

# Tearing Down the Altar of Baal

by David Wilkerson

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*God wants His people to tear down the altar of Baal and cut down the grove, symbolizing the need to destroy the idol of unbelief and doubt that hinders their faith in His faithfulness.*

**Duration:** 41:47

**Scripture:** Judges 6:25

**Topics:** "Idolatry", "Faithfulness"

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## Description

This sermon focuses on the story of Gideon in Judges 6, highlighting the cycle of disobedience, oppression, and crying out to God that the Israelites faced due to idolatry and unbelief. It emphasizes the need to tear down the altar of Baal, symbolizing the spirit of unbelief and doubt that hinders God's people from fully trusting in His faithfulness and provision. The message encourages believers to rely on God's presence and power, to reject the lies of the enemy, and to step into victory through faith and obedience.

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## Transcript

I want you to turn to Judges, the sixth chapter, if you will please, the sixth chapter of Judges. Tearing down the altar of Baal. Tearing down the altar of Baal.

Judges, the sixth chapter, we'll start with verse 11. There came an angel of the Lord and sat under an oak, which was at Ophrah, that pertained unto Joas, the Abiezrat, and his son Gideon, threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. The angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, the mighty man of valor.

Look at verse 25. It came to pass the same night the Lord said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it. Lord, I need strength and I need help.

Strengthen us to deliver the word and give the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Lord, I've never believed the anointing had anything to do with how loud I speak or how soft, but it has to do with the word that you have sent from your throne to speak to us at a particular time, in a particular place, to a particular people. Lord, everyone that's here this morning are here by divine order.

It's not by accident. And Lord, I've always understood this, as long as I've been preaching, that you always prepare a word in time just for those who are crying out for it. And I pray, Lord, for those that are crying for

truth this morning.

Take this simple little word, this simple little message, and bring hope and change our hearts, we pray in Jesus' name, amen. Verse 1 in chapter 6, And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. Now, these same words, if you don't do it now, but if you go back to chapters 4, 5, the previous chapters, you'll find these words repeated over and over again.

The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, their God, and they served Balaam. And God, in His hot anger, the Scripture said, sold them into the hand of their enemies. You find it again in chapter 3, The land had rest for forty years.

Again, the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord, once again, gave them up to Moab, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord, eighteen more years of hardship and terror. Chapter 4, you get to chapter 4, and again you hear these words, The land had rest for eighty years. But the children of Israel, again, did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord sold them to the Canaanites.

And every time the Scripture says they cried to the Lord, the Lord heard their cry and sent a deliverer. As long as there was a deliverer, as long as there was a man or woman of God seeking God's face, the Lord, in His mercy, gave them deliverance. But as soon as that prophet died, as soon as that leader died, they turned right back to the worship of Baal.

And then there was forty years of terror, eighteen years of terror, fifteen years, over and over. It's like a broken record. It's really a sad commentary of the history of Israel, how they cheated on God, how they misbelieved Him or refused to accept that He was faithful.

And here again in the sixth chapter, sixth chapter, here it is all over again, The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years. And Israel was brought very low. The Midianites and the Arabs combined, once a year at harvest time, would come in with their huge caravans of camels and driving their herds, their sheep and their goats, and they would turn them loose into the cornfields and the wheatfields of Israel.

And they would completely devour like locusts. They would drive the people, because they brought their armies with them, and they would drive the Israelites up into the caves, into the hideouts, and into the strongholds of the mountains and valleys, drove them out. And this is the situation you find in the sixth chapter here of Judges.

And the children of Israel were greatly impoverished. There was poverty on all sides. They lost their homes, they lost everything, and sleeping and living in caves.

And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord. Here they cry again. But folks, it wasn't a cry of repentance.

The Bible said it was because of the Midianites. They're weeping and crying. But this time God sends a prophet, and the prophet comes and puts his finger on the reason that they're being so harassed and terrorized.

He said, God delivered you out of the hands of all who oppressed you. God brought you out of bondage. He said to you, do not fear the gods and the Amorites in whose land you dwell, but you have not obeyed his voice.

