

Helping Others Onward & Upward to Victory!

VOLUME 20

W.o.W.
(WORD ON WORSHIP)

NOVEMBER 12 , 2026

Teshua Ministries

WELCOME TO OUR

Monthly Newsletter

Exploring Unacceptable Worship in the Old Testament

Greetings in the Name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!
Welcome to the twentieth edition of W.o.W. (Word on Worship)—the monthly newsletter from Teshua Ministries designed to inspire, equip, and deepen our understanding of true worship. Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning, we are delighted to walk this journey of worship with you as we seek to glorify God and grow stronger in faith.

This publication reflects the heart and mission of Dr. Janicka, founder of Teshua Ministries, who is passionate about helping believers experience victorious worship that transforms lives. We pray that each edition ignites a greater hunger for God's presence and empowers you to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Thank you for being part of the W.o.W. Word on Worship family. Let's continue this journey onward and upward to victory in Christ!

Blessings,
Teshua Ministries

In this newsletter:

Learn what it truly means to live a disciplined life of worship with Dr. Janicka.

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Introduction

Over the past few months, we have been discussing the importance of building a theology of worship and identifying what the Lord's expectations are for acceptable worship. It is notable that just like a human relationship, there are specific behaviors that please and offend God too.

This can be both intentional and unintentional. It is very easy for a person to practice worship that is technically unacceptable to God. This often occurs when worship becomes people-centered versus God-centered. This also occurs when worshipers deceive and convince themselves that their actions of reverence or obedience to God are pleasing to Him, when in fact it is deemed in His eyes as unacceptable worship.

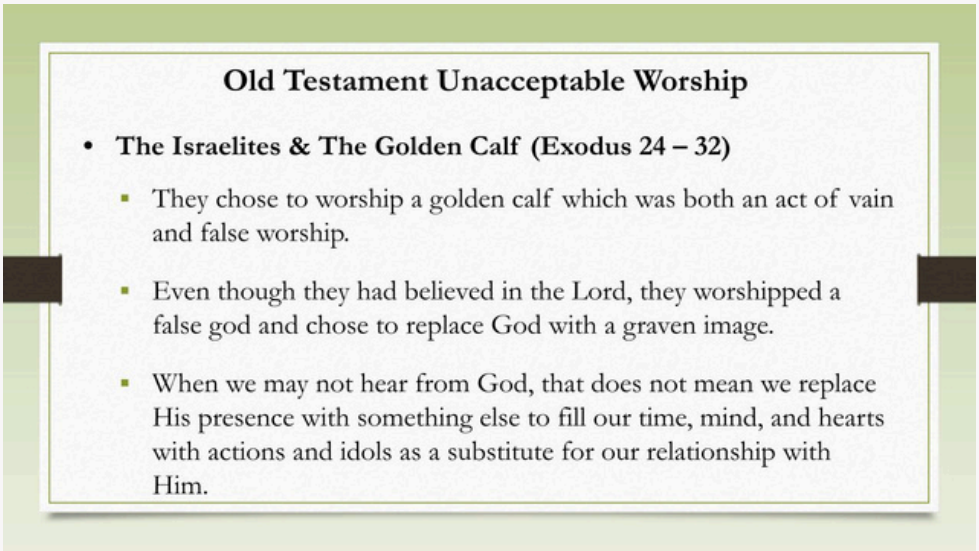
Developing a theology of worship that is rooted in biblical principles requires an examination of examples of



unacceptable worship in the biblical books of Exodus, Leviticus, and I Samuel. By doing so, we, as modern Christians, can avoid pitfalls in our reverence for God that he finds spiritually offensive.

Unacceptable Worship in the Old Testament

The biblical account of the Israelites and the golden calf provides our first example. The Lord had given Moses instructions to come into His presence in **Exodus chapter 24:12-14,"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them.' So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, 'Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them.' Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain."** Moses was with the Lord for a while, receiving instructions and

