

# *Introduction*

**I hear the cry for body life in the church.** Some look around, wondering what will bring it back. The answer lies in returning to the pattern in the New Testament. Initially it starts with proper personal foundations, but from there we enter the arena of the biblical church government. We've tampered with this to our destruction and the time to change is far past!

Learn a lesson from king Ahaz:

*10 And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. 11 And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. 12 And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon. 13 And he burnt his burnt offering and his meat offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. 14 And he brought also the brasen altar, which was before the LORD, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of the altar. 15 And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king's burnt*

*sacrifice, and his meat offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brasen altar shall be for me to inquire by. 16 Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded. 17 And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brasen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones. 2 Kings 16:10-17*

We read an account like this and are appalled by his presumption in God's House! The text itself makes no comment on the action. There's a strong lesson to be gleaned from this.

The church is the House of the Lord today. The local assemblies are the God ordained smaller units the Lord calls His church. He dwells in our midst:

*19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephesians 2:19-22*

Today we commit a similar trespass to that of king Ahaz in redesigning the layout of the House of the Lord. The king saw a style that suited his personal taste. Ahaz thought this was better than God's choice! God's choice didn't matter to him, he followed his own will. The popular "Pastor/Congregation" set-up in the church today, fits that same image of Ahaz. It's a redesign to a popular layout. The problem? It's "*not according to the pattern*" (Exodus 25:8,9), and THAT'S a serious transgression! We may not hear thunderous words from God condemning us, neither did Ahaz! Let's not take the terrifying position of presumption in the design of God's House.

*The call for body life is THE CALL FOR BIBLICAL REFORM!*