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# **Praise and Worship**

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*International Educational Fellowship School of Ministry*

# **Praise and Worship**

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# Chapter One: Introduction to Praise and Worship

## The Purposes of this Course

As you study this course, it is our prayer that God will:

1. Give you a better understanding of the Biblical teaching about praise and worship.
2. Encourage you, as an individual, to enter into a personal experience of intimacy with God through praise and worship.
3. Encourage the church to see the importance of praise and worship, and to boldly follow the Lord's leading in this area.

## Basic Truths about Praise and Worship

Before we look in detail at praise and worship, here are some basic truths to keep in mind as you study this course.

### **Praise and worship are distinct, yet closely related activities**

**Praise is an outward expression of your love for God.** Praise is a choice. You can choose to express your love for God at any time, and in any situation. You can praise Him for who He is, for what He has done, and for what He has promised to do.

Your praise can be addressed directly to God, but it is often directed to others around us, proclaiming His greatness and encouraging others to praise Him. Praise can even be directed to the spiritual forces in the heavenlies, proclaiming the greatness of the true God.

**Worship is your loving response to the manifest presence of God.** When you praise God, He will respond by manifesting His presence to us. When you experience God's presence, you are able to respond directly to Him, and tell Him how much you love Him. That response is called worship. In worship, you experience intimacy with God, and express your adoration to Him.



**Praise is the gateway through which we must pass to enter into the presence of God and worship Him.** If you do not learn to praise God as He wants to be praised, you will fail to experience His presence, and your worship will be lacking.

### **Praise and worship are the activities of heaven**

When you read the descriptions of heaven in the Bible, you discover that the heavenly beings are constantly involved in praising and worshipping the Most High God! When you praise and worship God here on earth, you are joining with the angels in a constant celebration of praise in the heavenlies. The act of praising and worshipping God is a "foretaste" of what heaven will be like.

### **You are created to praise and worship God**

This was the purpose for which you were made. When God gave you a voice, a mind, arms, legs, and hands, He designed them to be used as instruments for expressing His praise. He exhorts you to present your body to Him as a living sacrifice, an act of worship that is acceptable to Him (Romans 12:1).

When you give yourself to the activity of praise and worship, you are fulfilling the purpose for which you are made. Because of this, the praise and worship of God brings a fulfillment and satisfaction that nothing else in the universe can bring.

### **It is important to God that you praise and worship Him.**

It pleases God when you praise Him. The Psalms tell us that He comes and manifests His presence in your midst when you praise Him. He inhabits the praises of His people!

You can see the importance God places on this by the frequency of His exhortations in this area. If you were to do a study of all of the exhortations in the Bible, you would find that the most frequent exhortation in all of the Bible is the exhortation to **PRAISE THE LORD!** (It is

interesting that the **longest** book in the Bible, and the central book in the Bible, is the book of Psalms -- a book of praise songs!)

**It is important to God HOW you praise and worship Him.**

The example of the tabernacle of Moses in the Old Testament shows us that God has the right to be praised and worshipped as **HE** desires. When the people chose to disregard His instructions and follow their own ideas and traditions, He was displeased!

If you are to praise and worship God, then, you must look to His Word to understand how He desires to be praised and worshipped. You must study this subject with a commitment that you will do whatever He desires of us. If God tells us that He wants you to praise Him by bringing Him a freshly baked pie every week, then you will come to church with a pie! If He says that He wants you to stand on your head when you praise Him, you must commit to learn how to stand on your head! (Fortunately for most of us, He has not made that request!) You must allow God to instruct us about **HOW** you are to offer up your praise!

Fortunately, the Bible gives us very clear instructions on how God wants to be praised and worshipped. In this course, we will look to see what those instructions are.

## Chapter Two: Biblical Teaching on Praise

This chapter examines what the Bible has to say about praise.

### What is Praise?

#### The definition of praise.

The best definition of Biblical praise I know of is this: *Biblical praise is the free expression of love and appreciation to God.* It is important that you love God. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is that you love the Lord your God. It is also important, however, for that love to be **expressed** outwardly.

A husband and wife may love each other, but if that love is never expressed, if there are no loving words or actions exchanged, their relationship is not good. A general principle is: When love is **not** expressed, it shrivels up and dies. When love is expressed, it **grows**.

It is important for your love of God to be expressed outwardly. That outward expression of your love for Him is **PRAISE**.

#### The expression of your love

It is important to note that praise is **NOT** just a mental, or verbal expression of love. It is an expression of love that involves your **TOTAL BEING**.

Some people think of praise as an intellectual activity. They think of recounting the attributes of God. They say, "Oh Lord, you are omniscient, omnipresent, loving, kind, etc."

This is a form of praise, but it is only a very small part of what real praise is. I believe Jesus described the full expression of praise when He said...

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength."*

Jesus was saying that your *expression of love* to God should be a passion that involves every aspect of your being. It should involve:

**Your heart.** This involves your emotions. Some people are afraid to express their emotions, particularly in church. They say, "I don't want to show any emotion in church." But people are emotional beings.

- When you see a beautiful sunset, **emotion** rises within you.
- When you are touched by an expression of love, you feel **emotion**.
- When your favorite athlete wins the game, you feel **emotion**.
- When a new baby is born, there is **emotion**.

What a dismal place the world would be without emotions! God created us with strong emotions and those emotions are a big part of your personality. To withhold your emotions from God is to keep back from Him a very important part of who you are. Jesus said you should love Him with all of your hearts.

**Your soul.** This involves your will. The decision to praise is a decision of the will.

Some people think praise is only something to do when you feel good. When you read the Psalms, however, you discover that David spoke to his soul even in the midst of despair and commanded it, "Praise the Lord, O my soul!" David made a decision, an act of the will, that he would praise the Lord even if he didn't feel like it.

In Psalm 146 you read, "I **will** praise the Lord all my life, I **will** sing praise to Him as long as I live!" That's a choice!

Very often the times when you don't feel like praising are precisely the times you need to praise the most. You need to decide to praise Him because He is worthy of praise, even when you don't feel like it! When you do that, you are expressing love for God from your soul.

**Your mind.** This involves your *intellect*. This is important! Some people express praise to God that has no meaning. They just say, over and over, "Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord."

If that's all you do, you miss out on a lot. God wants your love to be expressed with your minds. To praise God deeply, you need to express a real understanding of who God is.

In the Bible, you see that deep praise flows from a deep understanding. That's loving Him with your mind.

**Your strength.** This involves your *body*. Jesus here was talking about the physical expression of praise.

In the Old Testament, there are seven different words for praise. Each of these words describes a different type of physical activity.

Praise involves physical activity. The Bible talks of David "praising God with all of his might." That is expressing love with your strength.

Praise is the free expression of love and appreciation to God. For praise to be a full expression of your love, it must involve all that you are. It is an expression of your heart, soul, mind and strength.

## **Why is Praise Important?**

You don't have to read the Bible long to discover that praise is important. As we have said, the most frequently repeated command in the Bible is the command to praise the Lord.

Ephesians 1:6,12,14 and I Peter 2:9 states that one of God's purposes for saving us is to be a people who would show forth His praises in the earth.

There are several reasons why praise is important:

### **Praise aligns your heart to Him.**

Praise opens your heart to receive from Him. Praise does this in several ways:

### **Praise clears away the distractions.**

Sometimes you just feel sort of "dull" spiritually. Perhaps your mind is distracted, or you feel tired, or you are filled with concern about all of the things you have to do.

If you try to come to God like this for your devotional time with Him you find that it just doesn't work. Your mind is filled with so many other things that you just can't concentrate.

That's when you need to praise. Praise aligns your heart to Him. When you come before God with your total being to express praise to Him, all the distractions get swept away.

Not only does praise clear away the distractions...

### **Praise builds faith.**

Perhaps you are facing a problem. There may be a physical sickness that's not getting better, or a financial crisis you don't know how to solve. You would like to trust God for it, but you just don't have the faith. You are worried because you don't see a solution.

The solution is to praise God. You put your eyes on Jesus and start to fervently praise Him. You praise Him that He is your Healer, and your Provider. You praise Him for His promises and for His faithfulness. As you do that, you discover that faith rises up within you.

### **Praise brings His presence.**

Praise not only aligns your heart to Him, it also brings His presence. The Bible tells us that God inhabits the praises of His people. When you praise Him; His presence is manifested in your midst, often in a very tangible way.

There are three levels of the presence of God:

1. **His omnipresence.** This means that He is present everywhere, at all times. There is nothing that is out of His control.
2. **His indwelling presence.** If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, God is resident within you in a special way. When you trusted in Jesus as Savior, the Holy Spirit of God took up residence in your heart. He is always with you to comfort, to enlighten, and to teach you as you read His Word. You may not feel His presence, but by faith you can know that He is there.
3. **His manifest presence.** God's presence is manifest when He chooses to make His presence known. It is when He makes Himself tangible to you. You *experience* Him. Usually there are physical sensations that accompany it.

When His presence is manifest, that's when you enter into intimacy with Him. This is also when His power is revealed. (Power is an outflow of communion with Him.)

When you feel His presence, He is there to heal, to comfort, to energize His gifts or to manifest His power. If you want to experience God's presence, and see God work in power in your life, the solution is to learn to praise Him.

### **Praise defeats the enemy.**

Praise is a weapon against the enemy!

The Bible says that you are involved in spiritual warfare. It tells us that you have an enemy named Satan. Ephesians 6 describes this warfare and tells us that you must be equipped to stand against the enemy.

There are times when you know you are under attack. Everything seems to go wrong. Many times, it is just after you have made a step forward in your spiritual life. Sometimes it is when you are just getting ready to begin a new area of ministry.

What do you do when the enemy attacks? One solution is to praise God.

Remember the story of Jehoshaphat? The enemy came against him and it seemed like there was no chance of victory. What did he do?

In II Chronicles 20:20-26 you see that Jehoshaphat sent out singers and musicians in front of his army, and they marched into battle singing: "Praise ye the Lord, His mercy endures forever." They were just rejoicing in the Lord! (Stop and read this passage.)

The Bible tells us that when God's people praised Him, the Angel of the Lord came and defeated the enemy for them. I believe God put the account of Jehoshaphat in the Bible to teach us a lesson about spiritual warfare.

Spiritual warfare is also taught in Psalm 149. Psalm 149:1-6 gives us a beautiful description of praise, but in verse 7 and following, it changes to a description of warfare. (Stop and read this Psalm.)

Before I understood that praise was a weapon for spiritual warfare, this Psalm never made any sense. Then I came to see the importance of praise in spiritual conflict. When you are praising God, you are taking up your sword to stand against the enemy.

Satan hates it when you praise God. He will do everything he can to keep Christians from praising, but he won't stay around long when they do.

## How is Praise Expressed?

The Bible tells us that *praise* is the gateway through which you enter into *worship* and the experience of deep intimacy with God. The better you are at expressing your praise to God, the more deeply you will be able to enter into worship.

In the Old Testament, there are seven Hebrew words used for praise. Each one of these describes a specific way of expressing your love to God. These are the ways in which God exhorts us to express your praise to Him.

These seven expressions of praise fall into three categories: Three express a physical, or bodily expression of praise. Two describe a musical expression of praise. Two describe a form of praise that is a free expression of joy in the Lord.

### **The Physical Expression of Praise.**

#### ***Yadah* and *Towdah* (to praise with lifted hands).**

The first two words for praise are very similar in meaning. They are *Yadah* and *Towdah*. They both come from the Hebrew word that means "to extend the hand". These two describe an expression of praise by extending the hands upward to God in adoration.

