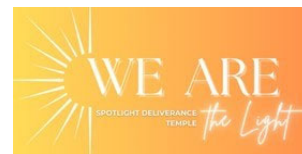


LESSON #11



Oxen and Offerings

Christians should express devotion to God through sacrificial giving.

Study at a Glance: The 5 W's

KEY AREA	DETAILS AND SUMMARY
WHO (Author & Audience)	1&2 Sam, 1 Kings and Chronicles- not known. inspired by the Holy spirit. 1 Cor is authored by Apostle Paul. Proverbs are authored by King Solomon. The audience were the Israelites and their future generations to maintain history. 1 Cor audience was the new church.
WHAT (Core Message)	Make sure history was kept so the events could be remembered and learned from. Also to make sure future followers understood their role in ministry.
WHEN (Timing)	Written throughout Biblical history in the Old and New Testament.
WHERE (Location)	Israel, Palestine and Corinth
WHY (Rationale)	To demonstrate that God's unlimited power can be exercised through the least or greatest of His creatures. Scripture demonstrates this clearly and reminds us of the providence He employs over creation.

Introduction

In his address to the people in 1 Samuel 12:3, the Prophet states the following. ***“Behold, here I stand. Testify against me in the presence of the LORD and his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed?”*** We have discussed the importance of donkeys in middle eastern culture and how God chose in His providence, to use donkeys for divine purpose. Today we discuss the ox, another important beast of the field that is arguably the most important animal in the agricultural and farming communities. Like the donkey, God chose this animal to aid man in physical life and in relationship with Him. These two animals were of such special significance that the prophet Samuel used them as the benchmark in which he staked his reputation and integrity on before the assembly and before God.

Key Terms defined

KEY TERM	<u>CONTEXTUAL</u> DEFINITION OF THE WORD	WORD IN GREEK LANGUAGE	PRONOUNCE THE GREEK WORD	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
MINISTER		<i>Leitourgos</i> <i>hiereas</i>	<i>Lay-toorg-os'</i> <i>Hee-er-YOOS</i>	1 Cor 9
SACRIFICE		<i>thusia</i>	<i>thoo-see'-ah</i>	1 Cor 9
OFFERING		<i>prosphora</i>	<i>Pros-for-ah</i>	2 Sam 24
WORSHIP		<i>sebo</i>	<i>seh-bo</i>	2 Chro 5

Some facts about oxen. They are male or female cows, but male cows are castrated. Why castrate? This is a common method still used today to lower their testosterone to help tame their naturally aggressive temper preventing injury to farmers or other animals. It also eliminates unwanted breeding. They are only bred for heavy duty work, not genetics so male oxen are usually more valuable on the market. If the tractor breaks down or fuel is too high, there is always a reliable ox.

SECTION 1: ROYAL OFFERINGS

(Read 2 Samuel 24: 18-25 & 2 Chronicles 5:1-6)

Discussion Questions

1. **Text focus:** What qualifies something to be used for a sacrifice?
2. In 2 Sam 24, Araunah offers King David his threshing floor and his oxen for free, but the king refused to accept it for free. He instead paid full price for it. Why do you think he did this?
3. **Application:** Considering our relationship with God through the finished work of Jesus, why is sacrifice even necessary?
4. During the temple dedication, the scripture (2 Chr 5:16) tells us there were “so many sheep and cattle sacrificed that they could not be counted or numbered for multitude”. What does this demonstrate and why would this type of act be rejected by unbelievers?

More facts about oxen. A single adult ox is capable of slow pulling up to 3000lbs. which is double their body weight and they can do this for hours. Hard working, usually paired with another ox which is called a “yoke”. They work together covering large areas and various terrain with ease. This yoke can be quadrupled if necessary for major hauls. Ask me about being “unequally yoked”.

SECTION 2: FORSAKING FARMING TO FOLLOW GOD

(Read 1 Kings 19:14-21 & Prov. 14:4)

Discussion Questions

1. Text Focus: Elisha had 12 yokes or pairs of oxen (24). Each cost roughly 30 shekels of silver. Worth between \$718- \$875 or 120 days of labor per ox. Using an average of \$800, that’s over \$19,000! This represents an immense amount of wealth for the time. He was willing to walk away from his apparent financial security and his responsibility for his family and the farm. He then butchered a yoke of oxen on site, burned the farming equipment and cooked the meat to give away to neighbors. All to answer the call of God in his life. He did not consider permission or financial loss.

- Explain what you believe his actions represented? _____
- Do you believe this act came at a personal cost to Elisha ? _____
- Explain if you honestly believe his actions were necessary and why? _____
- How do you think his family was impacted by his decision and actions? _____

2. Application: Do you believe this type of sacrifice and obedience is required of us today?

Even more facts about the ox. As previously mentioned, a single ox was worth about 30 shekels of silver. Though considered very valuable, 30 shekels was also the market value of an injured, useless slave or the restitution paid for a slave killed by an ox (Exod 21:32)..ok wait a minute. Wasn’t Jesus betrayed by Judas for 30 shekels of silver? The value of a useless slave? Judas and the religious elite valued Jesus at the lowest possible tier of human worth. Subsequently, those 30 shekels only covered the cost of Judas’ grave. Apparently 30 shekels was the going rate for a sacrifice.

SECTION 3: SUPPORTING MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL

(Read 1 Cor 9: 4-14)

Discussion Questions

1. Text Focus: We are no longer expected to offer animals as offerings or sacrifice however; Paul instructs us to support ministers of the gospel through offerings. What are some ways to do this?

2. Application: Rhetorical: What is your worship worth?

Conclusion: Our relationship with Jesus is going to cost us something. Whether it’s a farm animal or farm equipment. A relationship or a career, there is a cost associated with faith in Jesus. Let us remember not to see this as something being taken from us but rather something we are willing to freely offer up with gratitude and honor to God and for those who labor in the gospel of Jesus.