients that help good seeds need to grow, in the same way, these three *thorns* contend for our attention, affection and time. In the end, the presence of God will depart if we don't deliberately focus on rooting out these thorns.

### **Things thorns contend for in our hearts:**

Attention- Matt.6:25, 31.

Affection- 1Tim.6:9-10.

Time- Matt.6:32, Ps.127:2.

**“And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.”**

Our hearts must be a good home for the Word of God.

Why is this so?

It is so because without the Word having absolute control in our hearts [where the Word is not sharing our hearts with other things, no matter what they

are], living by the Word will be impossible. Josh.1:8,  
Matt.12:34.

**“And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.”**

My heart is not meant to be empty. Even when a man has met the actual requirements of having a right heart, it will still be an empty heart except I obey the next command: **“And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.”**

Why will I just have a clean but empty heart? Without putting God’s testimony—i.e. God’s Word into my heart, obviously there will be NOTHING in the heart! Matt.12:43-45

To leave the heart clean but empty is to deny Jesus of His rightful place in my life. One of the core determinants of divine presence is this issue of the Word of God visibly present in a man’s heart just as the law was present in the ark. Jn.14:21, 23; Prov.4:23, Mk.7:21-23, Ps.119:11.

**“And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.”**

**“...the testimony which I shall give thee.”**

The Word of God is here referred to as a *testimony* [or witness]. What does it mean that the Word of God is a witness?

i. It is a constantly present witness to my conscience, helping me to discern clearly what is right or wrong. 1Jn.3:19-21, Heb.9:14.

ii. It is there to primarily search the depths of deceitful sin that my heart is capable of. Heb.4:12, Heb.3:12-13.

iii. It is a constant assurer that faith in God is the right thing—especially in the face of trials, temptations or persecution. Rom.10:10, Heb.4:2.

**“...which I shall give thee.”**

This implies it is not a once and for all thing. God will not have me depend on what He said yesterday. As long as it is TODAY, He has something to say. I

must always check to make sure that the Word of God presently in my heart is not stale... Heb.3:7-8, 15; Lev.6:9-13.

# LESSON THREE

“MAKE ME A MERCY SEAT.” Ex.25:17-22

The throne of God  
in the human heart  
[or the supreme  
place in the human  
heart—who sits  
enthroned on the  
will?]

**“And thou shalt make a mercy seat *of* pure gold...”**

**C**learly here, the Master is saying, set up for me, a throne worthy of my majesty in the highest place in your heart. 1Pet.3:15, Lev.10:3, Isa.8:13.

Whereas, to build a sanctuary means presenting our bodies as a fitting dwelling place for Divine Presence and to build an ark implies having the actual type of heart that makes a comfortable throne-room for the Most High, to make a mercy seat means to set up a throne of divine majesty in the highest point of the human heart—the will.

He said, “**And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold...**”

The Lord will not force His way into the heart of any man. He will stand there, knocking without until a man opens to Him and He will equally remain standing until a man yields the throne shared by Mr. Sin and the Flesh to Jesus the real King. Rev.3:20, Gen.6:3.

“**...a mercy seat...**”

Why not a judgment seat or even a communion seat? Why a *mercy seat*? God chose this term because He humbles Himself to look upon what goes on both in the heavens and on earth. Thus, if He will

seat enthroned in the heart of a mere man, it can only be by mercy. Ps.113:4-6, Isa.40:15-18, Ps.50:9-12, Rom.9:16, 18.

God is so transcendent, perfect, holy and majestic that the holiest among us men is clothed in the worst possible filthy rags before Him. We will NEVER be able to measure up by self effort. It has to be that we obtained mercy—not just the first time we came, but every time we come ... Eph.2:4-5, Heb.4:16.

**“...A mercy seat *of* pure gold...”**

The Master is specific on the actual type of material needful for building this throne...it must be made of pure gold. It is not just gold...it must be *pure* gold. In setting up a throne for my God in the throne room of my heart, the gold being used must not be adulterated, diluted, impure, tainted and polluted. It must be pure. Jn.4:23-24, Phil.3:3 AMP.

**“...A mercy seat *of* pure gold...”**

There is a specific material the Master requires that this Mercy Seat [or His throne in me] must be made of...as the testimony is in the ark, so also must the Word of God be the foundation of my heart and life—yet a man must build upon this foundation or upon whatever other false ground he is building upon. Matt.7:24-27, 1Cor.3:11-15 AMP.

God's throne signifies the very place He will sit enthroned in my heart...it must be worthy of all glory, majesty and surpassing greatness. My body as the sanctuary is good, my heart as the throne room is better but my will, the very place the throne must be set up must befit His majesty. Solomon made a throne of ivory and overlaid it with gold but the Lord requires a throne made only out of pure gold. Isa.40:18, Jer.10:10

**“...two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.”**

I cannot overemphasize the need to be faithful to the exact specifications and dimensions of the Lord's



demands of what His mercy seat must look like. If it is not built according to His specified pattern, it is a mere waste of time and a useless work that does not profit heaven. Jn.5:30, Gen.6:22.

**“And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: *even* of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth *their* wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces *shall look* one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.”**

Ex.25:18-20

The Master intends that this throne must be covered... covered in such a way that when you walk in first, what you encounter is a throne covered by the mighty outstretching wings of cherubims on either side...

What is so important with this mercy seat that it has to be covered by cherubims—archangels specifically identified with God’s glory? Heb.9:5

Yet again, why *cover* the mercy seat? Ex.33:18-20 [TLB], 1Tim.6:16 [TLB]

After the Lord demands a sanctuary [our bodies], an ark [our hearts, a throne room] and a mercy seat [His throne at the highest place in our hearts], we cannot just come anytime, anyhow—all by ourselves. The mercy seat must remain covered, up till today. The mercy seat remains covered until we allow Him to come, He who enters confidently within the veil... Lev.10:1-3, Lev.16:1-34.

### **After the building of Mercy Seat, there is a need for the presence of a perfect High Priest**

From Leviticus 16, we see that it is impossible for the best of us to approach God anytime, anywhere and anyhow we like—even within ourselves... the reason for this is that the gulf of sin had separated us from God and even the most holy high priest himself

needs to be forgiven of his own sins first before God can consider the people. Heb.5:1-3.

The Lord Jesus had met the requirement, having shed His own blood for us, once and for all, we can approach the mercy seat within our hearts, knowing fully well that Jesus Christ the Righteous had entered and is sitting in the right hand of God who is enthroned above the cherubim...interceding for us always and waiting for us to draw near...Heb.4:14-16, Heb.6:16-20, Heb.7:25-28, 1Jn. 2:1-2, Heb.8:1-2, Heb.9:12, 24; Heb.10:11-23.

**“And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.”** Ex.25:21

Here, the Lord is saying, enthrone me [by yourself] as your uncontested king in your heart. Jn.12:32, 1Pet.3:15

**“And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon**

**the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” v.22**

**“And there I will meet with thee...”**

When the conditions of verse 21 is met, then will there be a meeting—when I have enthroned the mercy seat upon the ark and when I make sure that the ark always carries within it, the Word of God.

**“...and I will commune with...”**

This means to speak intimately, confidentially and sympathetically with someone. Intimate things are not issues we talk about lightly. One must be very close to hear what is intimate. This is what happens to us when we enthrone the Lord... Ps.25:14.

END

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