

Worship, 'As It Is in Heaven'

by Denny Kenaston

Worship is a powerful and meaningful dynamic of the Christian life that requires a clean heart, corporate participation, and a response to God's glory and majesty.

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Scripture: Exodus 15:1

Topics: "Worship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the scene described in Revelation chapter four. He describes the throne of God and the presence of the elders and seraphims around it. The preacher emphasizes the worship and reverence shown by the elders and the constant praise offered by the seraphims. The sermon also highlights the impact of heaven on those who experience it and challenges the listeners to let their walk with God add to the atmosphere of their meetings.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Our Father and our God, we rejoice before you this afternoon.

Glory, praise and honor we bring to thee, God. Oh, what beautiful scenes before the eyes of our heart as we sang that song. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you for moving upon that dear German man, alone in his closet one night many hundred years ago, Father. Thank you for giving us that song. Oh, God, we pray that you will give us the reality of that song.

Have your way in this session, Lord. Teach us, instruct us, Father. But more than all that, lead us, oh God, into that beautiful worship.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Did you have good lunch? What a joy to just sit back and hear all the loud hum of the fellowship of all the brothers.

It's a joy. Someone said yesterday when the service was dismissed, he said, I can't hear anything for the roar in this place. I said, yes, isn't it beautiful? The sound of all these people fellowshiping with one another at the same time.

It can be a bit loud. Thank God, though. All right.

Well, we're. This is the beginning of three sessions about music, singing, worship and leading, singing and all those subjects. This is the first session of that.

And the title that I've given to the message that I'm having here is worship as it is in heaven. Worship as it is in heaven. Now, when this was all originally planned, I just thought, well, I'll take one session here and get this thing started.

But when I started digging into this book on the subject, it's pretty big, pretty deep. So we won't be able to near cover it here today. But I think we'll cover it enough to lead into the rest of the sessions that Brother Earl will be having.

Worship as it is in heaven. What a good place to start out a whole week of singing and seeking God together. And I guess the burden on my heart in these sessions is somehow to inspire you and motivate you and instruct you that you will go back home and keep singing like that.

That's burden. I know that it isn't always that way at home. Get a little congregation, two or three families in a living room somewhere.

And the motivation isn't quite there to sing like that. But I tell you, if you will, God will bless it. Worship is one of the most powerful, meaningful dynamics of the Christian life.

I agree with A.W. Tozer. Worship is the missing jewel of the church. He wrote that quite a ways back.

But we want to look at worship here this afternoon. But I would like to preface this message on worship with these thoughts. So I don't have to come back to it.

You cannot do what I'm going to speak about today without a heart that is cleansed. You cannot do it without a heart that is yielded to God. Without a heart that is filled with God.

You can't do it. There is a danger of emotional delusion which comes from an attempt to worship without the heart. People do that and it makes an atmosphere.

And the people even sometimes think that God came. Because of the atmosphere that it makes. But you cannot do what I'm saying in the true sense.

In the sense that will bring the strength, the power, the dynamic into your life and into the corporate life. Without a clean heart. And a heart that is filled.

So, you can fall into an emotional delusion. And maybe some of you have been there or seen that. However, powerful things happen when God's people gather corporately and worship the Lord in spirit and in truth.

Let us not turn the ears of our hearts away from that which God says clearly in His word. Because someone else has abused it in some way. Let's not do that.

But rather enter into corporate worship of the Lord in spirit and in truth. With singing. With praise.

With awe. And with adoration. Now, the burden of these sessions on music is to encourage and inspire you to seek a more meaningful time of worship.

In your little churches and even your big ones. When you go back home. We will be speaking about Asaph.

I know your little program has the name of Asaph. But I'm notorious for not having the right title when I get up here. But we will be speaking about Asaph.

However, as I began to research him as a leader of worship. And that was the burden that I had on my heart when I gave forth his name. I found that there is not enough material to build a whole message on him.

However, I did find the man that I was looking for. Who leads God's people into worship. I did find him.

When I began to study. His name is David. The sweet psalmist of Israel is one of his beautiful titles in the Bible.

David. The sweet psalmist of Israel. Who did truly lead the people of God into worship.

And disciplined Asaph to lead the people of God into worship. Today as we consider the subject of worship as it is in heaven. We must begin with some reflections from the book of Revelation.

Because it's a revelation of worship as it is in heaven. So let us open our Bibles and turn back there to the book of Revelation. For a few reflections.

Seven scenes of heavenly worship unfold before John the Apostle. It must have been a thrill to his heart. Having worshipped God himself.

Having tasted deeply many times in his own Christian experience. The depths, the heights, the awe, the empowerment, the dynamics. That came into his own life as he worshipped God in the early church.

But oh, I had to think how much that must have changed him. By the time he was done. Getting all those things that he saw.

And I had to wonder, you know, they say. That John as an old man. Which he was an old man when he wrote the book of Revelation.

He had such a presence about him. That even when he was an old man. And he didn't have much strength about him.