"Yadah" is the most frequently used word for praise in the Bible. Most of the exhortations to praise use this word. That is significant.

In the Bible, when the people of God thought of expressing praise, they most frequently thought of lifting up their hands to God. (In I Timothy 2:8, the New Testament also instructs us to come before God with your hands lifted up.)

Some people ask, "What is the significance of raising your hands to God?" The lifting of hands is an outward expression of love, dependency, and appreciation that was programmed into us from the time you were a small child. When you were a little child, and you wanted your daddy to pick you up and show you love, what did you do? You ran up to him and lifted your hands to him!



All of us started life as little children, and we all have the natural response built into us that the way to express love to someone greater is to raise your hands to them.

When you raise your hands to God, it sets in motion all sorts of attitudes within you; attitudes of submission, dependence, awe, and adoration. It tells your mind that you are dealing with someone greater than you are.

This is a very important part of learning to praise God. Many people are uncomfortable the first time they raise their hands in worship. It is new, and it makes you feel uncomfortable. For many, the first few times were a real struggle; the raising of hands was done out of obedience, because the Bible exhorts us to do so.

Once most people overcome the initial discomfort of raising their hands, they can't imagine ever wanting to stop. It is a very significant form of praise.

### **Barak (To bend the knee in praise, to bow down before).**

"Barak" describes an expression of praise that uses not just the hands, but the whole body. It is the expression of praise by kneeling or bowing down to God.

In the ancient world, when you came before a king, you would bow down before him. When we bow down before God, we are acknowledging Him as our Lord, the King of the universe. It is very appropriate to express our praise to Him in this way.

Your bodies were designed by God to be instruments to express His praise. It is valid to stand, kneel, lift your hands, or fall down on your face before Him. God wants you to be free to express your praise to him with your bodies.

### **The Musical Expression of Praise.**

Music is an important element of your walk with God. The Bible tells us that one result of the filling of the Spirit is that we will sing to God. (Ephesians 5:18-20)

As we have pointed out, the longest book in the Bible is a book of praise songs (Psalms). As you read the Psalms, you find that musical instructions are part of the text. Many Psalms even include instructions on the particular instruments that should be used to play them.

Music is spiritually significant for a number of reasons. Music sensitizes your spirit to hear God (II Kings 3:14-16), it communicates spiritual truth (Colossians 3:16), and if played under the anointing of God, it can drive away spiritual enemies (I Samuel 16:14-23).

Two words describe a musical expression of praise.

**"Zamar" (to praise God with a musical instrument).**

"Zamar" comes from a root word that means "to pluck strings of a musical instrument." This word is used in several passages, including Psalm 135:3 and Psalm 147:7. (This is the Hebrew word we get the word "Psalms" from. The Psalms were songs to be sung to instrumental accompaniment.)

As noted previously, Psalms often specify the type of instrument to be used in playing them. In Psalm 8, for example, the instrument was the "gittith". Musical historians tell us that the gitteth was a stringed instrument, the early ancestor of our modern guitar.

The Bible indicates that the instrumental part of the music is important. Psalm 150 exhorts us to praise God on string, wind, and percussion instruments. The Israelites used all the instruments they had as instruments for praising God.

If you play an instrument, the playing of it can be a tremendous asset in your praise and worship of God. I would encourage you to use your musical instrument in your daily devotional time with the Lord.

**"Tehillah" (to express praise in song).**

The word "tehillah" comes from a root word that means "to sing."

It is used in such passages as Psalm 34:1-2. "His (songs of) praise shall continually be in my mouth" and Psalm 100:4, "Enter His courts with praise (songs of praise)."

Not all singing is praise, even if you are singing hymns or praise songs. Singing songs of praise becomes praise when you are singing to the Lord as an expression of love to Him.

In Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3:16, Paul describes three categories of songs to sing to the Lord in praise.

**Psalms** - The Psalms are Biblical songs. Even though we do not know the original tunes to the Psalms, we can take the words of the Psalms and set them to music and sing these inspired songs to God.

**Hymns** - Hymns are songs of praise to God that are not part of the Bible. The "contemporary expressions" of praise we sing today, as well as the hymns written through the history of the church, would all be included in the category of hymns.

**Spiritual Songs** - Spiritual songs are songs given by the Spirit, for a particular moment. They are a spontaneous expression of love for God. There are two categories of spiritual songs:

***Singing in the Spirit*** (I Corinthians 14) - The singing of songs in tongues. (If you speak in tongues, you can also express praise to God by singing in tongues. Allow God to give you a melody and just let your praise flow out to Him in tongues.)

***Prophetic Song*** - This is a spontaneous outflow of praise to God in song that is in your own language. It is not intended to be written down. It is an expression of the heart, given for the moment. (If you have never heard someone who is sensitive to the Spirit singing prophetically, you have missed something beautiful. I would encourage you to allow the Lord to lead you in this in your private devotional times.)

There are times when the whole congregation simultaneously sings in spiritual songs. The Spirit prompts everybody to lift up their voices to Him in an expression of praise. No one is singing the same thing. No one is singing the same melody but, as the Spirit guides and directs, the song flows together into a beautiful symphony of praise to God.

Maybe you say, "I'm not a good singer." Don't worry about that. If your song is an outflow of love, God will accept it as praise.

## **The Free Expression of Joy**

Sometimes God wants us to be deep and thoughtful in your expression of love, but there is another aspect of expressing love. There are times when the love inside of you wants to burst forth in free expression. There are times when you want to shout it from the rooftops! There are two words that describe this kind of praise:

### **Halal (to celebrate)**

The word "halal" is a Hebrew word that means to celebrate. In modern Israel this word is still used, and still retains its original meaning. It means to have a party, to celebrate!

When "halal" is used instead of praise, it describes this same kind of activity, only the focus is on the Lord. "Halal" means to express your love for God by joyously and freely celebrating before Him.

Biblical descriptions of Halal describe people clapping hands, dancing, shouting, and rejoicing before the Lord. This word is used in such passages as Psalm 47:1-6 and Psalm 150. (Take a moment and read these passages, trying to picture in your mind what they describe.)

It is from the word "halal" that we get the word "hallelujah". (Hallelujah is an exhortation to have a halal for Yahweh). It is exhorting us to praise God with a free expression of Joy.

More than any other, this form of praise makes many people uncomfortable. The idea of halal makes people uncomfortable for at least four reasons:

For many of us, it goes against our tradition. Many of us have been brought up to think that church is a place to be quiet and subdued. We've been trained to think that anything loud or expressive is somehow in bad taste in church.

We have been influenced by the ascetic philosophy that came into the church early in the middle ages. This pagan Greek philosophy taught that the body is evil, and should not have a part in expressing praise to God.

We know Biblically, that this philosophy is false, but most of us have enough of that philosophy in our background that it makes us very uncomfortable to think of people dancing before the Lord.

Some Christians have a view of God as a scowling monarch who doesn't really like us very much. You don't feel free to express a lot of joy in the presence of a God like that (of course, that is not the Biblical picture of the way God is with His children. The Bible describes God as a delighted Father who rejoices in His children. The book of Zephaniah describes God rejoicing over you in song).

Many Christians are uncomfortable because of the fear of abuse. This kind of praise can easily degenerate into emotionalism. (I have visited some churches like that, where people enjoyed being loud and boisterous, with very little real love or sensitivity for the Lord.)

There are at least four reasons, then, why it makes people uncomfortable to think of praising the Lord in this way. Despite this, you must remember that this is a Biblical form of praise. God exhorts us to praise Him with joy and celebration. God is pleased when you rejoice before Him like little children with a loving father.

This form of praise was very common in the Bible, and the Bible warns us not to reject it. Consider the account of David and his wife, Michal.

In II Samuel 6, when the ark was brought into Jerusalem, David took off his robe and danced before the Lord. (That was "halal".) His wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul, watched

David dance and despised him for it. When he returned, she criticized him and accused him of making a fool of himself by dancing before the Lord.

David responded to Michal by saying that it was all right to look foolish for God. He told her that he would continue to be foolish for God, because everything he had was given to him by God.

The passage concludes by mentioning God's judgement on Michal for criticizing David's dancing. We are told that because she despised David's joyful praise, God made Michal barren for the rest of her life. The lesson here is to be careful of criticizing other people's praise.

### **Shabach (to shout).**

The word "shabach" means to praise in a loud tone, to shout, or to shout in triumph. It is used in such passages as Psalm 117:1 and Psalm 147:12. This form of praise is very common in the Bible.

In Nehemiah we are told that as the people rejoiced before the Lord, the noise of their celebration was so loud that it could be heard a long way off. They were shouting before the Lord.

Take a moment to read Revelation 19:1, 4-6. In this description of heavenly praise, the road of all the heavenly hosts shouting their praises is so loud that it sounds like thunder, or the crashing waves of the sea. (Stop and read this passage. Try to picture in your mind what this would look like and sound like.)

I would encourage you to grow in your ability to praise. If there are forms of praise you haven't tried, go to a place where you can be alone and try them.

Remember, praise is the gateway through which you enter into the presence of God to worship Him. The more freely you are able to praise God, the deeper and more meaningful your worship of Him will be.

There is a basic principle concerning praise and worship:

If your praise is paltry, your worship will be shallow. If you enter into the high praises of God and praise Him with all of your might, you will find that your high praise will be followed by a time of deep worship.

## Chapter Three: Biblical Teaching on Worship

Now that we have a basic understanding of praise, let's look at the subject of worship.

### The Definition of Worship

*Worship is the heart's loving **response** to the presence of God.*

When you praise God, His presence is manifested in you. When His presence is manifested, it is a natural thing to respond to Him. This response is what the Bible calls worship.

Worship will take place almost automatically when the presence of God is manifested, if you have the freedom and sensitivity to respond. That's why there is not a lot of teaching about worship in the Bible. (There is a lot about praise, but comparatively little about worship.)

### Moving from Praise to Worship

If you are going to worship God, it is important to develop a sensitivity to the manifest presence of God. (If you're going to respond to God's presence, you need to be able to recognize His presence when He comes.)

The Bible gives a number of ways you can tell when the presence of God is manifested. Here are some signs of the Spirit's presence.

**A feeling of deep peace.**

**A sense that you are face to face with God.**

**A physical sensation of the presence of God.** This may come in the form of heat, tingling in your hands or on your shoulders, a sudden feeling of weakness, trembling or shaking. You may feel a sense of "heaviness" in the air.

**Sometimes you just *know* that God is here!**



I would encourage you in your praise times to develop a sensitivity to His presence. As you enter into the high praises of God, a window opens into the heavenlies, and God's manifest presence is revealed. When you sense that, it's time to worship.

## **Responding to God in Worship**

How do we respond to God in worship?

In this section, we want to describe two characteristics of worship. These will help you know how to respond to the presence of God.

### **Worship is quiet and intimate**

Worship is an act of loving adoration. It is very personal, reverent, and quiet. (Praise can be loud, but worship is almost never loud.) Worship is addressed directly to God, speaking to Him in an intimate face-to-face expression of love.

Praise can be talking **about** God, or **proclaiming** Him to others. Praise is saying, "God is great! He is the great God, and the great King above all gods!"

Worship is talking **to** God, intimately, and face-to-face. Worship is saying, "I love you, Lord. You are my hiding place. My soul thirsts for You."