God said, I told you from the beginning, I don't want you to fear. Fear no man, fear no one but God, your Father. Let no other fear enter your heart.

Because you've disobeyed him, you've allowed fears, all these fears to come in to your heart. God delivered you. Every time you trusted him, but the moment fear entered your heart, then you began to fear the enemy's gods.

And then I had to turn you over into the hands of your enemies to drive you back to myself. Now what was the great evil they kept falling back into? It was the Baal spirit. Now all through the Old Testament you hear of Baal, Baal, Baal.

Now Balaam, it says they served Balaam. That's the plural word for Baal, which it's a cover-all phrase that covers all the idols and all of the false gods, and even today that spirit still exists. It covers Buddha, it covers Hare Krishna, Bala, all of the false gods are wrapped up in this one word, Baal.

It's an all-inclusive word that has to do with the spirit, and that spirit is right out of the pit of hell. It came out of the mouth of Satan, it's still being spewed out of the mouth of Satan. It's one intent and one purpose is to cause God's people to mistrust the Heavenly Father.

And it's an attack of the enemy to try to have you look at your present situation. That's exactly what's happened here. The children of Israel cried out unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee both because we have forsaken our God and we are serving Balaam.

You see, they looked at their own condition and compared it with the prosperity of the Midianites, all their camels and all of their mules and healthy people, plenty of food and grain and cattle. And then they looked at their own poverty condition, and they said, How could God be interested? Where is our God? We're living in poverty, we're homeless, and see, that's where they begin to have these questions and doubts implanted in their minds. It was the sin in their lives, sin in the land that brought terror and brought sorrow upon Israel, poverty, uncertainty.

He loved them still. There's never a time that God did not love His people, but He had to turn them over into the hands of the enemy to be chastened. And oh, how they were chastened.

But they refused to acknowledge that their sin and rebellion was the cause of their terror and their poverty and their difficulties. All of these things, they're looking around, never once tied it into their rebellion. Folks, you see that in the United States now, you see it so clearly.

You see it around the world. The Twin Towers fall. The Pentagon is in flames.

And there were not a handful of preachers, there were not a handful of politicians. I don't know of any politicians, but only a small remnant in the church of Jesus Christ could see the hand of God in it, that God allowed the enemy, permitted the enemy because of a loving response of his heart to try to drive us back to himself and realize our sins are alienating us from God and His presence, His power, and His mighty arm to work on our behalf. And now we see that didn't work.

And now you have seen in the last six months, in the past year especially, this nation, one-third of the United States was on fire. The worst fires, forest fires in the history of the land. The worst floods.

The whole city of Houston a week underwater. Worst floods ever. Now drought.

Listen to me now, one-half of the United States is in drought right now, one-half. There's a deer kill up in the Midwest. They're killing 50,000 deer in five states.

Farmers are told to get the guns and go in their cornfields and wheat fields and kill the deer because the deer are dying, there's a brain disease and they're just falling and wasting away and nobody can pinpoint it. And now they may have to kill up to 250,000 deer. And every time they look around, there's another crisis.

We've got the Japanese beetle now eating whole areas and there's another disease in the forest they can't understand in California and it's one after another after another and God is saying when will you ever understand that it's your sins, it's your sins that bring this upon you. You know the floods in one city or one country in Europe, our team, our advance team just came back and there was a big sign as you entered the city, two homosexuals kissing one another and talking about the freedom of homosexuality in this nation, the next week this city was flooded and nobody ties it into God speaking, puts God speaking, he's speaking loud and clear. Do you hear what he's saying? He's saying I'll tap you and I'll tap you on this, loving taps, but he said I'm going to increase it and increase it.

You know we have people today say, oh they may have missed it but wait until the next big one comes, maybe a smallpox being released here in New York City, Subway's a little suitcase or anthrax or whatever it may be. And everybody, folks there are so few that don't expect that most people in the United States are saying, President Bush is saying it, Congress is saying it, and all of the so-called security people are saying the same thing, big one's yet to come. And I've heard people say well when that comes they'll turn to God, they'll surely know, forget it folks, forget it, they will not turn to God, they will not attribute it to the hand of God.

