

INHERITING THE NATIONS SERIES

SPIRITUAL MEMORIALS

I once read in the newspapers about an event where a pagan priest blessed the Prime Minister of a neighboring country. It looks like a small insignificant event. For him it may have been just a social, political and cultural thing. But those of us who know the word know that there is warfare going on. There is a kingdom of light wrestling against the kingdom of darkness. When I read it I was troubled in my spirit. I knew that even though it seems to be socially and politically correct and culturally acceptable, as the head of that country, he was indirectly, unknowingly and ignorantly yielding the authority of that country to the influence of paganism and to demons.

Recently another neighboring country is opening an entire city just for gays. They want to develop the entire city for gays. I tell you, the gays in the bible brought fire and brimstones from God. Some of us are so dull in our spirits. We have grown so tolerant that news of this nature doesn't shock or revolt us. I am not saying you react and become physically abusive or naturally revolutionary. Our warfare is not in the natural realm. We do not advocate civil disobedience at all. We are law-abiding people who believe in peace. But what is sad is that among Christians we are losing our sensitivity where the things that God hate we don't hate, let alone the things that God love we don't love. There is something that God hates. Homosexuality is one of them. It's only a matter of time before judgment starts

happening. Now there is coming as last day's judgment of this earth. But before that depending on the amount of sin that is what I call permissible judgment based on the sowing and reaping principle of man. But there are things happening that are not pleasing to Almighty God.

That country whose prime minister was blessed by a pagan priest is also bringing in one of the tallest idols in Asia. If we don't feel something in our spirit to do something, we are backsliding. Let me tell you there is something happening that you cannot continue your life the way it is. Try to live your life under Saddam Hussein in the natural. Try to imagine that in the spiritual when we Christians take these things lightly there is a spirit that is casting its shadow over you. It will affect your prayers more. It will affect your zeal for God more. It will affect your Christian life more. If the spiritual principality and prince of darkness cast its shadow over the area where you live in, it's going to take more prayer to remain a normal Christian. It's going to take more not to get sleepy as a Christian. Which is why Christians had to wake up to do something. I hope the Christians in that country do something.

Do you know what the Christians in Penang, Malaysia did when the pagans tried to build a very large idol? They went there to pray. And that is something, which we are going to talk about today in our spiritual warfare. We need to set up spiritual altars that have a physical manifestation. We know that there are some natural things that are set up that have an invisible influence over an entire place. For example when you go to Tulsa, Oklahoma in the United States, the moment you go into the place where Oral Roberts and a lot of ministries have their headquarters and beautiful buildings and monuments for God, you will sense a different atmosphere. Something good seems to hang over the place. Of all the cities I traveled in New Zealand one of the most open in the spirit was a city called Tauranga. The reason the area was open is because there is a bible school there. And they have been praying and doing faithful work to the Lord and there is something different in the atmosphere.

Now there is an extreme as we look at this theologically. There is an extreme that Christianity move into at one point where all Christians were interested in physical buildings. A lot of money was wasted on buildings. So Christianity went one sided

by emphasizing on the physical but hardly on the spiritual. They even lost the word of God. Martin Luther had to come in the reformation to restore the word of God again. Nobody was reading the bible but there were still churches there physically. There is a revival in our modern times where we realize that the church is not just the building but also the people. We the people are the church. But there is a tendency to move to the other extreme where we think that buildings and monuments for God are not important. That will be swinging a pendulum from that extreme to this extreme. If you travel around Malaysia, in many places you see a mosque. The mosques have an effect on the spiritual atmosphere through the broadcasting of their prayers in the air. Of course we know that the building itself alone will not achieve much. But I want to point to the balance. On one extreme is wastage on physical buildings. On the other extreme is where we don't recognize that when we do it right in God when we build something in God and it is an expression of our faith in God that it stands as a spiritual heritage and a spiritual point of reference for generations to come. It is an invisible influence for generations to come. We need to balance it and let the pendulum come to the center to realize that either extreme is wrong.

