

Daniel & Revelation End-time Prophecies Sermon Series
Study #38: The Two Altars
Revelation 6:9 - 11
Bible Sermon Study Notes by Cary Rodgers, pastor

Review

4 Horsemen... (4 seals)

What did John see when Jesus opened the fifth seal?

Revelation 6:9, 10

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

In the fifth seal we see a symbolic representation of the sacrifice of God's people who were killed for the sake of the gospel of Jesus. This same idea was told to Cain after he murdered his brother, Abel, for being faithful and loyal to God's word.

What did God say to Cain concerning the murder of his brother, Abel?

Genesis 4:10

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Abel's blood did not literally cry out from the grave neither are martyrs crying out to God from under an altar. God is painting a symbolic picture that He takes special notice of those who are killed for the sake of living and sharing God's Truth. God is putting all those on notice that He will execute justice on those who kill His faithful.

As a side note, you also see in the symbolic picture of Abel and the martyrs under the altar that God's people DO NOT go straight to heaven after death. The Bible teaches that those who die in Christ are in their grave "sleep" waiting for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Which altar did John see "souls of them that were slain for the word of God" in after the fifth seal was opened in Revelation 6:9 and where is it located? Let's explore this through deep Bible investigation and learn valuable lessons as we learn.

What does the altar represent?

Altar (Greek): thusiastērion [*thoo-see-as-tay'-ree-on*]

From a derivative of G2378; **a place of sacrifice**, that is, an *altar* (specifically or generally, **literally or figuratively**): - altar.

Very IMPORTANT: The altar in Revelation 6:9 is a **place of sacrifice**.

After God used Moses to free God's people from slavery in Egypt, God wanted to re-train them about His plan of salvation in a very illustrative way while they were in the wilderness.

What did God tell Moses to build in the wilderness?

Exodus 25:8, 9

- 8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.
 9 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*.

The earthly sanctuary was a miniature model that reflected the sanctuary in Heaven.**Hebrews 8:1 - 5**

- 1 Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest [Jesus Christ], who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;
 2 **A minister of the sanctuary**, and of the true tabernacle, which the **Lord pitched**, and **not man**.
 3 For every high priest is ordained to **offer gifts and sacrifices**: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.
 4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:
 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou **make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount**.

Psalm 77:13

13 Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?

In the earthly sanctuary in the wilderness God gave us a perfect classroom illustration of salvation of what Jesus has done in the past, what He is doing in the present and what He will do in the future. You not only learn about salvation in the sanctuary but you also learn to have total victory OVER sin!

Before we learn more about the significance of the altar let's review the earthly sanctuary.**Brief Review of the Sanctuary Message**

Gate>Altar of Sacrifice>Laver>Holy Place>Candlestick>Table of Shew Bread>Altar of Incense>Veil>Ark of the Covenant

Altar of Sacrifice known as the Altar of Burnt Offering or Brasen Altar

Justification and Sanctification identified in the sanctuary.**Lesson in the courtyard (represents Jesus ministry on this earth)**

Justification = made blameless. (Teaches us how to go from guilty to NOT guilty and accept the atoning blood of Jesus) - transferring sin to the "victim"

Gate=Jesus (only way to victory)

Spiritual Transaction at Altar of Sacrifice = Jesus payment for death on the cross
 = Laying your sins on the altar

This is where a spiritual transaction takes place between you and God. This is where God illustrates that He sacrificed his ALL through Jesus Christ and the you must sacrifice your ALL, give up harmful sinful practices.

The altar of sacrifice reveals that Christ only had to die once for the sins of the world, but you **MUST** die daily to self and allow God to have control of your life.

Hebrews 9:28

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:31

31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

It is at the altar of sacrifice that you must daily allow God to refine your character. Altar of sacrifice is a place of submission and surrender. It is a covenant of victory between God and us.

What does "sacrifice" practically mean? = To give something of great value and receive something MUCH less in return.

Who started the fire on the Altar of Sacrifice and who was responsible to make sure that fire did not go out?

Leviticus 9:23, 24

23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.