God doesn't do it but he withdraws his protecting arm and allows the enemy. You know that God at any point could have stopped those men from getting on that airplane and coming this way, at any point God could have stopped it, he's done it time and time again. God didn't do it but he didn't stop them because he was trying to speak.

He brought down the two symbols of our power and our prosperity to say power and prosperity and all of your boasting, I will not have it. I love this nation, I love America with all my heart, but I want to tell you folks, listen, God is going to speak louder and louder, don't know what is coming next but we're not to live in fear about it, whatever happens. You see the truth is even if America cries out to God and that's just what Israel did here in the sixth chapter, they cried out to God for mercy again, but you see God expects more than that, expects more than just to cry out of fear, in fact God sends a prophet to these people, they hear the clearest word they've ever heard, they heard the prophetic word right from the throne of God, God's saying, I'm telling you, I'm in this, I'm responsible for this because I've allowed this to happen to bring you back to my heart, to bring you to repentance and even though they cried out because of their troubles and even though they had a prophetic word, God said that's not enough, there's something else I'm going to ask of you, in fact I'm going to demand of you.

Now we talk about repentance, many of you said well I've truly repented, I've cried out to God and I've heard the prophetic word and I've responded to it, and that's what Israel did, we could have churches open all over the United States and people on their knees crying out to God, we could have men getting in the pulpit now finally and hearing a word from heaven, a prophetic word ushered from coast to coast, but the Bible says there's a problem, it's called Baal, there's an idol, and folks until we get rid of our idolatry, all

this crying is not going to have any impact, it's not going to have any effect because you have to tear down the idol, that which has the heart, if there's true repentance God's going to say go after Baal, tear down the idol of Baal, take thy father's young bullock or bull, throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it. Now Baal is still very much an idol today, I told you it's a spirit, now Baal, the idol itself, there are various sizes, but it was a carving either out of wood, stone or metal, and it was the form of a man, Adonis type man, very handsome man. Now that was a stone or piece of wood, it couldn't speak, it couldn't talk, but you see that's the kind of God they wanted because, and that's why they wanted the golden calf, calf they knew was made out of their earrings and their nose rings and their jewelry, and say this is your God.

Now you see they wanted to dance nude around the altar, they wanted to get this legalist, what they thought was a legalistic bondage, they wanted to be free, and you see they wanted a God that couldn't hear and couldn't see, couldn't see their idolatry, couldn't see their fornication, couldn't see, couldn't hear their language, but you see behind that idol there is a voice, there is a spirit that animates it, and the devil had to have this visible thing that folks, they could feel, you go to, when you went to, you go to the meeting place where there was a bale and the groves that were set up there, the trees planted in rows and in order, and the tents for prostitution, it was a very gala thing, it was very colorful, very impressive because if you didn't have the touch of God you would feel, you would hear a voice, an inner voice pulling you away from your confidence in Almighty God. Now what is bale? In this enlightened age you'd think no one would bow down to a piece of stone, a wooden statue. We have Buddhas, we have Hare Krishnas, we've got a million gods in India, almost all of them have some kind of statue to represent who they are, often serpents, all kinds of creeping things.

But you see there's a demonic spirit behind it all. It's that spirit that is meant to destroy the confidence we have in God's faithfulness. And I want to tell you something, I want you to hear me well.

God's been speaking to me all week on this. You see the enemy will come in a crisis time, he'll come when you're going to, because you see every time there's a child that's near death, every time there's an accident and a mother and a father at a funeral parlor, they're shaking their head, the devil sends his emissaries at every accident, at every place of terror, every hard place he sends his emissaries, his principalities and powers to inject fear, to inject these seed thoughts, where is your God? The first anniversary of 9-11, I was listening to the radio when they were interviewing people, they interviewed hundreds, in fact they interviewed thousands. And they concluded that a great majority of the interviewed said they'd lost all confidence in God.

Many of them said, my God died on 9-11. How could a just God, a loving God allow this to happen? How could it be? And every time you've got a child you go through a hard time, you lose your job for example, you have a broken heart over a relationship that went sour. There's a fatal disease in your family, a life threatening disease and someone's at death door.