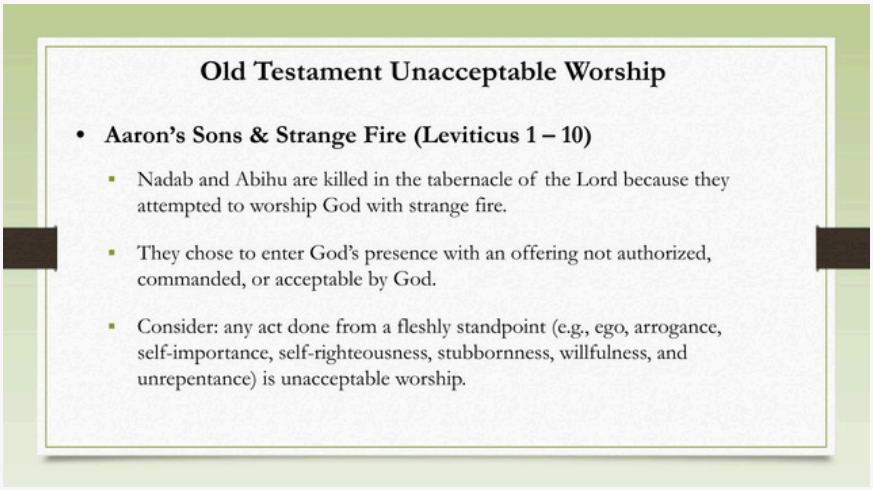


specific expectations that related to worshiping Him: offerings for the sanctuary where God intended to dwell among the people, the Tabernacle, burnt offerings, priesthood and their garments, artisans to build the Tabernacle, and the Sabbath law. Unfortunately, while Moses was receiving guidance concerning reverencing God, the Israelites took matters into their own hands concerning worship. They went to Aaron, Moses' brother, and said, **"Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him," in Exodus 32:1.** Rather than correct or dissuade their request, Aaron said, **"Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me. So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf," in Exodus 32:2-4.** They were so pleased with themselves, the Israelites' elders declared in **Exodus 32:4, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!"** They were referring to the molded calf and intentionally rose up early the next day (Exodus 32:6) to offer acts of worship that included peace and burnt offerings, food, drink, and merrymaking before the golden, molded calf that was intentionally designed to replace the presence of God.

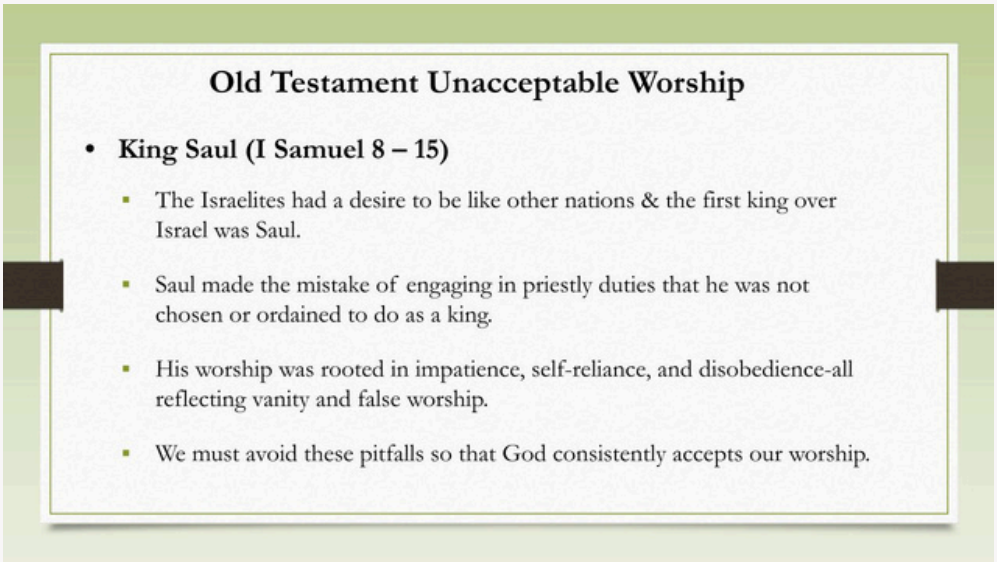
They chose to worship a golden calf which was both an act of vain and false worship. Vain worship occurred because even though they had believed in the Lord, they had worshipped a false god. False worship occurred because the Israelites chose to worship a graven image. As a result, 3,000 people were killed, and the remaining living Israelites endured a plague taking the lives of many more. Today's worshipers could learn from this story. During a season of quietness from God, what are we doing as worshipers to strengthen our spiritual growth with Him? Are we studying the Word of God more?

Are we engaging in prayer and fasting more to hear from the Lord? Or are we filling the quiet time with diversions and worldly distractions to replace elements of our biblical faith? We must be careful during the quiet moments in our relationship with God. When we may not hear from God, that does not mean we replace His presence with something else to fill our time, mind, and hearts with actions and idols as a substitute for our relationship with Him.

In the Bible, an ordinary Israelite could not enter the holy place in the tabernacle. God had consecrated special priests who could enter the holy place. The chosen priests had their authority from God, and they were set apart as servants for Him. In Leviticus, chapters 1 through 9, God provides thorough instructions to establish His expectations regarding sacrifices in the temple, the ordination of chosen priests, and the outcome of Him dwelling in their midst during tabernacle worship. This was serious business, as God specifically shared His expectations for all types of offerings: burnt, grain, peace, sin/purification, and guilt/trespass. Leviticus chapter 8 describes the consecration of Aaron and his sons as priests, whose role would involve leading worship through offerings to the Lord. Leviticus 8:34 details the seriousness of the consecration when Moses stated, **"'Everything we have done today was commanded by the Lord in order to purify you, making you right with him. Now stay at the entrance of the Tabernacle day and night for seven days, and do everything the Lord requires. If you fail to do this, you will die, for this is what the Lord has commanded.' So Aaron and his sons did everything the Lord had commanded through Moses."** Then in Leviticus chapter 9, Aaron and his sons' priestly duties began. Aaron, as an act of reverence, offered a sin offering and a burnt offering first for himself and his family, and then a sin offering, burnt offering, grain offering, and peace offering for the people of Israel. God was so pleased that God's glory appeared to everyone and **"Fire blazed forth from the Lord's presence and consumed the burnt offering and the**