24 And there came a **fire out from before the LORD**, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: *which* when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

Leviticus 6:11, 12

11 And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place.

12 And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; **it shall not be put out**: and the **priest shall burn wood** on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings.

The fire on the Altar of Sacrifice was holy fire because it was started by God Himself. The priest were instructed to never let this Holy fire to go out. They were instructed to NOT only keep this fire going but they were instructed not to use any other fire, except the one started on the altar of sacrifice by God.

Laver = baptism, dying to old self to into newness of life, washed by the blood of the Lamb!

Lesson in the temple (Holy and Most Holy Place) (represents Jesus ministry in heaven):

Sanctification = made holy – total victory over sin. (Teaches us how to live a holy life)

Holy Place

Candlestick = Jesus the light. The oil that supplies the light.

Table of Shewbread = Jesus is the bread of life. The Word. Daily

Altar of Incense = sweet fragrance that went over into the Most holy place daily... (see the meaning in detail later in this study)

Most Holy Place

Ark of the Covenant = Inside Ten Commandments, Aaron rod budded, pot of manna.

On top, the mercy-seat of God with two covering cherubs on each side.

The Most Holy Place is where you have total victory over sin.... BUT you must go through ALL the spiritual phases of the sanctuary in order to have total victory!

When we go back to Revelation 6:9, which altar does John see in vision?

The Altar of sacrifice or the Altar of incense. Let's explore deeper.

Remember: Altar = place of sacrifice. The altar of sacrifice in the courtyard and the altar of incense in the Holy Place are both connected to a **SACRIFICE**. **In other words, the first phase of the sacrifice is at the altar of sacrifice in the courtyard. The second phase of the sacrifice is at the altar of incense in the Holy place.**

How does God describe His acceptance of a sincere offering to God on the altar of sacrifice?

Genesis 8:20, 21

20 And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21 And the LORD **smelled a sweet savour**; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

Leviticus 1:5 – 10, 17

5 And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that *is by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

6 And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces.

7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire:

8 And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that *is* on the fire which *is* upon the altar:

9 But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, *to be* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a **sweet savour** unto the LORD.

10 And if his offering *be* of the flocks, *namely*, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice; he shall bring it a male without blemish.

17 And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, *but* shall not divide *it* asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that *is* upon the fire: it *is* a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a **sweet savour** unto the LORD.

Sweet (Greek): n̄ychôach (*nee-kho'-akh, nee-kho'-akh*) - From [H5117](#); properly **restful**, that is, **pleasant**; abstractly **delight**: - sweet (odour).

Savour (Greek): rêyach (*ray'-akh*) - From [H7306](#); **odor** (as if *blown*): - savour, **scent**, **smell**.

A proper and sincere sacrifice on the "ALTAR" is a sweet (restful and pleasant) smell to God. It is delightful.

What is the altar of incense?**Exodus 30:1, 6-9**

1 And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: *of shittim wood* shalt thou make it.

6 And thou shalt put it before the vail that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

7 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.

9 Ye shall offer **no strange incense** thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

Where did the coals from the altar of incense come from (VERY IMPORTANT)?**Leviticus 16:12, 13**

12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of **fire from off the altar before the LORD (Lev. 9:24 – altar of Sacrifice)**, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the vail:

13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not:

Here is the link between the altar of sacrifice and the altar of incense. The coals from the altar of sacrifice are used on the altar of incense to burn the sweet smelling incense in the HOLY Place. Remember the fire at the altar of sacrifice was started by God Himself.

When a priest offered a sin sacrifice for himself what was he instructed to do with the blood?**Leviticus 4:3-7**

3 If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.

4 And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.

5 And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation:

6 And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the vail of the sanctuary.

7 And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Blood and the FIRE – link to the altar**The Coals and Blood**

The coals off the altar is a memorial of His power and sacrifice. Also the coals are memorial of where we lay our sins as an offering on the altar of sacrifice. The coals are a consistent reminder of what Jesus did for us at the cross, He took away our sins.

What does the altar of incense represent and what is the main lesson that Jesus is teaching us at the altar of incense?