The other extreme is when we don't believe in building physical buildings; we don't believe that God could place His name in a place. We are missing something. It is just like many other areas of church life where the church has moved to the extreme. Like the Lord's Supper; for hundred of years ago Christians thought that Lord's Supper can save them. If they don't eat the Lord's Supper they feel that they are not going to heaven. Then the Protestants swung it to the other extreme where the Lord's Supper is not important anymore; it has become so unimportant that they eat it once a month or once in 3 months. It's just a ceremony. It's just a symbolic act. Then we loose the power of the act of the Lord's Supper. There is some blessing in partaking in the Lord's Supper more often and we have missed that blessing. As we swing the pendulum back to center point we will recognize that the Lord's Supper will have nothing to do with our salvation. But it has a lot to do with our covenant relationship with God that we live by faith. And there is a blessing in the Lord's Supper that the more often you do it the greater the blessing you receive.

It is the same like baptism in water. The pendulum swings to the extreme. On one side people think that it can save them. On the other side people think I am going

to heaven whether I have it or not makes no difference to my Christian life; it's only a symbol. There is a blessing when you follow the Lord's commandment in water baptism. Lets swing it to the balance point of view.

Let us see the life of Abraham that God's instruction to him to build an altar was explicit. Gen. 12:7 *Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.* You may say to Abraham, "Abraham, you are a man of faith. Why do you need to build an altar?" Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. If you believe it, you confess it, you visualize it, and you don't need something outside. Spiritual monuments that are physically expressed have a powerful impact and carry what I call an anointing that continues to affect the surrounding area and everyone who comes into contact with it. You may ask in the past why do a lot of Christian buildings and big cathedrals don't seem to have much impact. The reason is the motive for building it: whether it was done out of man's glory or it was done as an expression of faith. When something is an expression of faith it carries an anointing.

Faith sees, faith receives, faith speaks but faith also acts. And when faith acts there are physical expressions. Why do you think Abraham built the altar? The moment God said, "I give you this land" Abraham put his mark on it. He could walk up and down the place and put his footprint in the sand of the desert. That footprint will last for a certain time. But when you build an altar it lasts longer. He could travel where he wants and come back 10 years later and find that it is still there. The altar is a mark, an expression and a monument to the faith that he believes in God when He said, "I give you this land." He immediately built an altar to the Lord. Now the Canaanites were still in the land in Genesis 12: 6. He couldn't claim them as his when somebody else was still in the land. But he put his mark there by building an altar.

In Gen.12: 8 *Thence he removed to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he build an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.* He builds an altar to the Lord something that last longer than his footprint there, a spiritual monument with as physical expression. He was not going to be there forever. What's the point of building an altar that you are not

going to worship for sometime? It was an expression of his faith in God.

In chapter 13 Abraham had some difficult times. This is where it's important. You read later in chapter 12 there were some difficult times. Famine came, some backsliding in Egypt. God preserved his life, God preserved his wife, and God even blessed him and prospered him. When he came out in Gen. 13:3 do you know where he was heading for? Gen. 13:3 *And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, to the place where he had made an altar at the first.* Let me try to make a physical illustration to show the impact. Some of you may own a business. You started with rented property. God prospered you and for the first time you bought a piece of property. Then you prospered even more and you sold that property to buy your own land and put up your own building. You moved into that building and expanded your business. God prospered you. Three years down the road you hit a rough patch. But even though you hit a rough patch, yet every time you walked into that building that God helped you to build, your faith rises up. And every time you are down God reminded you to take a look around and see His goodness to you. That can happen in the physical realm.