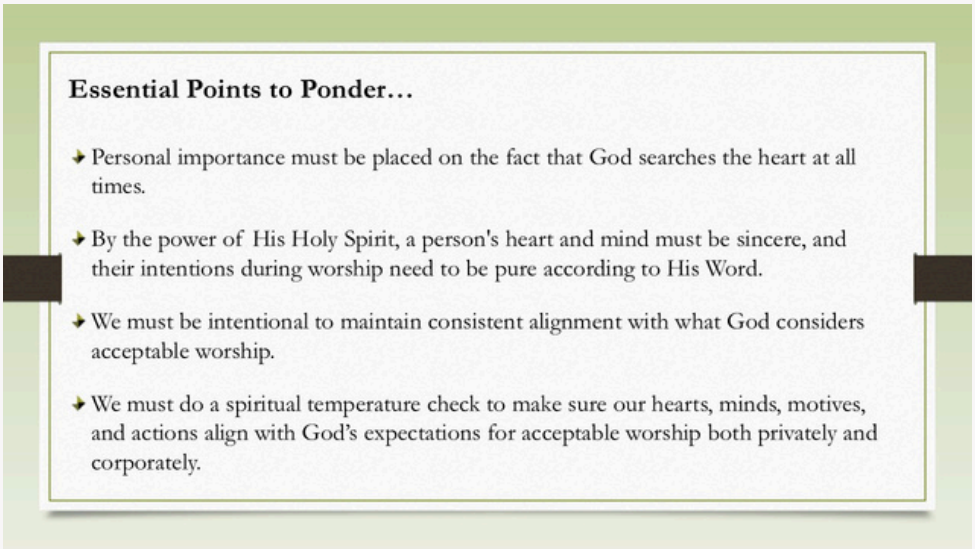
fat on the altar. When the people saw this, they shouted with joy and fell face down on the ground," in Leviticus 9:24.

However, in Leviticus chapter 10, Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, were killed in the tabernacle of the Lord for attempting to worship God with strange fire. **Leviticus 10:1–2 states, "Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."** Their mistake became a death penalty when they attempted to perform an act of worship in the Holy of Holies, which only a High Priest could have done. They chose to enter God's presence with an offering not authorized, commanded, or acceptable by God. Their actions seemed to be of their own initiative, and the steps they took with the offering did not reflect God's holy standards for worship. They were motivated by self-will, when they should have sought God's will for acceptable worship. It was considered unholy, profane, or unsanctified worship, and Moses reminded Aaron that God had stated, **"…By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy, And before all the people I will be glorified," in Leviticus 10:3.** Ignoring this theology of worship cost Nadab and Abihu their lives.



Today, we do not perform the same types of offerings in our churches because of Christ's spiritual and redemptive work on the Cross. However, God still requires holiness and has expectations for us when we come into His presence. There are many believers worshiping the Lord based on their standards, expectations, comfort levels,

and preferences. Consider: any act done from a fleshly standpoint (e.g., ego, arrogance, self-importance, self-righteousness, stubbornness, willfulness, and unrepentance) is unacceptable worship. How many times have we lifted our voices in praise and adoration but did not have a repentant heart? How many times have we entered a corporate worship setting and have not humbly asked the Lord to purify us before lifting our hands as an offering in His presence? We must keep in mind that God's expectations always prevail over our own, and the spiritual goal is for God to accept all of our acts of worship.