Psalm 141:2

2 Let my **prayer** be set forth before thee as **incense**; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Revelation 8:3, 4

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the **prayers of the saints**, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

Prayer is deeper than just our silent or audible request, or thanksgiving to God. In the Greek, prayer is also referred to as worship. Who you worship will determine how you worship. You are to worship the true God of Heaven as revealed by your strict obedience to Him. **The highest form of prayer, worship and praise is obedience to God's Word!**

Hebrews 13:15, 16

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.

16 But to **do good** and to communicate **forget not**: for **with such sacrifices God is well pleased**.

Our sacrifices are LIVING not dead!

Romans 12:1, 2

1 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.

2 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.

The smoke and fragrance represents the life and prayers of the saints.

Remember after the first phase at the altar of sacrifice you make commitment to leave worldliness and the second phase of the sacrifice is to enter into the holy place and live a holy life. Your prayers and life at the altar of incense is a sweet smell before God!

Even if we claim the sacrifice of Jesus, but don't go into the holy place to learn and live a holy life and hold on to worldliness and sin how does God see and smell our lives? In other words, How does a "sacrifice with just the ceremony and no obedience smell to God?

Proverbs 15:8

8 The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

Proverbs 28:9

9 He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

Isaiah 1:10 - 15

10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

11 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is iniquity*, even the solemn meeting.

14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear *them*.

15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye **make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.**

Psalm 66:18

18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*:

Isaiah 3:17 - 24

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of *their* tinkling ornaments *about their feet*, and *their* cauls, and *their* round tires like the moon,

19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

21 The rings, and nose jewels,

22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

24 And it shall come to pass, *that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink*; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; *and burning* instead of beauty.

God does not accept a sacrifice in which sin and worldliness is NOT forsaken. Such a sacrifice stinks to God and is an abomination to Him. The same is true for those who claim to keep the seventh-day sabbath, but break the other commandments of God.

Going back to Revelation 6:9, 10 - Which altar did John see the “the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held?”

Answer: Altar of Incense.

This is confirmed by John’s first and second vision.

Where does John see Jesus in the first vision? In the holy place in Heaven

Where does the second vision start in heaven? In the Most holy place where the doors are wide open! John sees the martyrs in vision under the altar of incense that is in the holy place!

Those who have been died for that sake of truth were in the second phase of their sacrifice. They forsook the world and lived holy lives through Jesus Christ. Their lives are a smell sweet unto God.

Philippians 4:18

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus [soldier for Christ] the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a **sweet smell**, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.

Ephesians 5:1, 2

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a **sweet smelling savour**.

Those who died for Christ, their lives were sweet smelling unto God. Their lives and prayers were the incense represented on the altar of incense.

WARNING for those at the altar of incense: If you live a holy life through Christ according to the Word of God, what will happen to you?

2 Timothy 3:12

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Matthew 5:11

11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Mark 13:9

9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

Many who are persecuted will lose their life for the sake of the Everlasting Gospel Truth! Those who were killed were killed because they reflected the life of Jesus.

As John was looking at the scene of the saints under the altar what question did he hear them ask Jesus?

Revelation 6:10 (read again)

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, **How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?**

Justice will be served for ALL those who participate in the persecution and murder of the true faithful people of God.

Revelation 13:10

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

When will Jesus avenge the blood of all those who were killed for the cause of Christ at the end of time during the mark of the beast crisis?

During the seven last plagues and the total destruction of Babylon.

Revelation 16:5, 6

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6 **For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.**

Revelation 18:20, 21

20 Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

What was Jesus' response to the saints question under the altar?

Revelation 6:11

11 And **white robes** were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should **rest yet for a little season**, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

They were give white robes of righteousness. Jesus told them to rest, because there will be another group of saints that will be killed right before Jesus comes again.

Two Groups

In the fifth seals reveals two groups of martyrs that come to view. The first group are those who died since the first martyr in Genesis through the time of the apostles, through the time of the Papal Empire to the present. Starting from Abel who was killed for giving a perfect sacrifice. To Stephen who was stoned for giving the truth straight. To Peter who was crucified upside down; to Isaiah who was sawn in half; to the Waldensian who were thrown over cliffs, beaten, and burned; to the Reformers such as John Huss, his friend Jerome, Tyndale, and many others who were burned at the stake. All these died in faith living the holy life of Jesus.

