

Bible Trek Ministries

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Worship Is War

By Scott Barkley

Worship is:

"Worship is an end in itself, it is not a means to something else"

Old Covenant Worship

When God gave the Levitical system to the Jews he told them **EXACTLY** how he was to be worshipped. This is because it was a foretaste of the Messiah. They were required to continuously sacrifice since the penalty for sin had not been paid. Their sacrifices were to be without blemish, the best of the herd, presented at the tabernacle/temple so that it would be acceptable to the Lord (Leviticus 1:1-3). Everything about the sacrifice pointed to the one who would ultimately come as the Messiah. The Old Covenant worship was a rehearsal for the real thing.

New Covenant Worship

When Jesus came to planet earth in his earth suit he came for one purpose. The penalty for sin is death, and he came to be the ultimate sacrifice – the only sacrifice that was perfect enough to be presented to God and that God would accept. As John the Baptist said, he was the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World". By sacrificing himself for us he would "redeem" us or "purchase us out of slavery" to Satan.

The first church was initially made up of converted Jews. They had grown up living under the Law and the Levitical system and after the *Ultimate sacrifice* was made, blood sacrifices were no longer necessary. In fact, to perform them after Christ died would have been synonymous with saying that; Jesus wasn't really the Ultimate sacrifice (which is the same reason we should not offer up our good works in place of the sacrifices or as any part of the salvation process). This is because in God's plan, the penalty for Sin was death and HE paid it. The barrier [sin] that separated man from God was destroyed.

Ephes. 2:14-16

*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has **destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, [15] by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.** His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, [16] and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.*

These early Hebrews had a difficult time understanding GRACE after living daily under the intensity of the Law and Levitical system. The writer of the book of Hebrews (probably Paul – a rabbi, fully qualified to address this) tackles this and instructs them in several things:

I. Christ is *THE* High Priest

Hebrews 6:20

*where **Jesus**, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. **He has become a high priest forever**, in the order of Melchizedek.*

Hebrews 3:1

*Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on **Jesus**, the apostle and **high priest** whom we confess.*

II.

Hebrews 8:3

Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices

III. Peter tells us (And Peter was a Jew) – We have each been made Priests.

1 Peter 2:9

*But you are a chosen people, a royal **priesthood**, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may **declare the praises of him** who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

If you are with me so far, we can see that although the sacrifices of earthly animals is no longer required as they were under the Old Covenant, some of the duties of the priesthood continue. We (the newly declared priests) have a responsibility to "**declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

Despite what so many well meaning Christians and many church's try to tell us...Living under GRACE is not living under the LAW. Under the Old Covenant you were either good, or you sacrificed **EVERY TIME** you were bad. Consequently, the temple was a very busy place as the people were forced to sacrifice **continuously**.

Under the New Covenant, we are "**Urged**" to live a life worthy of the sacrifice that was paid for us. Urging is like encouraging someone as they run a race.

Ephes. 4:1

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, **I urge you** to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.*

Romans 12:1

*Therefore, **I urge you**, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--**this is your spiritual act of worship.***

We are instructed that it is this sacrifice – our day to day living sacrifice *that is our spiritual act of worship!*

Contrast the "urging "to live a Godly life with the following verse:

Hebrews 13:15

*Through Jesus, therefore, let us **continually** offer to God **a sacrifice of praise**--the fruit of lips that confess his name.*

The wording of this verse is so strong that it is almost a commandment. We are not urged , we are simply to **never not offer** a sacrifice of praise . Continuous sacrifice just like the Old Covenant but not because we are sinful (that goes without saying), but because He is righteous, and the ONE sacrifice has been done.

If you are with me so far, we can see that under the New Covenant, the sacrifice of praise for all intents and purposes replaces EVERY sacrifice they made under the Old Covenant. This is because Jesus fulfilled the Law with his death. Everything was accomplished by his works – not ours.