### **Worship must be expressed**

As you read the Bible, it's good to look at the way people express their worship to God. (Many of these are the same as the expressions of praise, but on a deeper level.) Some of the Biblical ways of expressing worship are standing, raising hands, singing, weeping, being quiet, and kneeling.

Many times in worship, if you are sensitive to the Spirit, He will give you specific instructions on how you are to express your worship to Him. When God gives us instructions on how to express your worship, you need to have three things:

**Sensitivity to hear from God.** This means you have a relationship with God through the Spirit.

**Freedom within yourself to express your emotions outwardly.** To be able to do this, it may be necessary to allow God to heal us emotionally.

**Sensitivity to know when and where worship may be expressed.** There may be expressions of worship that are entirely appropriate in your personal time with the Lord, but would be distracting and disruptive if done in the church.

Strive to develop the sensitivity to the Lord to freely enter in to worship when His presence comes.

## **The Pathway to God's Presence**

If you understand the difference between praise and worship, you are ready to understand what the Bible says about coming into His presence through praise and worship.

The Bible gives directions to follow to come into His presence. These directions are found in many places, but one of the clearest is in Psalm 95.

Psalm 95 gives us three steps to follow when you want to enter God's presence.

**Praise - STOP AND READ:** Psalm 95:1-5

- The first step into His presence is praise.
- You come into His courts with praise.
- You come before Him with joyful song.
- You come before God and you offer up to Him the sacrifice of praise, a free expression of your love to Him. God responds by manifesting His presence.

When His presence comes, the next step is worship.

**Worship - STOP AND READ:** Psalm 95:6-7

After you come to Him in praise, your mind is turned to Him, and your spirit is open to Him. His presence is manifested to you. It is then that you respond in adoration. You are quiet before Him and enjoy His presence. You experience intimacy with Him.

Most Christians try to leave out the first step. They try to start with worship. They try to come before Him with quietness. They try to enter His presence with silence and stillness, trying to quietly focus their minds on Him with no outward expression.

Those who try to worship God without first praising God often find that they are distracted. Their minds wander while they are trying to worship.

They are distracted because they haven't followed the directions. The first step has been left out. God says you must start with praise and then move to worship. The praise rids your minds of distractions and allows you to focus on the Lord!

Once you have entered into worship, there is yet another step to take. It is the step of waiting on Him, and hearing His voice.

**Waiting - STOP AND READ:** Psalm 95:8-11

After your praise and worship, it is good to spend time, even if just for a few moments, listening for His voice. Often, after a time of praise and worship, there will be a time of silence, when God will give us a prophetic word or a tongue with interpretation.

It is good to follow these three steps in your personal devotional life, as well as in the gathering of the church on Sunday.

The next chapter is designed to help you begin a daily time of praise and worship.

## Chapter Four: Developing A Life of Praise and Worship

Praise and worship are more than a corporate activity (something you do when you come to church). Praising and worshipping God should be a strong part of your life; something you do daily.

Every Christian needs to find a time to be alone with God each day. This time should include time in prayer, and time spent in reading and studying the Bible. This daily time with the Lord should also include time to praise and worship Him.

The following is a suggested plan to follow in spending time with the Lord:

Begin your daily time with God in praise. Sing to Him. Express your love to Him by lifting your hands, or bowing before Him. There may be times when you even want to shout your praises! Praise Him by reading praise Psalms from the Bible, and by expressing your own praise and thanksgiving. Praise Him with your heart, soul, mind and strength.

As you praise, be sensitive to His presence. There will come a time when you will "break through" into His presence. When you sense His presence with you, respond to Him in worship.

As you find your time of worship drawing to a close, listen for instructions. He may bring to mind people to pray for. He may bring to mind a passage of Scripture He wants you to read and meditate on.

If the Lord does not instruct you differently, move into a time of prayer. Pray for your family, your church, your city, and your nation. In Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus gives us a suggested order to follow in prayer:

- Acknowledge God as your Father, and pray that His name would be exalted in the earth.
- Pray for God's kingdom and will to be manifested in this evil world.
- Pray for your needs and the needs of others.
- Confess your sins, and forgive others.
- Pray for protection from the evil one.
- Acknowledge that the kingdom, power, and glory are His!

Spend time in the Bible. Read it, memorize it, meditate on it, and study it. Unless God gives you a passage to read, it's a good idea to go consecutively through a book of the Bible. Take a few paragraphs at a time, no more than half a page. Read the passage several times. Try to outline the passage. Write down your outline. Ask yourself the following questions, and write down the answers:

What most impressed me in this passage?

What truths does this passage teach me?

What questions does this passage raise for me?

How should this passage change the way I act or think?

What is the key verse in this passage?

It is good to keep a notebook in which you write down the things you are praying for, and the things God teaches you from His Word.

The following pages will sum up some of what has been said about praise, and give you some material that will help you in establishing a daily time of praise and worship. Keep these pages with your Bible, and begin a daily time of praise and worship today.

## **Aids to Praise**

### **The Expression of Praise**

Many times, we think of praise as only verbal activity. It is not. Praise can be expressed verbally as prayer, but the Bible also encourages you to express your praise to Him in other ways. There are seven different Hebrew words of praise in the Old Testament. Each of these describes a different way to outwardly express praise. They are:

**YADAH** - To raise the hand, to express praise with uplifted hands. (This is the most common word for praise in the Bible.)

**TOWDAH** - To extend the hands in adoration, an offering of thanksgiving. (Very similar to YADAH.)

**BARAK** - To kneel down before, to adore with bended knee, to bless.

**ZAMAR** - To touch the strings of a musical instrument, to express praise by playing an instrument.

**TEHILLAH** - To sing, to express praise to God in song.

**HALAL** - To celebrate, to shout for joy, to express praise in joyful and expressive celebration (dancing, clapping hands, etc. -- see Psalm 150). We get the word Hallelujah from HALAL.

**SHABACH** - To address in a loud tone, to shout in triumph.

God exhorts us to express your praise in all of these ways! When you come to God for your daily time with Him, be creative in your expression of praise. Praise Him verbally, praise Him musically, praise Him physically, and praise Him with a free expression of joy! Write songs to Him! Write poems to Him! Allow yourself the pleasure of being in love with Jesus!

## **The Content of Praise**

In your praise, you need to do more than simply repeat the words "Praise the Lord!" Praise should have **content** and **meaning**. Psalm 103 is a good example of this.

We can praise God for **Who He is**, and for **what He has done for us**. One significant expression of praise, is to acknowledge the names of God. The names by which God identifies Himself in the Bible are really descriptions of His nature. When you attribute these names to Him in your praise, you are praising Him for who He is!

An example of this kind of praise might be something like this: "Lord, You are the Almighty, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Ancient of Days! I love you, Lord, for You are the Holy One, Ever Faithful and True, the Great Physician, the Prince

of Peace. . ." When such praise is expressed to God from a heart of love, God is pleased!

Below are listed some of the names of God you can use in praising Him.

### **Some of the Names Attributed to Jesus**

The Advocate - I John 2:1  
The Almighty - Rev. 1:8  
The Alpha and Omega - Rev. 21:6  
The Ancient of Days - Daniel 7:9  
God's Anointed - Psalm 2:2  
Author & Finisher of Your Faith - Heb. 12:2  
Author of Eternal Salvation - Heb. 5:9

Begotten of God - I John 5:18  
The Blessed & Only Potentate - I Tim. 6:15  
The Bread of Life - John 6:35  
The Bright & Morning Star - Rev. 22:16

The Captain of the Lord's Host - John 5:15  
The Carpenter's Son - Mt. 13:55  
The Chief Cornerstone - I Peter 2:6  
Christ Jesus your Lord - Rom. 8:39  
The Counselor - Isa. 9:6

The Dayspring - Luke 1:78  
The Daystar - II Peter 1:19  
The Deliverer - Rom. 11:26

Emmanuel (God with us) - Mt. 1:23  
Everlasting Father - Isaiah 9:6

Faithful and True - Rev. 19:11  
The First and the Last - Rev. 22:13

Glorious Lord - James 2:1  
God of Israel - Isaiah 45:15  
The Great God - Titus 2:13  
The Great High Priest - Heb. 4:14

The Head of the Body - Col. 1:18  
The Heir of all Things - Heb. 1:2  
The Holy One of Israel - Isa. 41:14  
The Hope of Glory - Col. 1:27

I Am - John 8:58  
The Image of the Invisible God - Col. 1:15

Jesus Christ your Lord - Rom. 1:4  
The Judge of Israel - Micah 5:1

The Lamb of God - John 1:29  
The Life - John 14:6  
The Light of the World - John 8:12  
The Living Bread - John 6:51  
The Lord God Almighty - Rev. 4:8  
The Lord of All - Acts 10:36  
Love - I John 4:8

The Man of Sorrows - Isa. 53:3

The Master - Mt. 23:10  
The Messiah - Dan. 9:25  
The Mighty God - Isa. 9:6  
The Most Holy - Dan. 9:24

The Only Wise God - I Tim. 1:17

The Physician - Luke 4:23  
The Prince of Peace - Isaiah 9:6  
The Prophet - Deut. 18:15-18  
Your Propitiation - Rom. 3:25

The Redeemer - Isa. 59:20  
The Resurrection - John 11:25  
The Rock - I Cor. 10:4  
The Root of Jesse - Isa. 11:10

The Savior of the World - I John 4:14  
The Seed of David - John 7:42  
The Good Shepherd - John 10:11  
The Son of God - Rom. 1:4  
The Son of Man - Acts 7:56  
The Son of the Highest - Luke 1:32  
The Sure Foundation - Isa. 28:16

The Teacher - John 3:2  
The Truth - John 14:6

The Unspeakable Gift - II Cor. 9:15

The Vine - John 15:1

The Way - John 14:6  
Wonderful - Isa. 9:6  
The Word - John 1:14  
The Word of God - Rev. 19:13



## **Primary Names of God in the Bible**

**ELOHIM** - (Translated as "God") - Elohim points to God as the Mighty One, strong and glorious, with the ability to create and govern.

**YAHWEH** (Jehovah--also translated as "Lord") - Yahweh is His personal name by which He related to His covenant people. It points to His eternal self-existence.

**ADONAI** - (Translated as "Lord") - Adonai means master. To address God as Adonai acknowledges His complete ownership of you.

### **Compound Names with Yahweh (Jehovah)**

**Jehovah Jaira** - Jehovah will see and provide - Gen. 22:14

**Jehovah Rophe** - Jehovah heals - Ex. 15:26

**Jehovah Nissi** - Jehovah my banner of victory - Ex. 17:15

**Jehovah M'Kaddesh** - Jehovah who sanctifies - Lev. 20:7-8

**Jehovah Shalom** - Jehovah is Peace - Judges 6:24

**Jehovah Tsidkenu** - Jehovah your righteousness - Jer. 23:5-6

**Jehovah Rohi** - Jehovah my shepherd - Psalm 23:1

**Jehovah Shammah** - Jehovah is present - Ezekial 48:35

### **Compound Names with El (Short form of Elohim)**

**El Shadai** - God, the Almighty One - Gen. 17:1

**El Elyon** - God, the Most High - Isa. 14:13-14

**El Roi** - God, The Strong One Who Sees and Provides - Gen. 16:13

**El Olam** - The Everlasting God - Isaiah 40:28

### **Other Descriptions You Find for God in the Bible**

List here any other descriptions of God you find in your Bible Study. You can use these in your praise.

