

# Twelve Pillars of Witness

by G.W. North

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*Moses' twelve pillars at Sinai represent Israel's spiritual pilgrimage and commitment to worship and follow God's commands.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 28:18, Exodus 20:24, Exodus 24:4

**Topics:** "Covenant", "Worship"

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## Description

G.W. North emphasizes the significance of the twelve pillars Moses erected at Sinai, symbolizing Israel's covenant with God and their identity as a people dedicated to worship. He reflects on the journey from Egypt, highlighting the absence of altars during their time in bondage and the importance of the altar built under the mountain as a preparation for the future brazen altar in the promised land. The pillars, representing the twelve tribes, serve as a testament to God's faithfulness and the spiritual pilgrimage of the Israelites. North draws parallels between Moses' actions and Jacob's earlier experience, underscoring the continuity of God's covenantal relationship with His people. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a deeper understanding of worship and commitment to God.

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## Transcript

As referred to earlier, before making the brazen altar to God's design, Moses also built another of his own -- this time in the desert of Sinai, in fact right under the hill. At that time, by God's command, the mount had been bounded off; it was prohibited territory, sanctified from the people and enveloped in the cloud of God. Moses had been up and down it, to and fro between God and the people, carrying the word from the one to the other. During this time such supernatural demonstrations were taking place that it was evident something was afoot of a most extraordinary nature and the people were very frightened -- even Moses said that he exceedingly quaked and trembled.

Upon returning from his latest journey up the mount and announcing to the people all the words that God had given to him for them, Moses also informed them that it was God's intention to enter into covenant with them on the terms stated. Hearing these, the people reaffirmed their former consent and intention to do all that God said. This secured, 'Moses wrote all the words of the Lord in a book and rising early in the morning builded an altar under the hill'. Having done so, in much the same manner as Jacob before him, he raised up twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Lonely Jacob's solitary pillar at Bethel was prophetic of the twelve pillars of Israel at Sinai under the hill. Builded of stones, these twelve stood grouped around the altar of stones in solemn order, mutely testifying

to God's faithfulness. Moses was showing them that Israel were to be a people of the altar. What a long way they had come from Egypt. The distance must be measured in terms of spiritual pilgrimage rather than in miles. There had been no altar there and only one had been built between there and Sinai.

Over four hundred years had passed since, at the first, Abraham had laid out his animal and bird covenant victims upon the ground that God should cut His covenant with him. During the whole of that time not one altar had been built unto the Lord in Egypt; Abraham had not built one there and neither had they. Now out of the land, soon they were to have a permanent altar of brass for the Lord of the promised land. As yet they had no knowledge of that fact, but by this one that Moses had now built God was going to prepare them for it. In that land the brazen altar was to be dedicated unto blood, specified offerings, ceaseless sacrifices and the continual fire of God.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gw-north/twelve-pillars-of-witness/>

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