And I want you to know the devil's emissaries are there at the door and they move in immediately saying, where is your God, why would God allow it? I get on an airplane and there's a lawyer, a lady lawyer sitting next to me crying and I said, can I help you, I'm a minister. She said, I'll tell you, you can't help me. My father, 70 years old, one of the nicest men, clean man, a good man and he just died, no reason at all, he's dead, he's gone.

She said, I can't believe in a God anymore. You see, that's the spirit of the bale. The one, this has been from the very beginning, that was in the garden of Eden, that was in the lips of Satan even then.

See, God's forgotten, God doesn't care. And folks, you have to be careful, very, very careful when the enemy comes in with his first attack and tries to plant a seed in your heart. God's not hearing my prayer.

I don't see any evidence of God working in my life. Lord, I've fasted, I've prayed, I've done all of these things and the devil hears and he knows and he's right there to start planting his seed of unbelief and doubt in your heart about the faithfulness of God. Some of you have been there, maybe are there now, going through a very difficult time.

Very scary nowadays when you lose a job. Very scary indeed because bankruptcies right now are at an all time high. One thousand businesses have gone out of, businesses have died or gone bankrupt this past year, one thousand.

And you look into the future and the devil's going to try to put such fear in the body of Christ and these thoughts are going to come at you. And you have to be careful that you deal with them immediately because if he can get in and plant that seed, he's building a base, he's building an altar for Baal. And he will erect that as you continue to allow him to speak those doubts and fears into your mind.

He will move in quickly, cause you to doubt everything you've ever heard about the word, cause you to open this book and it will look like a dead book, nothing that appears about life anymore. You just read it but no longer is it life to you. You get down to pray and the reason many people don't pray anymore is because they don't believe God's answered them.

They don't pray. Folks, I've tried everything to get people to pray. Used every kind of scriptural tool.

I've raised my voice, I've thundered. And then I still wonder why people don't pray. And the only conclusion I can come to is if they really believed God answered, they'd be praying, they'd be talking to him.

But what's the use? I don't see God answering prayer. The spirit of doubt and unbelief left unchallenged moves in and sets up this altar. And I'm telling you folks, unbelief is an altar.

Unbelief is from the very pits of hell. That comes out of the devil's mouth. Unbelief and doubt comes right out of his mouth.

Out of the mouth of our Lord comes a sharp sword. This is a sharp demonic attack of idolatry. Unbelief is the worst kind of idolatry known to mankind.

When it says, till the visual did evil in the sight of the Lord, God's talking about their unbelief, talking about their doubts and fears. And don't turn there but in Ezekiel the 8th chapter, the Holy Spirit takes Ezekiel on a spiritual vision journey. Shows him four great abominations in the house of God.

He's gone, he's seen already two of these abominations and the Lord takes him to a wall that's a hole in it and he said, now dig the rest of the way through. And so Ezekiel in this vision dug through that hole and as soon as he got through there was a door. The Holy Spirit said to Ezekiel, go in and see the horrible abominations being committed behind that door.

He opens the door and he's overwhelmed with horror. Seventy men and one priest, there's 71, and in the temple it becomes so degraded so vile that in this room, secret room, on all the walls were portraits and

pictures of creeping animals and wicked beasts, four-headed beasts and animals and pictures of every conceivable foreign God they could picture. And they had censers in their hand, incense, and they were waving them, standing in front of this wall.

Now they're not worshipping the wall, they're worshipping the spirit behind all of those images. Every one of those images had a, there was a spirit behind it. And God said, Ezekiel, I'm showing you what's going on in the minds of these men, my own elders.

They've so been captured by this spirit, this idol has been set up in their imagination, in their minds. Folks, I've been working with drug addicts for over 40 years, and any drug addict will tell you the habit's in the mind. It's a mind habit, it's not a physical habit, it becomes that after a while, but it's up here, it's in the mind.