## Praise Passages

One way of praising God is to express to Him the praise recorded in His Word. The Bible has many beautiful expressions of praise. As you express these to God, you will learn to praise Him more effectively. You can express these praise passages to God verbally, or you may wish to set them to music and sing them to Him. Here are a few sample praise passages from the Bible:

- Job 38 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 16 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 18 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 19 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 23 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 29 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 30 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 33 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 34 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 40:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 46 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 47 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 48 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 63 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 65 \_\_\_\_\_
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- Psalm 145 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 147 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 148 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 149 \_\_\_\_\_
- Psalm 150 \_\_\_\_\_
- Eph. 1:3-14 \_\_\_\_\_
- Phil. 2:5-11 \_\_\_\_\_
- Col. 1:15-20 \_\_\_\_\_
- Heb. 1:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_
- Rev. 19:11-16 \_\_\_\_\_

As you read the above passages, take a moment to jot down a few words to remind you of what the passage said about God.

**Personal praise diary**

On these sheets, record your personal items for praise. These may include a record of things God has done in your life; things God has shown you in the Word; and expressions of praise you write, such as songs or poems to Him.

**DATE:**

**PRAISE ITEMS**

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## **Chapter Five: Praise and Worship in the Church (The Tabernacle of David)**

What is God doing in His church today? One of the things He is accomplishing in the church today is the restoration of Biblical praise and worship.

We know from the Bible, as well as from church history, that the early church placed a great emphasis on praise and worship. Between the fourth century and the sixth century, however, the church was invaded by many pagan concepts and ideas. This invasion of pagan thought brought about a change in the way the church worshipped, as well as a change in its doctrine. The church abandoned the Biblical concept of praise and worship, and adopted pagan styles of worship.

The Protestant reformation in the 16th century (and the revivals that have taken place since then) cleansed the church of many of the pagan ideas, and restored the truth of the Gospel. In your day, God is bringing a "new reformation" in which He is restoring the Biblical concept of praise and worship.

In order to understand what God is doing in the church today, you need to understand what the Bible teaches about the tabernacle of David.

In the Old Testament Scriptures, God had two goals to accomplish with His people. They were (1) to redeem His people from sin, and (2) to draw them into fellowship with Himself.

To accomplish those two goals, He gave them two tabernacles.

### **The Tabernacle of Redemption**

The tabernacle of redemption was the tabernacle of Moses. (This tabernacle is described in the book of Exodus.)

The tabernacle of Moses was a portable temple. It was a tent designed and laid out according to a specific pattern given by God.

### **It's structure**

The tabernacle of redemption had three courts:

An **outer court** into which all of the people of God could come to bring animals for sacrifice.

An **inner court** called the holy place; only the priests were allowed in this court.

**The Holy of Holies.** Located behind a thick curtain, this was where the Ark of the Covenant was located, and the place where the presence of God was manifested. Only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies into God's presence, and even he could only go in one time a year.

### **It's sacrifices**

The Tabernacle of Moses was characterized by blood sacrifice. Every day, regular sacrifices were carried out for the nation, morning and evening. Throughout the day, whenever someone sinned, they would bring a sacrifice to be offered up at the tabernacle to cover their guilt.

This continual offering of sacrifice was designed to teach the people a lesson. It was designed to teach them that the wages of sin is death, and without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness. Through these sacrifices, the people were prepared to understand and accept the **ONE GREAT SACRIFICE** Jesus would make for them, when He came to shed His blood as the Lamb of God who took the sin of the world.

### **It's rituals**

The Tabernacle of Moses had strict rules and rigid rituals to be followed. These rituals were designed to show the seriousness of sin.

Before the priests could enter the holy place they had to go through a ritual cleansing at the laver (a big bowl of water just outside the door).

Before the high priest could go into the Holy of Holies, into the presence of God, he had to go through a long series of washings and sacrifices. This was all designed to stress the holiness of God.

These people had come out of Egypt. They had grown up in a culture that knew nothing of God and His holiness. So, God gave them a tabernacle that would teach them about holiness, sin, and redemption.

This tabernacle was designed to give the people a picture of Jesus and His work. It pictures His work of salvation, purchasing your forgiveness through the shedding of His blood. We don't need to have a tabernacle like this today. Jesus fulfilled this tabernacle. Jesus is your tabernacle of redemption.

## **The Tabernacle of David**

The Tabernacle of Moses was built in the wilderness at Sinai. It was with Israel all through their 40 year wandering in the wilderness. For 400 years it was the only temple the people had.

In David's day, the tabernacle of Moses was set up on the high place at Gibeah where, daily, morning and evening, the priests continued to offer up the daily sacrifice.

In David's day, though, God began to do something new. Now that the people knew how to receive forgiveness, God chose to begin work on the second goal; to bring His people into intimate fellowship with Himself. To do that, God gave them a second tabernacle.

He had David make a new tabernacle, the tabernacle of fellowship. This is the tabernacle of David (As we said, the old tabernacle continued to stand at the high place at Gibeah). Under the Old Covenant it could not be done away with. Sacrifices had to be continually offered there. The ark, the very presence of God, was no longer there. The ark was in the new tabernacle, the tabernacle of David.)

The Bible tells us much about the tabernacle of David. (It tells us more about the tabernacle of David than it does the tabernacle of Moses, but many have never been taught about it.)

The tabernacle of David is described in detail in I Chronicles 15-16, and over and over again in the Psalms. The tabernacle of David was the "sanctuary" that you read about in the Psalms of David.

As you read through the descriptions of praise and worship in the Psalms, what you find is not a description of worship at the tabernacle of Moses, a description of the tabernacle of David.

Psalms 9 tells us that this new tabernacle was set up on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and it was very much different from the tabernacle of redemption.

### **Its structure**

There was no specific command given about the structure of this tabernacle. There were no special items of furniture. There was no altar, no laver, no veil, no inner court to separate the people from the presence of God.

The tabernacle is described as a large, empty tent, with the ark in the middle, in full view of the people. The people of God could come freely into His presence.

The descriptions in the Psalms tell us that the people could see and sense His presence there in a tangible way. Just as the presence of God filled the Holy of Holies in the first tabernacle, so the presence of God filled the tabernacle of David, and this presence was for **everyone** to see and experience. Consider the following passages: (Look these up and read them.)

Psalms 63:1-5 - "I have seen Thee in the sanctuary"

Psalms 42:1-2 - Describes the joy at going to the tabernacle and actually meeting with God.



## **Its Sacrifices**

Another difference in the two tabernacles was that at the tabernacle of David there were no animal sacrifices. No blood was shed.

Instead of offering up animal sacrifices, they offered up expressions of praise to God. Their sacrifice was a "sacrifice of praise." Consider the following passages: (Take time to look these up and read them. Write down what these passages say about the sacrifices at David's tabernacle.)

Psalm 69:30-31 - \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 141:2 - \_\_\_\_\_

## **Its' Worship**

The worship at the tabernacle of Moses was serious and somber. It involved the killing of animals.

The praise and worship at the tabernacle of David was very different. It was joyful. The tabernacle of David was a place of joy, praise, and intimacy with God.

Stop and read some of the descriptions of the praise and worship at David's tabernacle (jot down what impresses you about the praise and worship at David's tabernacle):

Psalm 42:4 - \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 68:24-27 - \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 150 - \_\_\_\_\_

I Chronicles 16:4 tells us that David scheduled the Levites at the tabernacle in shifts to pray and give thanks to God continually. He also scheduled musicians and singers around the clock, with lyres and harps and cymbals and trumpets, so that the presence of God was continually surrounded by praise. That's what it means when it says that God sat enthroned on the praises of His people.

At any hour of the day or night you could enter this tabernacle and see God's presence. At any time you could go down to the tabernacle and join in with the Levites in offering up praise to God.

The tabernacle of David gives us a picture of the continual praise and worship in Heaven. I can just imagine walking through the streets of Jerusalem and hearing the sweet sound of praise continually being lifted up in the tabernacle of David!

### **Contrasts Between the Tabernacles**

The following chart shows some of the contrasts between these two tabernacles:

	<b>The Tabernacle of Moses</b>	<b>The Tabernacle of David</b>
Established	In smoke and thunder and fear at Sinai	In praise and joy at Zion
Pictures	The Law (The Old Covenant) Your Redemption by God	Grace (The New Covenant) Your Relationship with God
Sacrifices	Blood (Offering an Animal)	Praise (Offering up your Praise)
Structure	Precise form and pattern. Need to approach God with caution.	No prescribed form. Freedom to rejoice in His presence.
Fulfilled...	At the Cross	?

As you see in the chart, the tabernacle of Moses was fulfilled at the cross. You will see in a moment, where the tabernacle of David was fulfilled.

### **The End of David's Tabernacle**

The tabernacle of David only stood for a short time, about 40 years. When the temple of Solomon was built, the tabernacle of David was done away with. Although Davidic-style praise continued to be offered up in the outer courts of Solomon's temple, Solomon's temple more closely followed the plan and ritual of the tabernacle of Moses.

If the tabernacle of David was only given for such a short period of time, why did God give it? It was given as a foretaste of things to come. It was instituted to give a pattern for us.

### **The Tabernacle of David Restored**

There's an interesting prophecy in Amos 9, which says that the time would come when David's tabernacle would be restored. It would be rebuilt, and the people of God could again come freely into His presence and rejoice in Him.

We're told that this restoration of David's tabernacle would come at a time when even the Gentiles were turning to the true God, and would join in praising Him.

What time was he describing? The answer is given in Acts 15.

In Acts 15, describes the account of the first Jerusalem council. Peter tells the people how the Gentiles are being saved and joining with the Jewish Christians to walk with the Lord.

When James hears this, his heart is quickened. He stands and quotes from the prophecy of Amos, "After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tabernacle. Its ruins I will rebuild and I will restore it, that the remnant of men may seek the Lord and all the Gentiles who bear my name says the Lord who does these things that have been known for ages."

Acts 15:16-18

When James heard that the Gentiles were being saved, he realized that the prophecy of Amos 9 was being fulfilled. The tabernacle of David was being restored . . . in the church. He is saying that the **CHURCH** is the restoration of the tabernacle of David.

We don't need the tabernacle of Moses anymore. The need for redemption was met at the cross. The time has come for tabernacle of fellowship, the tabernacle of David. That's what the church is.

Do you remember what the early church did? Acts 2:46-47 tells us that the Christians met together every day, in the temple courts and from house to house. Acts 2:47 tells us that in all they did, they were continually praising God. (As you walked through the streets of Jerusalem at any hour, you could hear that church lifting up a sweet sacrifice of praise.) The early church was the restoration of the tabernacle of David.

I believe that is also God's goal for His church today. The Church is to be a place of praise. Ephesians 1 tells us three times that the church exists for the praise of God's glory. I Peter 2:9 tells us that God has saved us, so that you might show forth His praises. Hebrews 13:15 tells us, "Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess His name."

The Church is to be continually offering up a sacrifice of praise, just as Israel did at David's tabernacle.

For much of its history, the church has missed the point. During the middle ages, the tabernacle of Moses was taken as the pattern for Christian worship. There were ornate structures and intricate rituals. Those structures and rituals may be good things, but they did not really fulfill the purpose of the church.

God is working in your day to restore the tabernacle of David in the church. He is teaching His people how to come before Him in praise, just as they did at David's tabernacle.

## Leading the Church into Praise and Worship

You have already seen the importance of developing a personal walk of praise and worship. It is also important, however, for the church as a whole to learn to praise and worship God.