What about the spiritual realm? Abraham has not walked 100% with God correctly. Finally he got out of the place where God didn't want him to be. And the first place he went to was the altar. Now as he approaches the altar I could sense all those feelings he had for God coming back. Something like what you have when you go back to your places of prayer. When I am in Penang I seek to go back to the place where I used to pray at the beach. When I looked at the spot where I used to cry out to God for a ministry, I could cry because I remember that He has been faithful. It reminds you of spiritual exploits and it stirs the fire of your faith afresh. Abraham had a rough time. He prospered physically but he had a rough time just like some people who prospered physically but they really had it rough emotionally and spiritually, which is what Abraham had. And as he approaches the altar between Bethel and Ai I wonder whether there were tears in his eyes when he recalls the covenant that God had with him. He remembers a spiritual monument just by looking at a physical altar. Gen.13: 17-18 *Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you. So Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron; and there he built an altar to the Lord.* Look at what he did. He built an altar there to the Lord. It's powerful when you read about all

these altars that Abraham built all over the land of Canaan. 400 hundred over years passed by before Abraham descendants came and took possession of the land. Maybe after 400 years the altars may not be what it was when Abraham put it together. But that was a spiritual landmark that had a physical expression that was important to the lands of Canaan being claimed by Abraham. You go to any place that succeeds in building a great church building, you will find that the atmosphere of the city is different.

One of the saddest times in Singapore church history is when one of the largest churches had a difficult time in getting their own building. In the end they lost the building that they were leasing. They tried to buy it over. They could not. If Calvary church had succeeded in building the largest church in Singapore today there would be a different atmosphere. That is why when any church begins a building program, Satan attacks very hard because he doesn't want a physical expression of the spiritual faith. Once it is built it lasts. The act of faith lasts. Two generations down the line you can come up and look and say thank God that 2 generations ago men of faith had done it. Oral Roberts can go home to be with the Lord and maybe in 2010 A.D. a young man or a young woman who is new as an evangelist or prophet who has never heard of him would walk among these faith-inspired buildings in Tulsa, Oklahoma and would know that a man of faith had built all these buildings. Don't you think it inspire more faith. Faith inspires faith. That is why we must not under estimate the importance of getting a new building or moving into a new building or building something for God. Don't fall to one extreme where there is sheer wastage and extravagance with no proper planning. Don't go to the other extreme where you say well just a wooden shack hut over us will do. The next freak storm that comes could easily tear off the roof and perhaps leave your faith shattered too.

But understand that when something is in line with God, when the motives are right, when God ordains it and it succeeds in being birthed into its physical manifestation, there is something spiritual that affects the atmosphere of that very city. Do you know the enemy does it the same way? He just copy from the bible. Let me give some illustration. Some families are under oppression because they go out may be to Indonesia or to Thailand and bring home a demonic object. Their scientific mind is not renewed by God's word. They think all these are just arts and cultural things. Let me tell you arts can be immoral. And they take those objects

and bring it into their homes and place it on a special shelf. That very day a demon has taken authority in their house. A foothold has taken place in their house. And the very next day the demon power will began to cause them not to like to read the bible. They will feel sleepy when they try to read the bible. And suddenly they don't feel so much zeal for God. And they wonder why. For those who are weaker a crisis happens and the demons there start oppressing one of the little ones. How did those demons come in? They came in through an object or a physical monument. Think about it in the national level.

I tell that day when the huge Kwan Yin statue lands in Singapore, the house of Singapore will feel different. It's just like a house taking in an idol. God said in His words don't you ever take any of those things into your house. Now these things were happening on the negative side. How come we don't see the fact that the positive can happen also? How is it that we don't realize if any Christians succeeded in building something as a monument to God is going to have a positive effect? And we have Christians who swing to this realm of the pendulum who say they have no need for buildings. The positive and the negative work either way. One of the things that Christians need to do when they see altars that belong to the enemy is to challenge those altars spiritually. Don't go there with your jackhammer. Use spiritual methods. The statue of Kwan Yin will crack and one day a lightning comes from heaven and strikes the statue. And the insurance company will say that it was an act of God. Those spiritual authorities that come from the demonic realm need to be challenged.