They carried him to the meetings. Just so that his presence would be there. Because his presence added to the meeting.

That's a real challenge to us, isn't it? Does your presence. Your walk with God. Add to the atmosphere of the meeting.

John's did. But I had to think as I was studying for this message. Maybe that's one of the reasons why.

He was so awestruck. So affected. By what he saw.

And sensed. And experienced. That he brought some of it back with him.

And it went everywhere he went. Revelation chapter 4 is where we want to begin. The first scene unfolds for us.

John says a little earlier here in the book of Revelation. That he was in the Spirit. On the Lord's day.

That's a good place to be on the Lord's day. Isn't it? My, wouldn't that change our Sunday morning services? I was in the Spirit. I was caught up in the Spirit on the Lord's day.

Said John. And after this I looked and behold a door was opened in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was as it were a trumpet talking with me.

Which said, come up hither. And I will show thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit.

And behold a throne was set in heaven. And one sat on the throne. That's good John.

That's what heaven is all about. There is a throne in heaven. And there is one who sits on the throne.

And that's what all of heaven is about. And he that sat was to look upon like Jasper and a sardine stone. And there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto emeralds.

And round about the throne were four and twenty seats. And upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting. Clothed in white raiment.

And they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven spirits of God.

Quite a scene he saw there. Awesome scene. He saw the glory of God.

He saw the throne that Isaiah saw. No doubt about it. Same one.

Same scene. The glory. The majesty.

The awe of it all. The God. The only God.

Sitting there on the throne. And His person emanating out from that throne in such a way that rainbows were there. And light was there.

And fire was there. And thunderings was there. And all those things were there because it was all a manifestation of the God who sits upon the throne.

And he saw those seraphim that Isaiah saw. They were there. Dear brothers, they're there.

They're there today. You can be sure of it. But he saw them and they were there.

Probably thought about the book of Isaiah when he saw them. There they are. And they were doing the same thing.

How much later? At least a few hundred years. Doing the same thing. And the four beasts had each of them six wings above them.

And they were full of eyes within. And they rest not or cease not day and night saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty which was and is and is to come. And then John says this.

And he begins to notice the effects of those that are in heaven. And how heaven affected them. And oh, that heaven would affect us.

And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne who liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne and worship Him that liveth forever and ever. And they cast their crowns before the throne saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power for Thou has created all things and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. And so John, he tells us of the first scene and what happens.

And it's like, you know, there's the throne and there's God and all these things and the elders are there, there's four and twenty of them, they're all sitting on seats around the throne and all of a sudden these seraphims up and start to flap their wings and pronounce this thrice holiness unto God. And as soon as this happens, these elders, they just fall down on their faces immediately and begin to worship God. Now, do you think they did that out of duty? Do you think they thought in their minds, Oh, it's time for us again, let's go, fellas.

What do you think? Oh, no, they didn't. I think they were compelled to do it out of their heart. Deep in their soul, they were compelled to do that.

And wasn't it beautiful to see there that not only did they fall on their faces before Him who sat on the throne, but while they were falling, down came their crown. I mean, it's like, on the way down, here comes my crown, because this crown which is on my head is not my crown, it's His crown which He gave to me by grace, through faith, and not of myself. And down went the crown before Him who sat on the throne.

What a beautiful picture of worship in heaven. And the second scene that we see here is the scene of, first it's God on His glorious high throne, and the second is the glorious Lamb in the midst of the throne. And we know the story there, I can't read all these verses, I don't have time, but how this book was brought, and how it needed to be opened, and searched to find someone to open it, and no man was found worthy to open it.

And it was such a grief to John that he found himself weeping about it. And they stopped him and told him, he doesn't need to weep, don't worry about it, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, He hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. And what an awesome picture it is there that, you know, he turned to look because they said, behold, and so he turned to look, and there must have been something in his mind, you know, when they said to him, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and he turned to look and behold, there was a Lamb in the midst of the throne.

What? Yes, John, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, He prevailed, only He didn't prevail like lions do that you know, He prevailed with a Lamb-like spirit that laid His life down for the sins of the world, that's how He prevailed. The Lion is a Lamb, John, He is a Lamb, with the marks of slaughter upon Him, one of the

translations says. And I looked and beheld, and behold, a Lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the throne.

There He is, the Lord Jesus Christ, having the marks of slaughter upon Him. Awesome praise swells up more and more at the sight of this Lamb. It seems all Heaven's attention is on this Lamb.

And what this Lamb did, who is worthy to open this book, all of Heaven seems to be turning its attention upon this Lamb. And when He had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders, they fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them hearts and golden vials full of the odors which are the prayers of the saints, and they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for Thou was slain and has redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. It's like they immediately had a song for the occasion.

They sang a new song there for the occasion. So that was the response of those four and twenty elders and the four beasts. And then in verse 11 He says, And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels.

This thing is going to swell, you know. It's just going to keep getting bigger and bigger, this worship. Behold, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands.