And that's where the devil works, that's where he sets up this idol of veil, this idol of unbelief. Now, here's what they said, and this is what must have absolutely shocked the prophet Ezekiel. They said, the Lord seeth us not.

The Lord hath forsaken the earth. Now here's the spirit of veil fully exposed. God doesn't see you.

He's abandoned the earth. In other words, he's so busy with the cosmos, he's so busy with all the planets. Now, they didn't deny there was a God.

Devil lets you believe in a created God. He lets you believe he's out there somewhere taking care of the universe. But he just wants you to doubt that he is involved in your life, that he cares about you and that you can roll every care on him.

He's after your confidence that he's involved in every detail of your life. Let me tell you what his mission really is. It's not to seduce you to drugs, alcohol, or pornography.

Those are only fruits of the root spirit. Only the fruits. His single overriding mission is to plant in your mind that God is not what the Bible says he is.

He's not what the preacher says he is. He's not what you think he is. Isaiah said unbelief, he described unbelief like this, a sin written with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond engraved upon the table of the heart.

God answered, you have kindled a fire in my anger, speaking to their unbelief which shall be born in me forever. Then he added, cursed be the man that trusteth in man, make his flesh his arm, his whole heart departs from the Lord. But blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord.

Folks, my hope is in the Lord himself. That I know him, that he's with me and that's my hope. If God is with us, what else matters? In Judges 6, Gideon of the Lord brings a word to Gideon.

He's threshing this little pile of wheat or whatever it was he's threshing, just enough to survive. The angel of the Lord said, the Lord is with you, oh valiant warrior. The Lord is with you.

Now folks, God didn't send an epistle to this man. God got right to the point. And what he's trying to do, he's going to give him a foundation for his faith.

In just five words, that if he would believe, he'd never be a man ever invaded by the spirit of Baal. The Lord's with you. And folks, I'm going to tell you, that's all you and I need from the hand and the voice of God.

God is with you. I don't care who your enemy is. I don't care about the Midianites or their army or their caravans.

I said, I'm with you. I'm with you. You are mighty in this power.

Just go with it. I'm with you. Whatever you're facing right now, can you say it and believe it? God is with me.

God expects you to hang all your faith on that, build on that. That's all you need. You don't need an epistle.

Hallelujah. Gideon, though, had the spirit of unbelief in him. He hears this.

He says to the angel. Now, can you imagine? He knows it's an angel and he's speaking to the angel like this. If the Lord is with us, I see no sign of it.

I'm paraphrasing. Where are his miracles? Where are the answers to our cries? And he says, the Lord has abandoned us. He's given up.

He's talking to an angel who just told him, God is with you. How many times have you heard it in this pulpit? How many times have you heard it when you opened this book? How many times did God whisper to you, fear not, I'm with you. I'll never leave you.

I'll no forsake you. I'll go with you to the end of the world. Folks, God expects his people to rest on that and believe it with all that is in them and not to face the whole world in every agony and every trouble and every situation.

I, God, am with you. That's what the new covenant is all about. I will be God to you.

He's saying the same thing these 71 elders said. The Lord doesn't see us. The Lord's forsaken the earth.

The Lord's forsaken the earth. You see, here's a man who's cried out to God. Here's a man that's heard the prophet.

He's been visited with a clear word of God, and yet he still has these doubts and fears in him. You see, there's a problem, because there stands in his father's field a man who has an image of Baal. Now, that image, though it can't be heard audibly, can be heard in the spirit realm.

And every time Gideon goes by there, there it is speaking, God's forsaken us. God's not with us. And it spoke every time he passed.

And all the Israelites, every time they saw it, every time they passed it. I know it was on a hill, on a hillside, it appears that it was a scripture that it was established on a hillside, and everywhere they looked, they looked at their poverty, they looked at their poor sustenance, and they looked up there, and that's a reminder, God is not interested in you. There it is.

It's speaking loud and clear. God said to Gideon, go get your father's bull and pull it down. Pull it down, cut down all the trees in the grove, and take those trees and build an altar and consume it all on that altar.

God says, pluck out of your mind, in other words. Take the Holy Ghost. You say, he had a bull, I don't have a bull.