And the way we challenge them is the same like the way we would challenge a demonic influence in a house. Suppose you live in a house that doesn't belong to you, and you are renting a room. The idol belongs to somebody in the house. You cannot just take it away. It's not yours. Once in a while you go near it with anointed oil and say, "In Jesus' Name I take authority over you." It is important that we challenge these invisible influences over the people you are trying to preach the gospel to. It would have been a different thing if the Christians have risen up in that neighboring country where the Prime Minister was blessed by a pagan priest and have a prayer breakfast and pray for him. It would straight away have an influence. Do you know what is happening in Australia and New Zealand? In Australia one of our own elders is now involved with the parliamentary prayer meeting. In the Australian parliament there is a place that is reserved for prayer. Let

me tell you if he starts doing that, this godly influence will filter down to all of Australia.

When we are experiencing economic revival and prosperity, we may forget God. Some Asian Christians even turn to Confucianism and become proud of cultural things that sometime are demonic. As usual people fall sometimes when they fail. But many fall after they succeed. You better pray that your nation in Asia do not become proud like Nebuchadnezzar and fail to acknowledge the hand of God in blessings. It's a dangerous position to be in. When those huge idols began to come into that neighboring country something would begin to affect some people who don't know the Lord. The economy will be affected. When they are rich and powerful they forget the true Jesus. That is the same thing that happened to the Israelites in the bible. It can happen to any nation that forgets God. Spiritual monuments are important.

Turn to the book of Ex. 24:4 *And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.* Now this was before he built the tabernacle. Every time you have a spiritual experience, a physical memento helps to remind you. Now of course to people who are very traditional, some times the memento can become an object of worship then it becomes wrong. Even the bronze serpent in Moses' time became an object of worship in Hezekiah's time so that it has to be destroyed. A person who has no spiritual life depends only on physical manifestation. But people who have spiritual life understand their place. And so Moses built a memento and he put twelve pillars. These are all symbolic so that every time they looked at it they remember that the Lord had met with them on that mountain. And at the foot of that same mountain Moses built an altar and put twelve pillars. And on that day they cut a covenant with God. A physical memento is like a seal. It is just like you believe that God will give you something. But unless you act it out you haven't really believe. Your belief is still developing. If you believe that God will give you something, there will be actions that correspond to your faith. It is faith with corresponding action. If the actions are not there then your faith has not developed yet. Some times people believe one way but their action goes the opposite way. And the action that is going the opposite way in fear will be what they receive because that is the true condition of their heart.

Turn to Josh. 4:5-7 *And Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, that this may be a sign among you, when your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' Notice a physical memento or monument becomes a sign to people of something greater. Verse 7 Then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord when it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.* Notice the word *a memorial* which is a memento, and a sign. Those stones were special. They were not ordinary stones. When they crossed the Jordan they took the stones right from the bottom of the Jordan. Stones that have been eroded smooth. They took it up and they formed a pillar of 12 stones. It's a spiritual landmark, a sign to others, and a memorial for the generations to come. It is something when you look at it physically it inspires faith. Supposing that when Moses crossed the Red Sea and he took out something from the Red Sea. Supposing it is preserved up to the twentieth century and brought in front of you. What effect does it have? You might exclaim, "He has done it, He can do it again." Why are hundreds of Christians looking for the ark that is lost? Supposing that the ark of Noah has been found and opened for tourism. And you go there and touch the ark of Noah. Do you know it is going to be special? Because out of that boat came all of mankind and you touched the original ark where mankind came from. It is going to be quite an experience. And those who don't believe in God when they look at it and touch it, it is going to do something. That is why the devil also doesn't want people to find the ark. Supposing that they found the ark and it is there, it does something to your inside.

Long ago when Malaysia was just getting independence and air planes were not that many, the moment one airplane comes by every one rush out to see. Can you imagine if an airplane were to be transported in time to the 18th or 19th century. Everybody will want to touch that airplane. It's something that inspires you. If today you want to do something in God. If you are in the ministry and you want to plant a great big church, go and visit another big one. When you do that it will inspire you. You see faith builds faith. If you are a businessman and you want to build a huge big enterprise to bring the wealth of the world into the kingdom of God, go and visit some of those huge big enterprises and let that inspire your faith.