Public praise and worship challenges and encourages people to walk more closely with the Lord. Read the following passages, and note how the public praise of God in the sanctuary acts as a motivation for people to seek God (read each passage, then write down how public praise acted as a motivation or encouragement):

*Psalm 42:1-5 -*

*Psalm 63:1-5 -*

*Psalm 73 -*

It can be a difficult thing to lead a church into a Biblical expression of praise and worship. Most of us have not grown up in a church that practiced a Biblical concept of praise. For many of us, it seems new and different. There are some who feel very uncomfortable when they see the kind of praise the Bible describes.

Some churches have tried to follow the Biblical instructions for praise, only to find that many people are offended. Some are so offended they leave left the church. Some churches are divided.

It takes time for people to accept changes, even when the changes are from God.

When God led the Israelites out of Egypt, He did not take a direct route to the promised land. He knew there were some things they would have to learn before they could get there. God led them slowly, step-by-step, to Mt. Sinai, where he could teach them.

In following this path, the people didn't have to worry about the direction or the timing. They simply followed the cloud, and allowed God to lead them.

God is leading His people into praise and worship in much the same way. As the leadership of the church looks to the Lord, He will lead them to teach about praise and worship, and to slowly introduce changes in this area. God will teach His people, and give them time to get used to the changes. The important thing is to stay "under the cloud" of the spirit. If the leadership of the church is committed to following God and His Word, God will give them wisdom as to how to proceed.

It may be that some of the things in this course are new to you. You may be troubled by some of the things you read. If that is true, don't be fearful or offended. God will not force you into something you are not ready for. Take the time to study the Bible for yourself. In your personal devotional time with the Lord (when no one else is around), try to express your praise to God in new ways.

Remember that anything new will seem uncomfortable for a while. Maintain a heart of submission to the Lord, and give yourself some time to get used to these "new" concepts. Make sure that your motivation is to please **HIM**.

Allow Him to minister to you as you praise Him. Once the initial discomfort has passed, you will find that Biblical praise and worship is one of the most important and meaningful parts of your spiritual life!

# Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs

## Section Two Objectives:

To know the difference between a psalm, a hymn, or a spiritual song so that the scriptural admonition to use all three to worship the Lord can be followed in obedience. To gain understanding of singing in the Spirit, which is essential to create a spiritual song. To gain a clear understanding of the difference in speaking or singing in the Spirit as a congregational ministry gift granted to only some within the Body, as opposed to the utterance of the Spirit given to every Spirit-baptized believer for private, personal edification and the building up of their faith.

To feel a response of faith to the truth of the exposed Word, so that the believer will launch out freely into such worship forms during private and corporate worship.

To do that which is explained for the edification of the Body and in compliance with God's Word.

### Scripture verses:

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord . . . make a loud noise and rejoice, and sing praise,"  
*Psalm 98:4.*

"Shout to God with the voice of triumph and songs of joy!" *Psalm 47:1*

"Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of your Lord Jesus Christ," *Ephesians 5:18-20.*

"I will sing with my spirit -- by the Holy Spirit that is within me; but I will sing (in my native tongue) with my mind and understanding also," *I Corinthians 14:15*, New English Bible.

"For the one who is uttering words in a tongue, a language not understood except through an interpreter, is not speaking to men, but to God, for no one hears him so as to

understand what he is saying. And he utters with his human spirit, as energized by the Holy Spirit, divine revelations not explained. But, he who imparts divine revelations to men is speaking with the result of building up the Christian life, and exhortation, and consolation. The one who utters words in a tongue builds himself up in his Christian life," *I Corinthians 14:2-4*, Kenneth S. Wuest Translation.

"But you beloved, build yourselves up, founded on your most holy faith -- make progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher -- praying in the Holy Spirit, *Jude 20*, Amplified Translation.

"Pray at all times -- on every occasion, in every season -- in the Spirit with all manner of prayer and entreaty," *Ephesians 6:18*, Amplified Translation.

". . . Building yourselves up constantly in the sphere of and by means of your most holy faith, and as constantly praying in the sphere of and by means of the Holy Spirit . . .," *Jude 20*, Kenneth S. Wuest Translation.

"Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise," *Psalms 33:3*.

"Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," *I Peter 2:5*.

"And He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto your God; many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord," *Psalms 40:3*.

"I will praise the name of God with a song . . . This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock . . .," *Psalms 69:30-31*.

"To sum it up, my friends: when you meet for worship, each of you contribute a hymn, some instruction, a revelation . . . Aim at one thing, to build up the Church," *I Corinthians 14:26*, New English Bible.

"Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs . . . singing unto the Lord," *Colossians 3:16*.



### **Scripture examples:**

The Book of Galatians makes clear that the Lord Jesus Christ himself appeared to the Apostle Paul soon after his conversion and commission into the Lord's service and gave to him the revelation of the Church which had been hidden from others throughout the ages. Paul was transformed from seeing a spiritual service as constituted by a local group within a synagogue, to seeing Jew and Gentile in common heritage, belief, and conversion experiences participating as the Church within any congregated group meeting in Jesus' name. Therefore, he understood and explained Jesus' baptism which the believer was to receive as the person was immersed into the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist prophesied this in Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:6-8; Luke 3:15-16; and John 1:32-34. Jesus again repeats himself in Acts 1:4-5, 8. The fulfillment began in Acts 2:4 and continues to this day.

The Law of First Mention in scriptural interpretation shows this to be the pattern of intent. All believers were commanded to be immersed in the Holy Spirit, which is normally followed by the sign that they would speak in tongues through the power of the Holy Spirit, arousing their human spirit. This was and is for the believer's own personal edification, to increase one's faith. It enables the believer to pray by the guidance of the Holy Spirit when the person has no idea how to pray regarding a given situation. I Corinthians explains that when a person yields to prayer in tongues, his human spirit is addressing God, the Father of Lord Jesus Christ. The Book of Romans makes it clear that the Spirit of God can take even unintelligible groanings of man and pray the perfect will of God.

The Apostle Paul understood how the New Testament Church came together. Instead of a hierarchical rule and a set ritual determined by that hierarchy, each believer was edified before coming into the service. Each believer had to contribute something for the edification of the entire group. Also, each meeting would remain open for any member to speak by revelation of the Holy Spirit, once the meeting had begun.

I Corinthians 14 is from an epistle written to a group, or church and not to an individual. Paul stresses and gives direction on regulating the public meeting, so that the entire group will be built up, comforted and/or exhorted. Because Jesus gave him such a clear understanding of the functioning of the New Testament Church, Paul urged others privately and publicly to yield to bringing forth a psalm, a hymn, or a new spiritual song created by the Holy Spirit, prior to the meeting or while attending the meeting. The spiritual song brought forth in an unlearned language should then be interpreted to the group in their native tongue, so that they may gain understanding and be edified.

Throughout the ages, in times of national distress, citizens as well as the military from assaulted or threatened nations sing songs that rally national support and unified purpose. Men fatigued with battle have often been refreshed and able to preserve amid overwhelming odds, because someone began to sing a song that rallied support, mustered courage, and caused the soldiers to be strengthened. Such is the effect upon the believer in times of spiritual peace when in times of peace and war, he/she utters psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Paul and Silas were falsely accused, beaten, and thrown in jail. Acts 16:25 declares that at midnight these two believers were singing hymns of praise to God as a demonstration of their faith in God to preserve and to deliver them. Scripture says that other prisoners were listening. The voices, uplifted in song, praised God in adoration of his faithfulness and unflagging character. This caused the ears of others to be alert, and God moved in supernatural demonstration as a response to the faith of Silas and Paul.

Paul and Silas were not recounting the unjust events that had befallen them. They were not expressing anger and indignation at the Romans and magistrates who wrongly imprisoned them. Nor were they inspecting their bruises and wounds. With one voice, they were expressing their trust in God, and praising him. This is a principle of living for the New Testament Church. These two apostles were not praising God in order to manipulate Him, but

expressing their complete reliance upon Him to watch over and guide them as He chose. God chose to respond to the exhibited faith of these two by shaking the very foundation of the prison. Not only were Paul and Silas freed, but all the other prisoners were freed as well.

When a New Testament believer gains understanding of this principles, it becomes a way of life for them to lift their voice in a psalm, a hymn, or a spiritual song unto the Lord in honor and praise of Him. As the believer concentrates their vision upon God, the answer to every problem, God will shake every problem in such a manner as to set loose the believer and also to set free those around the believer. Let's investigate the varying difference between the psalm, the hymn, and the spiritual song.

## **Psalms**

The Psalm was usually a worship form, directed vertically from people to God. It was a song of praise, either from Scripture or a song in the character spirit or manner of the Old Testament Psalm. The Psalms were accumulated over a long period of time. Psalm 90, written by Moses, was composed in approximately 1405 B.C. This Psalm, directed toward the Lord, exalts His triumphant leadership, which led the Israelites out of bondage and simultaneously drowned horses and riders that pursued them.

The Psalms of David and Asaph were written between 1020 - 975 B.C. Solomon's reign provided Psalm 127. Most of the music of the Old Testament centers around the psalms - sung by the Levitical Temple Singers. It was their ministerial duty to sing songs of praise before the Lord. The singers themselves were the authors of these songs, with their trained leaders.

There is a vast difference between the Psalms of God's people and those of heathen people during the early ages. The Israelites were the first to use Psalms as a focal point in worship. They also were the first to give the Psalms a content which portrayed love, adoration, and exaltation of The Most High God. This elevation of God as preminent,

distinguished Hebrew Old Testament Psalms from pagan ones more than any other aspect. In the Old Testament, Psalm singing was elevated to the highest form of praising God.

Psalm 90 is the first written Hebrew Psalm. It graphically describes the inner thoughts and feelings of Moses as he watched his people die in the wilderness, due to their disobedience.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, wrote that the song Moses sang on the shore of the Red Sea, Exodus 15, was delivered in poetic form. Thus, the first recorded song in Scripture is in reality a Psalm. Psalm singing was not formally instituted as part of worship in Moses' Tabernacle, as it was not yet God's ordained timing.

The emergence of music as a prominent ministry to God is associated in Scripture with the end of the journey of the Ark of the Covenant and the establishment of the Tabernacle of David. David appointed singers to minister; he made musical instruments. He gave instructions to musicians on how to play the instruments he created. This paralleled the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem before its transfer to the Temple. The procession of the Ark to Jerusalem was preceded and led by singers and musicians in three divisions. Priests with trumpets immediately proceeded and followed the Ark. Thus, the presence of God was ushered in by the praise and worship of singers and instrumentalists. This is a pattern for us even today as God inhabits the praise of His people.

The prominence of music as a ministry to God is associated with the resting of the Ark in David's Tabernacle. See I Chronicles 6:31. At that time, the emphasis of musical worship was on grace, not law, and was expressed as David sat in God's presence without a separating veil. This foreshadowed New Testament worship and the restoration of the worship and song of David's Tabernacle noted in Amos 9:11-12 and Acts 15:15-17. Songs composed in the spirit and manner of Old Testament Psalms display a yearning after God, joy in God's House, a passionate seeking for God's presence, and a steadfast faith in God amid all circumstances, with constant love for His Word.

Before David's time, there is evidence that the schools of prophets instructed not only in the Law and scriptures, but also in Psalm- singing. Eusebius, known as the father of church history, stated that the instruction in the school of prophets was done by riddles, proverbs, and chanting of sacred and secular poems as well as singing songs. The Jewish scholar, Sendrey, said that it is undeniable that the sons of the prophets received systematic and thorough instruction in music.