Matthew 5:17-18

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them **but to fulfill them.** [18] I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law **until everything is accomplished.**

Worship therefore is not just singing in church on Sunday. The sacrifice of praise, in order to be **CONTINUAL** cannot just be singing songs or we would all be crazy by now.

Worship – "the Sacrifice of Praise" takes many forms:

<p>Prayer</p>	<p><i>Acts 2:42; Acts 2:46; Acts 3:1; Acts 4:31; Ephes. 6:18; Philip. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Thes. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; 1 Tim. 2:8;</i></p>		<p><i>Ephes. 5:19; Col. 3:16; James 5:13; Eph. 5:18-20</i></p>
<p>Communicating to others your understanding of God</p>	<p>Acts 2:42; Acts 6:7; Acts 12:24; Acts 18:28; Acts 19:20; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 2:2; 2 Tim 4:2</p>	<p>Receiving his son</p>	<p>John 1:11-12</p>
<p>Sacrifice of our bodies</p>	<p>Rom 12:1</p>	<p>Good works</p>	<p>Heb 13:16</p>
<p>Sacrifice of substance</p>	<p>Phil 4:18</p>	<p>Reading Gods word</p>	<p>Col. 4:16; 1 Thes. 5:27; 1 Tim. 4:13; Rev. 1:3;</p>
<p>Studying Gods Word</p>	<p>Acts 6:2; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:15;</p>	<p>Lifting hands*</p>	<p>Psalm 28:2; Lament. 2:19; 1 Tim. 2:8; Ex 7:8, 14:8;II Chron 20:12-22;Ps 134:2, 141:2, 68:31; Is 1:15</p>

***Note:** We are **commanded to lift up our hands in worship to our Lord** in both the Old and New Testament. When we see those in our congregation doing that - we should not be critical of it. They are carrying out God's command.

Example:

Old Covenant

Lament. 3:41

Let us lift up our heart **with our hands** unto God in the heavens.

New Covenant

1 Tim. 2:8

I will therefore that men pray every where, **lifting up holy hands**, without wrath and doubting.

God called Satan many things. One of the least understood is: "**Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth;**". In other words he was the leader, he was created to be "**Perfect in thy ways**" to protect and guide the ancient world. More specifically he was created "a guardian cherub". This was a special kind of angel created to protect God's holiness."

KJV

*Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: **the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. [14] Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth;** and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain*

*of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. [15] **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.***

Let's note these things God says about Satan:

1. "Thou wast **perfect** in thy ways from the day that thou wast created,"
- 2.
3. *"the workmanship of thy **tabrets** and of thy **pipes** was prepared **in thee** in the day that thou wast created."*
- 4.
5. *What are Tabrets and Pipes? A **tamborine** and a **Pipe type instrument**.*

The following is excerpted from Dwight Pentecost:

"Musical instruments were originally designed to be a means of praising God. It was not necessary for Lucifer to learn to play a musical instrument, in order to please God. If you please, he had a built in pipe organ, or he was an organ. Lucifer, because of his beauty, he did what a musical instrument would do in the hands of a great musician, bring forth a psalm of praise to the glory of God. Lucifer didn't have to look for someone to play the doxology – he was a doxology."

In other words, Satan was the Anointed Cherub made by God to be the most beautiful angel, made unique in all the universe to be the highest expression of worship to God. He **WAS** in fact a living musical instrument created for the sole purpose of leading worship to God. From the context, there seems no doubt that Satan was actually created to be **THE** worship leader in Heaven.

As we know Satan rebelled and was stripped of his heavenly position. God then made humans.

What do you think our role is?

We took Satan's place when it comes to worship (Rev 4:11, Proverbs 16:4, Col 1:16).

The most obvious purpose of worship is to revere God for all that he is. What I want to deal with is the not so obvious aspect of worship. All of the information so far has been to bring us up to what I believe is one of the most important aspects of Worship, and one that is rarely understood.