There is a difference between spiritual monuments and physical monuments. The physical monuments that are spiritual not only inspire faith, not only are they signs and memorials of faith; they carry an anointing and an atmosphere that prevents the enemy from coming in. I am sure some of those great cathedrals that were built centuries ago were built out of faith in God. And the devil knows how much it can affect people. And sometimes when you go to a clean church or a great cathedral, you feel the presence of God. It inspires the presence of God. Why after 400 years it still carries that. You know how the devil defiles it. He puts his idols inside one by one slowly until the anointing and presence of God is desecrated by the presence of abominable objects. Today you go to some of those beautiful cathedrals which are full of idols you don't feel the presence of God any more. You feel oppressed because the devil knows the same tactic. Why is it that the enemy understands this and at every important physical avenue, the enemy puts an idol. Sometimes you go all the way to the highest place in the city, you will find there is an idol waiting.

In Singapore you go to the river mouth. They have changed the lion to something fiercer. It's the physical expression of the bondage that is coming upon the people. We need to challenge these things in the spiritual realm. I used to go for a walk just two blocks to the field. On the way there I saw this mango tree growing and I see this little altar there. As I walk by I saw a few joss sticks there. As the days went by more and more joss sticks and bigger ones were placed there. One day I took a good look at it and said, "In Jesus' Name" while kicking it into the drain. I didn't want the area where I am living to have an oppressive atmosphere. It's important for us to understand how we must take authority. In the area where we live now you will find a very spiritual atmosphere. But when we first moved in there was a big idol house that needed 4 people to carry. The construction workers put it there. And they neglected to remove it away after completing the construction. The people who moved into the area carried on worshipping the idol. I know that there is no point trying to get people to remove the idol house in a legal way. The setting up of that idol house was illegal any way. When we come to this kind of thing every one is touchy. On the day of moving that idol house we hired 4 strong men. And I told them to look as official as they could. They took the idol house to the rubbish dump. The whole atmosphere over that housing area is now different. We wanted a clean atmosphere. Now if it is something that has been there legally you can't do all that. But if somebody tries to do something illegal I as a citizen has a right to challenge the illegality. The land across the road facing my house is public land. My neighbor can put any idol they want in their house. But if they put one right in

front opposite my house on a public road, I am going to challenge that. It's important for us to take and stake our claim and our authority just like Joshua took the memorial stones and setting them up there in that very place.

I remember long ago we were called to a house of one of our members. Opposite his house was a huge mango tree. And somebody had put some idols in that place. We knew it was illegal. We just went and took them off and we painted a nice cross there. You can put an idol there I can also put a cross there. So that was the end of it.

When I was in the seminary in my second year, a seminarian's father passed away. He accepted Christ before he passed away. The family still had a Buddhist funeral since many of them had not accepted Christ yet. When we were there they called in a Buddhist monk to chant the Buddhist mantras. While he was chanting the seminarians started a prayer meeting somewhere else. Something strange took place. When there was a direct conflict in the spiritual realm, something happened to the monk. Then something happened to the members of the family. Two of the sisters accepted Christ that night. They felt the spiritual warfare. So some people who were present said there were two forces fighting that night. They had to send the Buddhist monk away quickly because they said the two forces, Christian and Buddhist, cannot be together. Spiritual warfare was taking place that night.

It's important for us to stake our authority. Which is why we need to go to those places where the enemy has staked his monument. For the enemy looks at a country like a house and tries to put idols here and there to create an atmosphere around. You go to any house that has an idol and you will feel different. If you are a strong Christian it doesn't affect you. Now if you go to the modern supermarkets and big shopping complexes which do not have any idols, they are clean in the spiritual atmosphere. But the moment they start putting idols there you will find that it is different. I have entered a shop that sells these idols. The moments you walk into that section the atmosphere is different. Look at a nation like a house. Just like God says the house of Israel, we can also say the house of Singapore, the house of Malaysia. Look at all these countries as a house. And the enemy is putting his monuments to create an atmosphere to make people fall easier, to make people less loving to God. But if within a country churches begin to rise up and put their

spiritual monuments and landmark and begin to challenge the things of the enemy and surround the nations like altars that Abraham built, it's going to have a positive influence over the people.