The second group of martyrs are those who will be killed now and in the near future.

Why will this second group be killed?

Revelation 13:7, 8, 15

7 And it (beast=Papal Rome) was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Revelation 20:4

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

They were beheaded or killed for 3 reasons: First, for being a witness for Jesus. Second, for the Word of God. And third, for not worshiping the beast nor his image, and not having the mark of the beast.

Mark of the Beast in on our heels! Are you ready?

Why we need “blue laws,” the religious tradition that sanctifies life outside of work

Religious “blue laws” achieve many of the same goals as progressive labor unions.

By [Lyman Stone](#) Oct 2, 2018, VOX - <https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2018/10/2/17925828/what-were-blue-laws-labor-unions>

“American life is increasingly market-driven. Religious bodies have traditionally provided an antidote.”

“But unions are not the only social institution that once sought to carve out time for Americans away from work. Religious bodies have, since time immemorial, claimed certain days and times for themselves, set apart for worship, prayer, or rest. The Jewish Sabbath is perhaps the most notable example of this practice, but virtually all religions have some sense of times that are set apart, during which many forms of labor or

commerce are taboo. These restrictions are known as “blue laws,” and in today’s climate of economic anxiety, religious conservatives and economic progressives should make common cause to restore them.”

“While these practices have their origins in various kinds of religious convictions, they are ultimately part of what economic historians would call a ‘moral economy,’ or an economic system where the moral or ethical norms of a society are sufficiently strong that, with or without the intervention of the state, certain values are prioritized above the market itself.”

“.. [the Supreme Court has repeatedly, and fairly recently, ruled](#) that blue laws *are* constitutional: The state can prohibit commercial activities on certain days, even if the days are selected for apparently religious reasons. The reasoning is that the state may have an interest in people spending social time away from work or commerce **in a coordinated way**, and it is reasonable for the **state to accommodate existing social forms, such as religion.**”

“**While this may seem like a back door to the establishment of religion, it’s actually a distinctively progressive view of how the law functions.** Implicitly, by approving blue laws, the Supreme Court is admitting the view that the state may implement very specific, apparently arbitrary rules to achieve non-economic, general well-being-related goals like ‘leisure time for workers.’”

“In other words, blue laws are also a way that the state enshrines a special time for citizens to exercise rights to **assembly, religious and secular.** Assembly requires that people have time off together, **so it doesn’t work to simply mandate that businesses close for any random 24-hour period, because that doesn’t ensure that people have time off together.** The state cannot force you to go to church or a community meeting or spend time with loved ones, but it can force your employer to close up shop, raising the odds that you’ll invest in social and civic capital instead of paid labor.”

Listen, the enforcement of Papal Rome Sunday sabbath is coming! Are you prepared for the fight? Are you prepared to give the loud cry message before judges, government committees, and persecution?

Remember: **Sacrifice is not complete without going to the altar of incense.** Those seen under the altar who died for the cause of Christ experienced true holiness. They daily went through both phases of sacrifice at the altar of sacrifice (separated from worldliness) and the altar of incense (lived holy lives). They were not fans of the Roman gladiators and games. They skipped out on the Greek plays and tragedies. They separated themselves from ALL forms of paganism. They burned their curios arts of the past. They were not afraid to dress simple. They dropped the outward ornamentation or jewelry of the world and chose to adorn themselves with the character of Christ. They stop listening to the pagan music of rebellion. Their lives and prayers reflected the sweet savour unto God.

In the last days when the mark of the beast is enforced – the enforcement of Sunday worship, those who have totally separated themselves from the world will be persecuted, some will be martyred. In these last days you cannot be a fan of Dancing with the Stars and ALL Hollywood has to offer and be a martyr too. You can't get all getty about the NBA, PGA, NFL, and be a martyr too. You have to have total separation!