The duty of a Priest:

Deut. 20:2-4

*When you are about to go into battle, **the priest shall come forward and address the army.** [3] He shall say: "Hear, O Israel, today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not be terrified or give way to panic before them. [4] For the Lord your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory."*

In the Old Testament, one of the appointed positions of the Priest was to **encourage the army prior to battle.** We are told in the New Testament that we are in a battle against our adversary.

Ephes. 6:10-12

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand **against the devil's schemes.** 12**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.***

As the appointed priests of the New Covenant, our duties include:

1. Bringing in the sacrifice of praise
2. We are to encourage the army going to battle.
3. Our battle is not against our fellow man (although it may appear that way) it is against Satan, the old worship leader **who is now the God of this world.**

I thought God was the God of this world?

2 Cor. 4:4

*The **god of this age** has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*

John 12:31

*Now is the time for judgment on this world; now **the prince of this world** will be driven out.*

Ephes. 2:1-2

*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, [2] in which you used to live **when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit** who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*

God reminds us that while we used to "**follow the ways of this world**", we are no longer a part of it. Where formerly our lives **were "continual expressions of worship"** to our earthly father Satan, we have been redeemed out of this world and as priests, we now wage war against that world. Our weapons however, are not worldly - but spiritual.

2 Cor. 10:3-4

*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4The weapons we fight with **are not the weapons of the world**. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

Jesus himself tells us that we are to tie up the "Strong Man" (another title for Satan –and his world system).

Matthew 12:29

"Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first **ties up the strong man?** Then he can rob his house.

Let's quickly review:

- Under the Old Covenant, the sacrifice were performed **continuously** – as a reminder of their sins and the coming "SOLUTION FOR SIN" – Jesus.
- Jesus destroyed the barrier [sin] between us and God redeeming us [purchased out of] from the "God of this world" Satan.
- Under the New Covenant, we no longer practice animal sacrifice because the barrier to God [our sin] has been destroyed.
- We no longer need a high priest since Jesus is now our High Priest.
- Where formerly our lives were "**continual expressions of worship**" to our earthly father Satan, we have been redeemed out of this world and as priests, **we now continuously give the "Sacrifice of Praise"** and wage war against that world.
- Our weapons however, are not worldly but spiritual **and "they have divine power to demolish strongholds"** of Satan.
- We are told to **Tie up Satan** and his schemes
- As Priests of the New Covenant, we are to go out **and encourage each other in Battle** against that adversary.
- Our adversary was once the Ultimate expression of worship to God, created expressly for that purpose (even to the point of

being made an instrument of worship physically). He was **THE** worship leader in heaven.

- We are now the new worship leaders on earth and we are to **"continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise"**

If you are with me so far, our mission has become pretty clear in the area of worship. The Bible is full of examples of Worship destroying the "schemes of Satan". Some perhaps you never thought of before as stories of worship. Some examples:

- *David in the battle against the half demon/half human Goliath*
- *Daniel in the Lions Den*
- *Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (note: Each of their Babylonian names was a Babylonian deity – or demon)*
- *Noah standing against the world system for 120 years when it had never rained – telling the people of that day, that judgement was coming*
- *Joseph – refusing to sleep with Potiphers wife - trick of Satan*
- *Job - of course pitted directly against Satan himself*

Each of these is an example of Worship – not just a cute story to shut up kids in Sunday School for 45 minutes. Each one is God's man, in the face of overwhelming odds pitted against the forces and "schemes of the devil" standing up and worshipping God – in fact **continually** worshipping God.

Now lets look at one of the most amazing stories of worship in the Bible. It is the story of "Jumpin' Jehosaphat.

The Problem: God's people are being attacked and they are pitted against overwhelming odds. Sound familiar?

2 Chron. 20:12

*O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. **We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you.**"*

Lesson 1: admit you don't know what to do.

But Jehosaphat has his priorities straight - "**but our eyes are upon you.**"

Lesson 2: Look to God for your solution

*[15] He said: "Listen, King Jehosaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. **For the battle is not yours, but God's.** [16] Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. [17] You will not have to fight this battle. **Take up your positions; stand firm** and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.' "*

Who's battle is it? God's. What are we supposed to do?

