



World Christian Fellowship

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Vow or Oath to God

What is the definition of Vow?

Offering a vow is practicing a kind of “credit card” act of worship.

It is a promise to worship God with a certain offering in the future, motivated by gratitude for God’s grace in the life of the offeror.

The reason for the delay in making the offering was that the offeror was not able, at that moment to make the offering.

The vow was made, promising to offer something to God if God would intervene on behalf of the individual, making the offering possible. In many instances, the vow was made in a time of great danger or need.

Vows are not limited to “If-you-do-this-for-me, I’ll-do-that-for-You” bargains with God. You don’t have to use the words “vow” or “promise” to make a vow. Anytime you voluntarily tell God you are going to do or not do something for Him, it is a vow.

The Rabbis believed that the gifts which were vowed in Leviticus 27 were to be used for the maintenance of the Temple.

There are about 30 biblical references to vows, most of which are from the Old Testament. The books of Leviticus and Numbers have several references to vows in relation to

offerings and sacrifices. There were dire consequences for the Israelites who broke vows, especially vows to God.

Examples of vows:

- Jacob vowed to pay a tithe if God would bless and keep him (**Genesis 28:20-22**).
 - The Nazarite vow is defined in Numbers chapter 6 and Samson (**Judges 13**)
 - When the Israelites fought the Canaanite king of Arad, they vowed to utterly destroy their cities if God gave them victory (**Numbers 21:1-3**).
 - The most tragic vow is that of Jephthah, who vowed to offer to God the first thing to come from his tent to greet him, which proved to be his only daughter (**Judges 11:29-40**).
 - Hannah vowed that if God gave her a son, she would give him to the Lord all his life (**1 Samuel 1:10-11**).
 - Jonah's vow was made from the belly of the great fish that had swallowed him (**Jonah 2:9**).
- In the New Testament,
- Paul continued to make vows and fulfil them (**Acts 18:18; 21:23**).

Vows:

All vows are sacred, and some are also foolish

Proverbs 20:25,

Ecclesiastes 5:2-4,

Breaking a Vow

Breaking any vow is sin.

Deuteronomy 23:21-22,

Ecclesiastes 5:5-6,

Numbers 30:15,

Forgiveness of Vow-Breaking

God will forgive vow-breakers

Numbers 30:6, 9 & 13,

Leviticus 27 has the detailed about Vow.

- ✓ Vows of people—V. 1-8
(Failure 20% Penalty)
- ✓ Vows of animals—V. 9-13
(Failure 20% Penalty)
- ✓ Vowed houses—V. 14-15
(Failure 20% Penalty)
- ✓ Vowed inheritance (family land) V. 16-21
(Land will be given to the Lord on Jubilee plus 20% penalty)
- ✓ Vowed (non-family) land—V. 22-25
(Penalty 20 Gerahs)
- ✓ Illicit vows—V. 26-34
(By decree Firstborn, Tithe etc belong to the Lord so if that is been offered then 20% Penalty)

These vows which God knew men did not wish to keep. God anticipates that the vows which are made at one moment in time may be regretted later, and thus the offeror will attempt, in one way or another, to default on them, to replace one offering for another, or to somehow reduce what was offered.

Matthew 5:33-37,

A little background information clarifies Jesus words here.

The religious leaders during the time of Jesus proclaimed that keeping a vow if it was a public vow using God's name.

However, if the vow was made in the course of everyday conversation, referencing only "heaven" or "earth" or "Jerusalem," it was not really binding. People had a loophole.

They could lie or exaggerate in their conversations and make an excuse by saying, "I swear by heaven that this is true!" They could not be held to accountable since they did not specifically swear by God's name and the vow was a private.

Jesus countered that idea. If you swear something, it had better be true, He says. In fact, all you need to say is "yes" or "no." Your word should be good.

If you have taken a vow what you should do?

Repent!

Ask God for forgiveness.

God provides a sacrifice for atoning for a broken vow, we can infer that forgiveness for breaking a vow is available through Christ, who is our guilt offering.

Isaiah 53:10,

Christians be careful about making vows, either to the Lord or to one another.

Let your words be true! Always!!