In the book of Kings when a new king is installed, do you know what the king has to do? He has to destroy all the idols that were allowed by the previous king. If the previous king has been a compromiser who allowed idols in the high places, the new king has to remove all the idols in the high places. So Satan knows how important a monument is. And one of the greatest monument that every existed on the planet earth was the tabernacle of Moses and temple of Solomon. Before your physical body can be afflicted your spiritual and soul must be first afflicted. If the devil cannot get your soul he cannot get your body. Before the devil can destroy that physical monument he had to destroy that spiritual presence.

In the book of Ezekiel you notice by the time of Ezekiel the idols has crept right into the temple. Right within the temple areas the idols has crept in and it was causing a national backsliding. Ezek. 8:5-11 *Then he said to me, "Son of man, lift up your eyes now in the direction of the north." So I lifted my eyes toward the north, and behold, north of the altar gate, in the entrance, was this image of jealousy. And he said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel are committing here to drive me far from my sanctuary? But you will see still greater abominations."* And he brought me to the door of the court, and when I looked, behold, there was a hole in the wall. Then said he to me, *"Son of man, dig in the wall".* And when I dug in the wall, lo there was a door. Then he said to me, *"Go in, and see the vile abominations that they are committing here."* So I went in and saw; and there, portrayed upon the wall round about, were all kinds of creeping things, and loathsome beasts, and all idols of the house of Israel. And before them stood seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them. Each had his censer in his hand, and the smoke of the cloud of incense went up. Here is a question that I pose to you. Was it the idols coming in first that caused the whole nation of Israel to backslide? Or was it Israel who backslides first and then they put the idols in? The answer to that question is important. Now most of us think when someone had backslide then they put an idol there. Of course when you have backslidden you will add more idols. Let me give you an important message that you may never have heard before. The idols came first followed by the backsliding. After they backslidden they added more.

Remember the greatest point was in Solomon's time. All Israel was still walking with God. But one man began to back slide, the king. And king Solomon built idols for his foreign wives. He didn't really worship the idols. He did it as a social thing. I Kg. 11:1 *Now King Solomon loved many foreign women; the daughter of Pharaoh, and Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian and Hittite women.* Verse 4-8 *For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not wholly follow the Lord, as David his father had done. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. And so he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.* Now let me see the time chronically the way it happened. First when Solomon married all these foreign wives they were not converted. They remain idolaters. Solomon may have even permitted them to continue. He didn't stop them. Now Israel was still following after God. The people still don't know what was going on. At first those things were there for social reasons and Solomon didn't fall yet. But slowly when he was old he himself started worshipping and the whole nation was slowly going down hill without knowing it. The idols came first. The idols came through social and cultural reason and then the fall began. People began to worship them. And after they started worshipping he added more and more. And people began to turn away from the Lord by the thousands. By the time Rehoboam inherited the kingdom it was already half backslidden.

Be careful what you take into your home. It could be a book. It could be a tape. I was surprised one day as I look through the videotapes to see a videotape on Buddhism. First thing I did was to ask what was it doing in my office. The people who brought it didn't know they were creating a spiritual atmosphere. They said that it was just for study. When did the bible say you have to study Buddhism to evangelize the world? It is because we don't know hear God. It is because we don't know how to hear the Holy Spirit. It is because we don't know the word of God that we think that we have to reach the world through contemporary reasoning. All you have to do is become lazy. After being lazy you become sinful. The enemy creeps in through many forms. You must be on your guard. We are not fearful of these things. But we need to know where the line is drawn.

The moment Israel is divided into two Jeroboam took the other half. We are told in verse 28. *So the king took counsel, and make two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who bought you out of the land of Egypt.* Do you know that he did that for a political reason? Because he is now over 10 tribes the Northern kingdom, he is afraid that if the people kept going to Jerusalem which all Jews must go there to worship, the people politically will turn away from him. Jeroboam received his kingdom from the Lord. He should have trusted that the Lord who gave would not take it from him as long as he follows after God. If God gave you something don't try to keep by your own method. The way you keep something should be based on the same principles you received it from God.