Lesson 3: Get in position

*[18] Jehosaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem **fell down in worship before the Lord.** [19] Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites **stood up and praised the Lord, the God of Israel, with very loud voice.***

Once in position we are to do what? Worship – with a loud voice!

Lesson 4: Shout to the Lord

*[20] Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehosaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." [21] After consulting the people, **Jehosaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:***

"Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever."

OK, wait a minute...where are the archers, the infantry, the swordsman? This is a real battle – one where the enemy is strongly inclined to seek, kill and destroy them. No one appoints a choir.... " *Ok Tenors in the front, Altos take up the rear....*"

Who would have been first up at the front, encouraging the army? The priests!

*[22] As **they began to sing and praise**, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. [23] The men of Ammon and Moab rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another.*

*[24] When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. [25] **So Jehosaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value--more***

than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it. [26] On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, where they praised the Lord. This is why it is called the Valley of Beracah to this day.

[27] Then, led by Jehosaphat, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the Lord had given them cause to rejoice over their enemies. [28] They entered Jerusalem and went to the temple of the Lord with harps and lutes and trumpets.

Lesson 5: The result of praise is victory over the enemy, and the rewards are great. Not only did they reap physical rewards but...

2 Chron. 20:30

And the kingdom of Jehosaphat was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side.

David – The "Warrior King" also set aside warriors who were to sing and play music in worship to the Lord (found in 1 Chron. 25:1-31)
Feel like you are being attacked on all sides? Looking for a little rest?
Feel like the odds are overwhelming stacked against you?

Get in position! Shout it to the Lord! Worship!

How important is regular worship in the life of a believer?

As Tim Hammontree has stated "
*[Worship] is the cornerstone of a
believers life.*"

Worship is warfare against Satan –
our adversary. We are commanded

*"take [our] our stand **against the devil's schemes.**'*

We are to '***continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise***'

As priests of the New covenant we are to encourage the army

Who is the Army?

1. Globally it is all Christians
2. Locally it is our local community of believers
3. Corporately, it is our own local church
4. Personally, it is our own family

We are told that we wage war not as the world does but that our weapons

Will demolish demonic strongholds.

2 Cor. 10:3-4

*For though we live in the world, **we do not wage war as the world does.** 4The weapons we fight with **are not the weapons of the world.** On the contrary, **they have divine power to demolish strongholds.***

What are our weapons? The word of God, Prayer and WORSHIP!

Do you want to smack Satan and his demons?

Our Corporate Worship **strips** Satan of his **assumed position** in this world.

Yes, God calls him the "god of this age", and the "Prince of this world". But his present title is only his because Jesus has not returned to take back his rightful position in the world. The authority he won at the Cross. This is by choice!

Corporate worship puts Satan on notice that he is no longer the Worship leader. He is not worthy of our praise, only God is. Satan **was** the worship leader in heaven, but **we are the worship leaders on earth** – even though this is presently Satan’s world. Can you imagine how much it must hurt Satan when we stand up , lift our hands, sing praise and worship Jesus *in Satan’s territory!*

When we corporately worship prior, during and after the message we are literally throwing the demonic out of our sanctuary (and as long as there are people in church, there will be demons in church). This allows us to fully hear what our pastor and more importantly what the Holy Spirit wants to reveal to us during this time – whether through song, testimony or the preaching of the word. As we have all experienced, we can be tremendously distracted in our corporate worship. We must learn to use the lessons we from Jehosaphat:

Get in position! Shout it to the Lord! Worship!

In what ways do we personally benefit when we worship God?

The same is true for our personal worship – done as we know **CONTINUOUSLY!** Here we are the sanctuary the Holy Spirit lives in us. Worship puts Satan and his demons on notice that your sanctuary is no longer his. His demons cannot have dominion over us because we are redeemed. That is why if we will continuously worship, Satan will have a very difficult time getting a hold of us.

What concrete steps can you take to worship God in a creative way?