King David was directed by God through prophecy on how to establish the Tabernacle of David with its musical ministry. David wrote psalms of praise and delivered them into the hands of the Chief Musicians, Asaph, Heman, and Ethan. These, in turn, carried on the ministry of composing the songs or psalms to be sung. Different Levitical singers carried on this ministry. These songs were given at first spontaneously from the heart of God to the musical minister and then later lyrics were written and preserved.

The arrangement of the singers into musical guilds was in obedience to the prophetic word given to David (see II Chronicles 29:25). This would be parallel to choirs or back - up singers of today. The Levites were appointed to their ministry of singing by David. This appointment indicated legal obligation upon them and the keeping of the desire of God. Therefore, to be unfaithful or slack in this ministry was viewed as being a lawbreaker before God.

In I Chronicles 16:4-7, appointed ministers delivered each other into the power of God. Custodial care for those who were assigned a task before the Ark of the Covenant. Since the Ark was the throne of God, this group was appointed to be given to the custody and empowering of God. The tie between the prophetic and the musician becomes stronger. Not all who sing the song of the Lord will be trained musicians, but many times, the musicians will be leaders in this area.

The word "separated" is used for those in musical ministry. This implied a radical separation, and a complete setting aside of these individuals unto the ministry. These were shut off from all other concentrations of ministry.

The temple musician had to be a Levite who had been trained in a tutorial manner, until the professional mastery was achieved. To be fully admitted into the Levitical choir, one had to be thirty years old, but later, the age was lowered to twenty years old. See I Chronicles 23. Historians of that time indicate members had a five year apprenticeship. The Levites ministered in song, until the age of fifty. They were retired from service as the vocal quality sharply declined.

The temple singers had a threefold purpose:

- To record, in order to bring into remembrance, the wonderful deeds of God. Thus, psalm singing consisted mostly of a recital of the acts of the Lord in history.
- To thank or to confess the name of the Lord, which was invoked and acknowledged with thanksgiving.
- To give forth the praise cry of the singers, which conveyed the soul of the worshipper toward God.

Chenaniah was the Chief Musician and bore the responsibility of head oversight of all musicians. The ranking of the musicians is given in I Chronicles 23:5. Chenaniah, the master of the song was also literally "the prince of bearing the burden." The term burden means one who is an oracle for God. This shows the whole function of the Levitical Psalm-singers, who bore the responsibility of not only singing, but also of bearing the prophetic burden of speaking the prophetic word of the Lord, which birthed through singing praise and adoration. The Levitical singer was termed a seer or prophet. Note how Jahazier functioned as an example when he prophesied victory for God's people in their pending crisis.

The influence of other nations had a decaying effect on the worship leadership of the musicians. There was temptation also for financial gain after the Babylonian exile, because the singers were provided for out of the royal treasury, instead of voluntary gifts from the people. Exclusivism developed, along with the tainted traits of pride, arrogance,

covetousness, and contention. Gone was the harmony of all singing with one voice. Out of pride came a greater desire to seek honor and recognition. Just before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., the musicians battled for the privilege to wear the same outfits as priests. This was gained through political maneuvering. This ministry as originally conceived, ending with the Temple's destruction.

A Psalm may be a new song of praise, which manifests the same spiritual traits as the canonical Psalms. Paul's instruction in I Corinthians 14:26 exhorts those who come together in the assembly to each have a Psalm. In I Corinthians 14:15, he stated that he would sing (Greek word is psallo or psalm) with the Spirit, and that he would also sing (psalm) with the understanding also. Thus, the singing of a new psalm can include singing in tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance to one who yields to Him. This is to be done in private worship as well as used amongst the congregation.

To sing in tongues in solo form before the congregation is an exercise of the ministry gift of tongues. It is not the use of the personal edification sign which is given when one is baptized in the Holy Spirit and can be exercised at will. According to scripture, all are expected to yield for the sign of tongues upon receiving Jesus' baptism into the Holy Spirit, but not all receive the ministry gift of tongues. This is exercised within the congregation and accompanied by the gift of interpretation for the edification and building up of the local body of Christ.

James associated the singing of psalms with joy and rejoicing when he asked, "Is any merry? Let him sing psalms," James 5:13. Romans 15:9, quoting from Psalms 18:49, speaks of Jesus Christ, "I will . . . sing (Greek psallo, "psalm") unto thy name." Christ sings songs of praise to the Father through His body, and the Church, as the assembly moves together in worship (note Hebrews 2:12).

Psalms are sung to God to exalt His name. They are man's expression of praise to God in response to God's revelation of Himself. Such an example is the *Magnificat* or Song of Mary

in Luke 1:46-55, and the song in Habakkuk 3. As a general term, Psalms may include all songs from scripture.

The introductory headings to the Psalms give valuable information, regarding the details of Psalm - singing in the Temple worship. These terms are:

**Shir:** A general term for a song. The Hebrew root is a general verb meaning "to sing." This term was most often used with vocal music and was used in Psalms 87:7 to distinguish the singers from the instrumentalists. The emphasis was on the vocal singing, but it did not eliminate musical accompaniment.

**Mizmor:** Is simply translated as a psalm and its root means to make music in praise of God. It emphasizes an instrumental accompaniment to the song. The Arabic form means "to pipe, to play on a reed or a flute." The Septuagint translates this term as "Psalmos", meaning a song with musical accompaniment.

**Maskil:** Has its root meaning in the term "sakar" which means to teach or to give insight. It is found in the headings of thirteen psalms. The Arabic term means to understand or to instruct. Psalm 32:8 uses the term to instruct. Psalm 47:6 uses the same term meaning to sing praises with understanding. Nehemiah 8:8, 13 indicates instruction to give others knowledge of God and His ways. Worshippers might, then, sing praise to God with real understanding. Such instruction carries over into New Testament Psalm - singing.

**Miktam:** Is found in six Psalm headings. This form was also instructional, rather than merely a worship function. Such Psalms bore a thematic phrase and was usually repeated and enlarged upon in the Psalm to teach a truth. Psalm 16 repeats, "You are my God", and this theme is developed. Psalms 58, 59, and 60 use the instructive method of repetitive phrases.

**A Prayer:** Is prefixed in the headings of five Psalms and also in Habakkuk 3. The root word means a prayer in the sense of self - judgment as a requirement. Requests to God are made on the basis of the singer's judgment upon his own life as to whether or not it



conformed to the character of God. It also implies an intercessory function and petitions made based on having a pure heart.

**A Praise:** Is attributed to Psalm 145. Praise and exaltation of God is the dominate idea throughout the Psalm.

After Solomon's death, Israel was divided, and wicked kings in Judah abandoned the worship of God. Psalm - singing was forced into silence. Once the hearts of the people turned again towards God, the Temple music always resumed and functioned with the organization David had originally given it. This restoration always accompanied spiritual revival.

By the time of Amos, the Temple music had so declined that Amos lamented it. The sinful condition of the people cause Psalm - singing as worship form to lose its purpose.

During the time of Jesus, Psalm - singing was yet a vital part of the worship form. There was also music in the synagogue, as it and the Temple existed side by side during the life of Jesus. Temple worship included sacrificial ceremonies, while the Synagogue was the house of prayer and study. The music of the Synagogue was carried on in congregational style. Early Christians worshipped first in the Synagogues, then, in turn, borrowed from them. Thus, the singing of Psalms became a regular feature of the earliest Christian worship.

Psalms in the New Testament Church helped the average believer to know portions of God's Word, as there were no printing presses, nor mass distribution of Scripture. Consequently, the singing of Psalms and Scripture choruses in the assembly added the knowledge and teaching of God's Word among the people.

The purpose of Psalm - singing was to instill God's Word in the heart, to enlighten one's understanding of God's Word, and to correct one's Christians walk by admonishment as listed in Colossians 3:16. Here, the distinctive purpose was teaching, rather than worship. Psalms and scriptural choruses also warn us of sin and area of your life which need correction. By such singing, the sword of the Lord pierces and cuts away any refuse.

Singing in the New Testament Church should cause one to learn from the study of the Temple singers to be:

Faithful to one's ministry. The seriousness of one's commitment to their responsibility should be seen in light of how Temple singers were considered in legal contract once appointed.

Those who minister in the House of the Lord, musically or otherwise, need to have purity of heart and be spiritually clean. The singers in Herod's Temple emphasized this by singing Psalm 24 the first day of every week.

Singers were set aside to serve. The Hebrew word contains the idea of acting as a slave who stands to serve and waits for instructions on how to function, so as to please the slave owner. Musicians should wait on the Lord, standing in His presence before a service to know His direction.

Temple musicians practiced and were instructed to be skillful; a humble spirit was needed, for fleshly tendencies and the seeking of vain glory worked to destroy the musical ministry ordained by God. It will do the same today.

Every believer should sing new psalms to the Lord during their worship times, even though they may never feel urged to bring them into the congregation. Consider the following guidelines for composing a scriptural chorus.

**First:** If a scriptural passage is quickened to you by the Lord's Spirit, ask Him in faith to give you a melody to it. It should come easily within certain compositional guidelines, instead of you having to strive for it.

**Second:** Regularly sing scriptures passages spontaneously in your devotions. As a melody seems to fit a passage, it might be refined later and taught to the congregation as there is opportunity.

**Third:** Spiritual depression is not the atmosphere in which melodies are birthed.

Israel hung up their harps on the willow tress amid spiritual defeat. One must stop circumstances spiritually.

**Fourth:** Have a song in your heart, which comes from a joyful heart. Isaiah 30:29 mentions having a song in the night season . . . or when oppressed.

**Fifth:** Realize that times of tragedy or testing are great opportunities for God to give a scriptural song in response to your faith.

Compositional guidelines to bring forth such songs to the congregation are:

- Keep it simple in the melody line.
- Keep it short, about four lines or two melodic sentences.
- Limit the melodic range.
- If it fluctuates too much, it will be impossible for a congregation to sing.

Keep it within one octave.

- Repetition of words and melodic line are good, if not overdone.
- The musical character should be consistent with the songs already sung and accepted in your local church Body.

For those new to leading worship by use of scriptural choruses, do the following to help the service retain the flow:

- Keep a list of choruses to prayerfully consider which to use before service.
- List them by theme. This allows quick selection concurrent with the theme set by the Spirit in a service.
- List them also by key signature.
- For instance, choruses with the theme of "joy", which are all in the key of "F" should be grouped together. This allows the singing of successive choruses with a minimum of interruption for key changes, which disrupt and often thwart what the Spirit is doing in a specific service.
- The leader should be flexible and move with the flowing theme of each individual service, even if his\her prepared list must be discarded.
- Choose a variety of tempos and use them in accordance with what God is saying to the people during the service.
- If God is urging joy, us faster and lively tempos. Ordinarily, the faster tempos should be used in times of praise and where the believer rehearses to others about the goodness of God. This washes away the worldly care the same as outer court ministry did in Moses' tabernacle.

The leader should maintain a consistency in tempos that link one chorus to another. If there is indiscriminate switching back and forth between fast and slow, the atmosphere of

worship is destroyed. Worship should build in intensity. Consider the scriptural theme which the Lord lays on your heart and choose choruses accordingly.