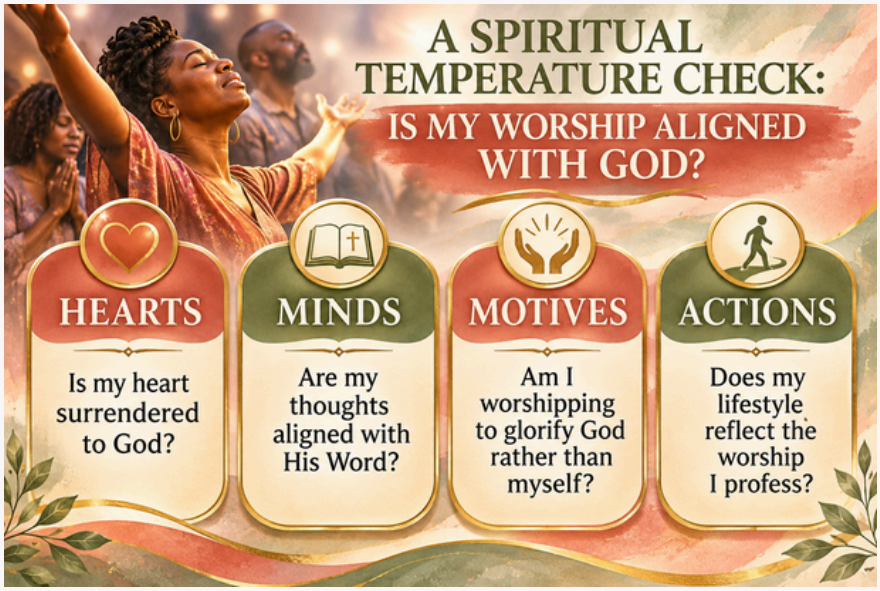
Our third example occurs in the book of I Samuel, where the Israelites desired to have a king like other nations. Samuel, a judge and prophet who was leading the people at the time, shared their request with the Lord. Though God forewarned them of the consequences of having a king, He said, **"Heed their voice, and make them a king," in I Samuel 8:22.** Israel's first king was named Saul. In the book of I Samuel, Saul was depicted as a leader who needed constant affirmation. He did not have strong or assertive military leadership and made the mistake of engaging in priestly duties that he was not chosen or ordained to do as a king.

In 1 Samuel chapter 13, Saul received instructions to wait seven days at Gilgal for Samuel to arrive and offer a burnt offering for God's favor before a battle with the Philistines. In I Samuel 13:8-11, on the seventh day Saul grew impatient when Samuel had not arrived and said, **"Bring a burnt offering and peace offerings here to me.' And he offered the burnt offering. Now it happened, as soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, that Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might greet him. And Samuel said, 'What have you done?' Saul admitted to Samuel, "Therefore I felt compelled, and offered a burnt offering," in I Samuel 13:12.** Saul was not a king who consistently, if at all, followed God, sought God's direction, or engaged in the worship of God. In **I Samuel 15:10 it says, "Now the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, 'I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.'** God was speaking to Samuel, who in turn had to break the news to Saul. When he went

before Saul, he said, **“Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king,” in I Samuel 15:22-23.** Oddly enough, after Saul experienced this rejection, he made a few attempts to repent and worship the Lord, but to no avail.

Saul’s willful disobedience and self-righteousness cost him everything when he engaged in worship that he was sanctioned to do. His worship was rooted in impatience, self-reliance, and disobedience-all reflecting vanity and false worship. How often are we in a rush with our acts of worship? How many times do we engage in worship relying on our own capabilities and strength without seeking God for his instructions first? When we think of our private and corporate worship times, is there any area of our lives shrouded in disobedience, yet we pray, praise, dance, give, fast, and study the Word believing our worship is acceptable? We must avoid these pitfalls so that God consistently accepts our worship.

Conclusion



Throughout the centuries and around the world, people have tried to articulate what worship is and what worship does (Culturally Conscious Worship). To be on the safe side, one must remember that God at all times searches the heart. When David was speaking to his son Solomon pertaining to building the Temple, which would be a place of worship, he gave some sound advice that all worshipers could take to heart. In **I Chronicles 28:9, David told Solomon, "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever."** When it comes to worship, by the power of His Holy Spirit, a person's heart and mind must be sincere, and their intentions

during worship need to be pure according to His Word. The biblical examples of the golden calf, Aaron's sons, and Saul provide opportunities for us to glean from these biblical instances where the worship was not God-centered. To support strengthening our relationship with God, we must be intentional to maintain consistent alignment with what God considers acceptable worship. Every time we engage in acts of worship, we must do a spiritual temperature check to make sure our hearts, minds, motives, and actions align with God's expectations for acceptable worship both privately and corporately.

Let's Pray...

Father God,

In the name of Jesus Christ, thank You for Your Word to guide every facet of our lives as worshipers. Lord, in this very moment, please forgive us for any spiritual offenses that could hinder our worship and praise of God. We acknowledge that our ways and thoughts are not your ways and thoughts, and humbly submit to your expectations for acceptable worship. Please reveal to us any areas of our lives that could hinder our worship from being received by You. May your precious Holy Spirit always guide and lead us to consistently give you reverence and adoration that reflects the purity of our hearts and minds as believers. Thank You for the work of Your Son, Jesus Christ, on the Cross, because today we can boldly offer You praise and adoration. Thank you that every day You bless us with brand new mercy and grace so that our worship of You grows deeper and we are strengthened daily by our encounters with Your presence. Amen!



SCAN ME TO
GET YOUR T-SHIRT
TODAY!