Some people pray so hard to get something from God. Then when God blessed them, they protect their blessings in a very natural way and they loose it. Or maybe God blessed you with grace and favor with people. And slowly you are promoted higher and higher until you are promoted very high. Whether it is a secular job or a political position or a church position. Then you forgot one thing: it was God who gave you the position. You don't have to protect your position. You never got it by yourself. What you get by yourself, you have to protect yourself. But what you get from God, God protects you. But what happens is sometimes people reached those position and they try to do things to protect themselves. They are trying to keep in natural ways what God gave them by spiritual means. And they become a mere natural human being. If God gave it, if anybody wants to take and God sees it fit, let it be so. But if God wants you to have it nobody else can take it. Whoever tries is in danger of facing God's dealings. You don't even have to protect that position. I find many Christian leaders trying to protect their position. Instead of remaining with an open heart for God and just doing what God wants you to do, sometimes to protect their position they loose their zeal for God. They loose the ability to count it all lost and pressed on. They lost their bravery to do the greater things for God. It's important that we don't loose these things. We need to follow hard after God.

And so we find here that it is the idols that came in first. And then the 10 tribes started backsliding. And of course when they backslide they added more idols. Later on when they were already having too many idols and reached their worst

point in their life, came king Ahab. What was the first thing king Ahab did with his wife Jezebel? Built an altar for Baal. See the altars came first before the massive backsliding come. Remember it can be for social reason, cultural reason, whatever reason that you are compromising on. If idolatry comes in or things that give ground to the enemy comes into life, it will begin to destroy and create an atmosphere for more destruction.

Spiritual monuments are important to us. What is your spiritual monument? What are the things in your life? The Israelites at one time forgot to keep the Sabbath. You know what Moses did. He started introducing the wearing of scriptures. He said make tassels on your robes so that you will remember to keep the Sabbath. God introduces more and more physical monuments for them to remember Him. If for some of you your spiritual high point is the Friday overnight prayers or the Saturday afternoon intercession and if these are your only source strength, all you have to do is miss church once on Sunday. And that begins your downward slide. The first thing the devil gets you to do wrong is to compromise for social, cultural or work reason. Coming to church to worship and being together is a part of holding you up. You don't realize how much you have been helping up until it is not there. Then you began to realize one physical monument has been blocked out. Slowly you begin to backslide. You begin to loose your love and zeal for God. Before long you will be somewhere in the world and if you go too far it is very hard to get back to the same position. Sometimes some people go so far and done things that they could never undo again.

I was talking one minister some time back. He was without a church for a long time. I said look whether you are in the ministry or not is a different question. But you must still go to a fellowship and a church. If you don't get into the right track, if you forsake the assembling of believers, the rest of your life will be affected. There is something there that is happening in your life. It could be the reading of the bible.

Today as we go through prayer, we would like you to seek out spiritual experiences that you already have had. And as we pray, if you have an authority in your office, I ask you this question. What have you put in your office that reminds you of God? Sometimes people forget God. Do you have any objects that remind you of God or something symbolic, something memorable of your spiritual victory? Maybe you

have fasted 40 days and 40 nights on Cameron Highlands and it was a spiritual breakthrough for you. Well take a big junk of rock from Cameron Highlands. Paint it right there 40 days fasting. Put the dates down. Put that rock in your office. I can assure that every time you look at it you can never step backwards from there. You will always step forward. Or if you are in the ministry, what are the landmarks that you have built? I still have one stone, which I had in the 1980s. It's important that you have some of these reminders; maybe it is a scriptural verse. For me I have a meditation file dated 1981. And my writing was different compared to now. But it is there in my old handwriting. It's like my memento. What is your spiritual landmark? Like Jacob you have a ladder experience to the throne room. Perhaps God has asked you to do or take a step out physically in some way. Don't underestimate the physical expression. When the expressions of your faith and your walk with God are very powerful, they will affect other lives.