New music should always be introduced by keeping the words and music together, instead of someone reading over the words without music or hearing the music played without the words. The best way for a new song to be introduced to the congregation, so they can quickly learn it, is to have a small group sing it without breaking the flow of the service, as the worship leader indicates. After singing it repetitively for perhaps three or four times, the people can be encouraged to join in and will do so with ease. The flow of worship should not be interrupted by having the people stop singing and sit down while someone sings the songs. The introduction of the new song should flow with what is already being done by the Spirit of God.

The designated worship leader is far more than a song leader. He is the rib cage, protecting the heart of what the Holy Spirit is doing. As the leader, he must also enter into true worship. Mechanics are only a means to a desired end. The leader should encourage people by example and on rare occasions, speak to exhort the people to worship. Worship leaders should avoid preaching and breaking the flow of a service by the injection of thoughts, talk, announcements, or other distractions. The worship leader should give the service over to the leadership for ministry of the Word when worship is at a peak. He is to be sensitive to the Spirit during the service, and if God speaks clearly, guide the service into the direction He has indicated. The worship leader should give sufficient direction, so there is no confusion or lack of leadership by indecision.

## **Review:**

1. What is the common name for the first recorded spiritual Psalm?

2. How is this same Psalm used in Heaven? (See Revelation 15:3).
  
3. What is a definition for a Psalm?
  
4. In your own words, write about the relationship between the spiritual revival of the Jewish people and the place of worshipful singing in their lives.
  
5. Name at least two purposes for the Psalm headings listed just before the body of various Psalms.
  
6. List 3 purposes that can be accomplished by singing Psalms?

## **Hymns:**

Hymns contain a component of praise but go beyond to emphasize various themes. Hymns tend to be on a horizontal plane of one person speaking to a person and rehearsing to one another God's acts, graces, character, and purposes. The hymn can also petition or challenge people to give further response toward God.

The Greek word for hymns is "hymneo". While pagan cults used hymns to praise their deity and as prophetic oracles, the believers of the New Testament came to use the term to equate the singing of praise to God Almighty or the singing of sacred scripture. The hymn came to emphasize the singing of God's praise to others as a testimony, lauding His greatness. This would parallel the Outer Court ministry of Moses' Tabernacle and the Temple days where the people wandered noisily about this area as animals were bellowing and being slaughtered for sacrifice, and the people would shout above the din of noise to rehearse with one another God's graciousness to them.

Jesus' disciples sang a hymn at their last supper with Him. While in prison, Paul and Silas sang praises and hymns unto God, and the prisoners heard them (see Acts 16:25). The Greek translation of this event means literally "praying they were singing . . ." It is the verb tense meaning that they were simultaneously blending together prayer and singing. They were mixing prayer, new hymns, or a new song given that moment by the Spirit, praise, and exhortation to the prisoners. The Greek verb indicating the prisoners heard is a rare verb which means, "to listen with pleasure."

The early church sang, and composed many hymns a generation after the Apostles. Such harmony continued, until controversy erupted during the Third Century as to whether it was carnal to use songs in worship service with words written by men. Some demanded that only Scriptural choruses be used. It was the Synod of Laodicea in 343 - 381 A.D. that forbade the use of hymns composed by men. The controversy continued and off and on until the Reformation period in history.

Scriptural choruses became popular again in the century following the Reformation. The rediscovery of God's Word as being above the tradition of the Catholic church brought an eagerness for Scripture to the exclusion of all else. Therefore, the Scriptural choruses retained favor.

Isaac Watts in the early 1700's was greatly criticized for writing hymns and publishing them. He is now known as the Father of Hymnology in the West and was responsible for bringing balance to the Church's music.

To despise hymn singing is to deny one of the forms of music God ordained for the Church today. The use of hymns or gospel songs in a service should edify the Body. Thus, the content should never have questionable doctrinal implications, but be scripturally sound. The lyrics should convey respect for your awesome God and not convey familiarity and disrespect. The hymns sung during a service should be in keeping with the intent and character of that particular service. Church music should include a variety and balance of musical styles. Church music should be seen as a tool of worship, not as an end in itself.

## **Review**

1. A Psalm is ordinarily in a vertical direction with people addressing God. Who is addressed in a hymn?

2. After the institution of the Lord's Supper, scriptures says they sang a hymn and then dismissed. In your own words, write the translation more literally of what the phrase "they sang a hymn" means.

3. Why were scriptural chorus type hymns so popular after the institution of the Reformation?

4. A hymn has contained within it a theme. Write how this should be considered when choosing hymns for a service.

## **Spiritual Songs -- The Song of Praise**

There are two types of spiritual songs. The Song of Praise is sung primarily to the Lord, like the Bride singing to the Bridegroom of the Church. The Song of the Lord is sung primarily to others under the direction of the Holy Spirit, who at that moment, gives the



melody, cadence, rhythm, dynamics, and lyrics. These are the "new songs" spoken of in scripture.

The Song of Praise is the singing of a "new Psalm." This is sung under the direction of the Holy Spirit and is new to hearers and singer alike. Such songs may be recorded when sung in the assembly of God's people and later, learned by the congregation. This was regularly done in the early days of the Church. While they did not have electrical recordings, there were those able to remember the melody and transcribe it into musical notation. Today, such a song is often given by the Spirit and contains such a simple musical line that musicians quickly pick it up. There follows an overflow to the congregation, which joins the chorus as an expression of their own overflow of praise to God.

Eusebius, one of the fathers of church history, wrote of the Church in that era, "When someone had started to sing a psalm to a soft melody, the congregation, at first, would listen in silence, and only sing in chorus' last verses" (*Ekklesiastike Historia* 11, 19). During the Fourth Century, Eusebius wrote about the attempt to preserve those "new songs." Such new psalms were not equated with the Scriptural Psalms. Yet, such songs were seen as effectively birthed by the Lord and expressed for the edification of the Body, since the Lord was exalted. These songs of praise were as love songs from the Bride, to the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Song of the Lord is prophetic in tone. It is the voice of the Bridegroom to the Bride, sung through a human vessel. Many songs of the Lord may be recorded in the assembly and sung by the people regularly in worship. Many such songs that were once "spiritual songs" have been musically recorded and are sung today regularly in worship. Such songs are far more than the inspirational ability of a Christian musician. These songs are birthed spontaneously, under the impetus of the Holy Spirit. The use of the term spiritual, or in the Greek language "pneumatikos" as in I Corinthians 12:1, means the limited sense of "speaking in or by the Holy Spirit," as with all vocal gifts. Paul, in his discussion on the spirituals, does

not speak of the charismatic gifts in general. In I Corinthians 12:3, Paul reflects on "of speaking in and by the Spirit of God". The same word for "spiritual" is used.

According to Paul's usage of the same term in I Corinthians 14:37; I Corinthians 2:15; and Galatians 6:1, it is clear that "spiritual or spirituals" refers to what he has been saying in the context about the Holy Spirit. Thus, the word is used in the limited sense of vocal, charismatic, supernaturally given gifts and therefore, shows that it is under the union of the Holy Spirit and not sung as the product of a man's composition or ability.

In Ephesians 5:19, Paul exhorts the singing of spiritual songs. Verse 14 demonstrates his admonition by giving a new song or a spiritual song before exhorting others to sing the new song of the Spirit. This song has a pronounced rhythmical character; it is a New Testament Song of the Lord as written by Paul in Greek metrical triplet form. The following translation preserves the rhythmical beat as it was originally written:

*Wherefore he saith  
Awake, O thou that sleepest,  
And from the dead arouse thee,  
And Christ shall dawn upon thee.*

The category of the Song of Praise, as the context of the spiritual song expresses the nature of praise and has elements of adoration. These are:

- A love song offered to the Lord as adoration of Him.
- An expression of love.
- An acknowledgment of God's worthiness.
- He is merciful and kind when people are merciless.
- He is all goodness when people are evil.
- He is love when people are hateful.
- He is righteousness when people are full of malice and unjust.
- He is peace when turmoil is all about us.
- We recognize His acts and intervention in our lives and others.
- Adoration is God centered perspective and not a person's view.
- Adoration is a deep sense of awe and holy respect with fear of God.
- God is exalted so that you bless God by your praise.
- The Song of Praise involves seeking God, expressing your desire for him.

The Function of the Song of Praise is to come from the heart as the song is birthed within the worshipper by the Spirit of God. The words can be a simple expression unto God. Therefore, it is vital to have a right relationship of heart to God in order to have a Song of the Lord come forth. See Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16.

The Scripture commands us to sing a new song unto the Lord. The New Testament calls it "spiritual songs." The Greek term for the word "new" is *kainos* and means something new rather than that which has already seen service or been used. It does not mean a song new to a specific congregation, but new in that it has just been birthed and never sung before or seen service in the House of the Lord.

The Old Testament Hebrew word for praise, as in the new Song of Praise, is meant to express by singing or vocalization in the song. It shows an intensive expression of praise.

Such Songs of Praise have an ingredient of joy. Psalm 100:1-2, is a command in Hebrew, the original language, to "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." It is not an option. This psalm also contains the command to come before God's presence with singing. To sing without joy was associated with death in Old Testament times. David sang laments over the deaths of Saul and Jonathan in II Samuel 1:19-27. Jeremiah called for women who were professional mourners to come and sing the Song of Death in Jeremiah 9. Temple singing was loud and piercing because of the intensity of joy and rejoicing exhibited before God in the song.

The results of the Songs of Praise are: spiritual release for those in spiritual bondage (see Judges 5:12). Deborah was urged to awake and utter a song, so that the military captain under her jurisdiction, Barak, would lead and troops and people into liberation. Not only does the Song of Praise bring spiritual release in this case, but with Paul and Silas, physical bondage was also broken, and all the prisoners were set free.

Another result of the Song of Praise is found in Psalm 27:6. The Hebrew word used here is the same used to describe the battle cry of the soldiers as they went into battle against the enemy. David described an anticipation of victory over God's enemies and his.

"And now, shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies around about me: Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing praises unto the Lord." Psalm 27:6.

As a warrior, David had learned the secret of God's tabernacle. If he sang praises unto the Lord as an offering of joy, he would be lifted above his circumstances and enemies.

Amos, the prophet, used the same Hebrew word to describe a shouting in the day of battle.

Jeremiah mentioned alarm or a sacrifice of joy, the same Hebrew word, which would be loud and intended to fill the enemy with terror. This was a common practice of the Hebrew people in times of war.

In II Chronicles 20:21, an example is given of singers preceding the way into battle. God's response was to send an attack against the enemy, and the enemy was slain.

The Festival of Lights, which Jesus celebrated, (see Matthew 10:22) came about because the Jewish forces under Judas Maccabeus attacked 7000 men of the army of Gorgias, and they sang psalms with a loud voice as they rushed upon the enemy and put them to flight. In Joshua 6, the shout was given by the people which caused the walls of Jericho to flatten. The same Hebrew word is used for "shout" that was used by David for sacrifices of "joy". Singing praise to the Lord as an offering of joy was part of the "shout" of Jericho. The same word, "terou'a" is descriptive of singing praise in the House of the Lord as an instrument of warfare. God's enemies are trampled by it.

The war cry against the enemy in music may be the anointed playing on an instrument, skillfully played with a loud noise or "terou'a." Psalm 89:15 recounts that blessed are the people who know the joyful sound or terou'a -- a shout, a loud cry of praise to God -- as they sing forth the Song of Praise to God. While it goes forth as praise to God, it causes a response in God that moves His hand against the enemy warring with God's people as they are under attack. Your Song of Praise is the war cry against the enemy which causes him to retreat. Spiritual victory is won because praise is an exhibition of your unswerving faith in God to protect and to lead you to safety.