Oh, yes, you do. You've got the strongest bull known to mankind on earth. You've got the Holy Ghost in you.

You have the Holy Spirit. God says, you take the Holy Spirit and you deal with that. Now, you pull down those thoughts of unbelief.

You pull down those thoughts of fear and unbelief. Pull them down. Every person you know that speaks doubt is of the spirit of Baal.

Pull down your relationship. Walk away. Just tell them kindly, I'm not here to gossip.

I'm not here to let you minister fear and unbelief to me. I've got to trust God. I'm pulling away.

You don't have to tell them that. Just walk away from it. Stay off the telephone.

I'm going to close in just a minute. Let me tell you what the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart in closing. You know, when I see God working with Gideon, he takes a man full of doubt and unbelief.

I see such mercy. What a picture of grace. Here's a man that just keeps testing God time and time again.

Well, God, if you're really with me, stay here and let me cook you a meal and you wait here. I want you to eat this meal so I can know that you're with me. The Lord says go ahead and he brings him out broth and the Lord says take it and put it on the rock.

He puts his rod to it. It goes up in flames. I said, well that must be God.

God is with me. Then he gets closer to the front, closer to where the battle really is. Things are really getting tough now.

Lord, if you're really with me, I'll tell you what I want you to do. He takes a big hunk of fluffy wool from one of his sheep. He said, I'm going to lay this here overnight.

If you're really with me, in the morning I want it dry all around and I want the fleece, the wool, to be wet. Wakes up in the morning, goes out and everything is dry. There's no dew on the ground but he starts wringing out the wool.

I mean, water just pours out of this. Oh, God must be with me. You know, we play that game over and over again.

God is reminding us all the things that he's done, the word and how faithful he's been. Oh Lord, this is a big one. This is bigger than anything that I've ever faced before.

No it isn't. He's done bigger things for you in your past. Nothing is impossible with him.

Think of the mercy and the grace of God. He goes back the next day and he said, Lord, this time, he said, wool has a tendency to suck in water anyhow. This time, I want dew and water all around it but I want the fleece to be dry.

He goes out the next morning, he sloughs them through the mud and he picks up a dry piece of wool fleece. God must be with me. Now think of the patience of God.

You know, there had to be something God saw in this man that his questions were not accusative. He was really a hungry man wanting answers. He was not accusing God as much as wanting an answer.

I didn't come this morning to condemn anybody here that's facing unbelief and doubt. I'm bringing you a word that God gave me and I want you to listen to it. I'm going to read it word for word because there are numbers of you here this morning.

You're going through this time and this God of mercy that took this man and used him. You see, he wants to do the same for you. He wants you to get victory over your unbelief.

He will give you the power and authority this morning just by an act of faith and trusting the Holy Ghost to pull down every stronghold of doubt, fear, and unbelief. Just pull it down by faith because he has great victories ahead of you. He's got something wonderful just as he did.

Now he wants to defeat the enemies in your life, the Midianites. He wants to give you power and authority. And folks, you know the whole story, how all these thousands gathered and they had to get it down to 300 finally.

God says, if you just trust me, it's not going to take much, just faith. It's going to take confidence in me. Just the little that you have, you give it to me and you believe me and I'll give you overwhelming victories.

Here's what I hear from the Lord. This is the word I receive. I don't know who it's for, but if it's for you, you'll know it.

The Holy Spirit will make it real to your heart. God's about to bring you into your most important victory you've ever experienced. He's about to lead you into new places of peace and rest in Christ.

He's about to reveal his strong arm on your behalf and answer. He's about to show you that he's truly involved in everything in your life and he's going to do a new thing. But you've got to pull down every thought of unbelief, lay down every fear, pull down that spirit of bail and allow him no entrance.

And I'll tell you something, I'll say it again before closing. If you want that, God will give you the bull. God will give you the power.

He'll give you the authority. God has a good word for you. God sent you here to hear it.

The enemy's trying to plague you with doubt and unbelief. Rise up in Jesus' name by faith and say, no, my God is with me. He's going to stay with me in everything I do.

Will you stand please?

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