The Song of Praise also turns others toward God as in Psalm 40:3. David declared that as he sang the song of Praise that others would hear it and respond. Many testimonies have been given by those who turned to God as the result of hearing an anointed Song of Praise sung to the Lord.

Another result of such singing is that it pleases God as we magnify His name. And lastly, it edifies others, as described in I Corinthians 14:26.

Congregations need teaching regarding these musical and spiritual matters, for this is part of the truth being recovered in this day. Once the Song of Praise has been brought forth in the congregation, the melodic line is simplistic enough for the musicians to begin to pick it up and accompany the singer. The one ministering the Song of Praise should repeat it, and the congregation will then be drawn into singing also. At such times, the Holy Spirit is leading, so that an entire choral and musical offering is given to the Lord. The music of the Spirit is such that by the time the song is sung three or four times, spun off obligato, counter melodies will augment the original melody line with the high praises of God issuing forth.

## **Spiritual Songs - The Song of the Lord**

The Song of the Lord is a spiritual song directed primarily to God's people as the singer becomes a channel for the Lord to convey His message in song. This particular song is considered to have a prophetic quality, since prophecy is God speaking to people, whereas tongues or singing in the Spirit are people addressing God. The new song of the Lord may occur with the melody spontaneously given during the service, or it may have only chordal intervals, instead of a melody line. It may be rhythmic or non-rhythmic. The style of the song is not the essential element; the message is; Christ, the Bridegroom, singing to His Bride, the Church.

The prophetic aspect of the Song of the Lord can warn, instruct, give direction, admonish, foretell, relate the mind of the Lord at that moment concerning a situation in the

local or the universal church, bring comfort or exhort to action. The hearer bears the responsibility to heed the Word from the Lord and obey. Only a proven and mature minister would bring forth a foretelling word to the congregation.

Everyone should exercise faith and maintain a willingness to yield so that the Lord uses him to bring a message in song to the local church. Everyone will not have ministry in singing the Song of the Lord. However, anyone may minister such a song at varying times. One who has never ministered in spiritual songs might first begin by singing a Song of Praise before attempting to yield and bring forth the Song of the Lord, which ordinarily takes more faith.

There is an aspect of teaching in such Songs of the Lord that result in deposits of biblical principles. There is admonishment, which warns and touches on the practical needs. There is exhortation, which stirs others. Edification strengthens, and comforting consoles.

King David showed there were preparations to be made by musicians before spiritual musical offerings and ministry were given to the Lord. By the same token, there are some preparatory guidelines for singing spiritual songs. One should ask the Lord to give them, a new song and surrender to Him in willingness to bring it forth. Believers should daily sing spontaneous new songs to the Lord in their devotional time. This will create a flow of songs from the Spirit. It should be a regular practice to sing the Song of Praise to the Lord. Revelation 5:9 indicates that the singing of new spiritual songs will be perpetual in Heaven throughout eternity. This is a privilege of the Redeemed. The Kingdom of God within us, according to Romans 14, is right standing with God, resulting in peace, which expresses joy in the Holy Ghost. Spiritual songs are birthed in an atmosphere of joy and rejoicing. See Psalm 89:15.

The diligent study of God's word causes "God breathed" revelation and quickening to your spirits, which easily overflows in ministry to challenge God's people.

The Song of Praise are often sung without an accompanying emotional feeling. This is when it becomes a true sacrifice of praise. When the individual singer becomes practiced in giving sacrifices of praise in obedience, instead of as a result of emotional peaks, it will be natural during crisis or times of spiritual war to quickly resort to the practiced response of giving a sacrifice of praise through the Song of Praise. Such songs are exhibitions of faith, instead of the feelings governing us (see Hebrews 11:6).

As the believer becomes sensitive through the Spirit of God to the needs and burdens of others, he should expect the Lord by faith to give him a song to minister to those needs. The should not be a reaction stemming from some personal vendetta, but should come only as the Holy Spirit quickens a burden to you. The Lord will give a song to meet that need in the local Body, where faith is exhibited for it.

It is not necessary that the one ministering in song be a perfect example of all which might be ministered in the Song of the Lord. A person should obey the Lord in areas of specific ministry to God's people. If such is not the case, failure in that area of personal living will hinder the truth of the message. The person should also consider if the burden being felt by him is for the Body, or if the Lord is dealing with him personally in some area of his personal life that needs changing.

There is tremendous power in the ministry of spiritual songs. Anointed music can break spiritual bondage and cause demonic spirits to flee. In I Samuel 16:23, the power of God in a spiritual song caused the power of the enemy in Saul's life to be loosed. Such demonstrations of God's power accompany not only the singing of such songs, but in the use of musical instruments used without words. It is the anointing which breaks the yoke. See Isaiah 10:27.

Anointed music brings us nearer to the Lord. Song of Solomon 1:12-14 indicates a time spoken of prophetically at the end of the ages when the Bridegroom is anticipated. It's described as a "time of singing" in Solomon 2:12. The cry of God's heart is given, "Let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice," Solomon 2:14. The secret of the stairs of spiritual

ascent to God is in verse 14. Jerusalem is geographically set upon a hill; the Jews obeyed God's instructions to keep the feasts of the Lord by going "up to Jerusalem." At the Feast of Tabernacles, the Psalms of Ascent were sung as the Jews physically rose higher and made their way toward the City of God. It was a prescribed approach to God. Singing to Him provides such an ascent spiritually today. His presence becomes known in this spiritual ascent.

The defeated spirit is lifted in the singing of songs of praise to the Lord. When David did not feel like singing, he so disciplined himself that he sang regardless. He commanded his soul not to be downcast, but to praise the Lord without acknowledgment of circumstances or emotional feelings. Isaiah indicates there is an exchange that should take place spiritually when the spirit of heaviness is replaced with a garment of praise. The Hebrew word for heaviness literally means, "failing." There are times when the believer is burdened with an attitude of failure, and defeat is embraced. Scriptural principles show that the person must throw off the cloak of failure and replace it with a garment, a total covering of praise to God, as an expression of faith. As the believer fills his mind, mouth, and the air with Songs of Praise, the spirit and attitude of failing will be stripped away and fall as a useless and dirty garment.

Isaiah 42 shows the spirit of failing and defeat as the image of a candle wick flickering in dimness, about to be extinguished, ". . . the smoking flax shall he not quenched." The Hebrew word for smoking flax is the same as the word for the spirit of failing in Isaiah 61. The promise is that the spirit of failing and defeat will not overwhelm the flickering which that seems about to be extinguished by hopelessness, if we will move in faith to sing the Songs of Praise.

Anointed music ushers in the presence and glory of God upon a congregation. See II Chronicles 5:13-14. The Temple was so filled with the cloud of Shekinah glory that the



priests could not stand nor minister. This was God's response to the ministry of music in His house. God's presence is associated with the praises of His people. See Psalm 22:3.

As the believer sings spiritual songs, the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord is shown to others. Testifying in song to God's greatness both morning and evening is exhorted in Psalm 92:1-3. This not only pleases God and makes the believer turn His mind toward God, but it washes away the day's frustrations, battles, concerns, and any sense of helplessness. God is exceedingly, abundantly able to do more than we can think or ask.

When Elisha needed to bring forth a prophetic word in order to aid King Jehoshaphat, he requested a minstrel. As the anointed music flowed, the prophetic gift was stirred, and Elisha prophesied. Elisha had a double portion of God's Spirit upon him, twice as much as Elijah had. He performed twice the miracles of Elijah and demonstrated God's power in an amazing way. Yet, he found the truth that proper musical accompaniment can loose the prophetic flow of the prophetic gift and also loose one who has the prophetic office. Likewise, in I Samuel 10, a company of prophets were going down a road preceded by instrumentalists on psalteries, tablets, pipes, and harps. This caused the prophetic flow to come forth to such a degree that when Saul came into their midst, he, too, prophesied freely. The anointing of God's Spirit abides within His people, I John 2:27. They need not wait for the anointing to "hit" them during a service, but should maintain faith to release that anointing. As this is released, God's people are edified.

Since the Song of the Lord is God speaking to man, there should be a response from man in acknowledgment of what God has said. That response could come from the congregation by one who is especially touched and who gushes forth in his native tongue a response fitting to what God has spoken through a human vessel. However, timidity often hinders such a response and it will be the worship leader who steps out in faith to reply to the Lord, perhaps, using the same melody that carried the Song of the Lord.

For instance, if God has spoken that hands are becoming slackened and knees weakened and that carelessness is taking place within that group, the worship leader might lead out in a response. "Lord, it is true we have grown slack. It is true that our knees are weakened. Lord, we sin to look at your weakness, for our eyes must be turned on you. We now turn our eyes on you; You are our strength, so we stand upright." With that response sung again in a simple melody, the congregation should be expected to pick up the melody and make the reply from their own heart, indicating that they accept the correction and choose redirection. For God to speak to His people, with no reaction or response, is by far more spiritually rude than for one person to ignore the speaking of another and fail to acknowledge their presence.

Paul, the Apostle to the New Testament Church, wrote that we are to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God when alone and when in the congregation. You are to sing in tongues and in your native language as private devotion, and to exercise the ministry gift to the congregation when urged to do so by the Spirit of God. Paul's own example of pray-singing when imprisoned is an example to the Church today that you are to sing as warriors; rallied, encouraged, and strengthened to recount the character of God and to praise Him for it amid your own personal troubles and feelings of failure. God's presence is then known to us, and our eyes are removed from our problem unto God, who is our answer. Songs in personal devotion and before the congregation should be a vital part of the believer's life, for in Him you live, and move and have your being. When we gather together as the Church, each one is to make a contribution that will edify the group. According to Paul, a manifestation of our being filled with the Spirit of God is that we will sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. The New Testament Church has an indictment against it when these simple instructions are not obeyed. This disobedience leads to powerful results in the spiritual realm. The scriptural pattern is evident. You now have the privilege, here on earth, to sing new songs to the Lord, which will be perpetual in Heaven throughout eternity.

## **Review:**

1. What specific ways does the Song of Praise differs from the Song of the Lord?

2. To sing a new spiritual song as instructed by scripture, one must have been baptized in the Spirit and be able to speak in an unlearned language. Use scripture to show the difference between a person singing in tongues in their own private devotional life, which needs no interpretation, as opposed to the ministry gift for the benefit of edifying the congregation.

# PRAISE AND WORSHIP

## FINAL EXAM

1. According to the Bible, what are the primary activities of Heaven?
2. What is praise?
3. In what four ways does Jesus say we should express our love for God?
4. Give the three reasons why praise is important.
5. What do the Hebrew words **Yadah** and **Towdah** describe?
6. What does the Hebrew word **Tehillah** mean?
7. What does the Hebrew word **Shabach** mean?
8. What is the definition of "worship"?
9. What are the three steps in coming into God's presence (according to Psalm 95).
10. What tabernacle is the church a restoration of?
11. Define a psalm.

12. What was elevated to the highest form of praise in the Old Testament?
13. What is the best way to introduce a new song to the congregation, so they can quickly learn it?
14. What is a hymn?
15. Why did some people ban the writing of hymns in the third century?
16. What is another name for a "spiritual song"?

17. What is a new song?

18. What are two types of spiritual songs, and what characterizes each?

19. What two things must a person have experienced in order to sing a new spiritual song?

20. What does the presence of anointed music do in the congregation?

International Educational Fellowship School of Ministry

*Praise and Worship*

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