That's a hundred million angels. I wonder what that sounded like. What are they doing? Are they doing their duty? No.

Out of their heart comes these words. All one hundred million of them sang with a loud voice. They're singing a song there.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. Now they've finished. And then every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and as such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sits upon the throne and under the Lamb forever.

And the four beasts said, Amen! Amen! That's what they said. And they're sitting there. All the singing is taking place.

And the angels sang. And all creation, all the creatures, they sang. And then the elders turned around and said, Amen! Amen! And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth forever and ever.

These guys get down a lot, don't they? Down again they go. Compelled by the God who sits upon the throne and the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne. They are compelled again to go down on their faces.

I wonder how John must have felt as he saw that Lamb there. You know, he walked with that Lamb. And he laid his head on that Lamb's breast.

He stood there and he watched that Lamb die. He probably thought, I had no idea how important that crucifixion was. That's probably what he thought.

I had no idea. I mean, all of heaven is swelling over this thing. And dear brothers, I don't think we have any idea either.

But oh, somehow, if we could just get to the place that we don't have any idea and stand in awe and reverence in our souls. Anyway, because we don't have any idea. The effect of the living presence of the body and blood of the Lamb in heaven.

Revelation 7. The redeemed praise Him for the victory. Verse 9. After this, I beheld in low a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindred and people and tongue, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. They had palms in their hands.

And they cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb. And all the angels, listen now, watch this. And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts and then fell down before the throne on their faces and worshipped God saying, Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto God forever and ever.

And then they finished with, Amen! Again. Thank you. Yes.

It's like the heart just flows out. Yes, I agree. So, here's this great multitude and they overflow with praise unto God for what has happened to them, how they've been affected and here we are, we're in this place.

And the elders, they respond. And the angels, they respond with prostration on their faces again. Saying beautiful things about Him who sits on the throne and about the Lamb.

Chapter 11. Glorious praise for the reign and authority of God in chapter 11. Now, we're a little further on down here.

Been some awesome things happening. Some judgment. God has made bare His arm.

He's brought some judgment upon the earth. And in the middle of all of this, in verse 15 of chapter 11, And the seventh angel sounded. And there were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

And He shall reign forever and ever. That was the word that came forth. Many voices in heaven spoke these words.

Now, they've been waiting for that, haven't they? And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats. Now, they're sitting down again. But just the sound, the proclamation of this.

They fell on their faces and worshiped God saying, Oh, we give thee thanks, oh Lord God almighty, You're all-sovereign one, which art and was and art to come. Because thou has taken to thee thy great power and has reigned. We're worshiping you for your reign and your authority, oh God.

Revelation chapter 14. A hundred and forty-four thousand singing harpists. Love to hear that choir.

And they looked and lo, a lamb stood on the Mount Zion. And with him a hundred and forty-four thousand having his father's name written in their forehead. And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters.

And as the voice of a great thunder. And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung, as it were, a new song before the throne.

And before the four beasts and the elders. And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. So here again, just singing, constantly singing.

Then adoration. Then we're falling on our face. Then it's amen.

Then more singing. Then words of adoration. Then we fall back on our face again.

And this just keeps going on. All continually worship as it is in heaven. Revelation fifteen.

Turn there. Two more songs. The song of Moses.

And then the song of the lamb. First the song of Moses. Notice how it falls in line in chapter fifteen, verse one.

And I saw another sign in heaven. Great and marvelous seven angels having the seven last plagues. For in them is filled up the wrath of God.

And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire. And I saw them that had gotten the victory over the beast. And over his image.

And over his mark. And over the number of his name. Stand on the sea of glass.

Having the harps of God in their hand. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God. And the song of the lamb saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty.

Just and true are thy ways. Thou King of saints. Why are they singing that? It's a song of victory for them.

So they sing the song of Moses. Remembering the parting of the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh. Then they sing the song of the lamb.

And they sing the song of the Lamb. Which gave them the victory over the same Pharaohs. Just coming up out of their hearts.

More singing. Oh, I hope you like to sing. When we get to heaven, we're going to be singing.

I hope you like to sing. And I know it seems like you do. And lastly, let's just turn over to Revelation 19.

Four hallelujahs. The crowning finale. Of all the things that John saw.

And with the end now. Babylon has fallen. Mystery Babylon has fallen.

Judgment has fallen. After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Hallelujah. Salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God.

For true and righteous are his judgments. Verse 3. And again they said, Hallelujah. And her smoke rose up.

Forever and ever. Now just picture that one. Just for a moment.

The judgment has fallen. The judgment has fallen. The smoke is rising up at that very time.

What are they saying? Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Just and true and righteous are our Lord.

And again, Hallelujah. As the smoke rises up. It's a sign of God's judgment on unrighteousness.

Awesome. Time to overflow with hallelujahs. But now that you understand God.

And verse 4. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne saying, Amen. And Hallelujah. Again.

And a voice came out of the throne saying, Praise our God. All ye his saints. And ye that fear him.

Both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude. And as the voice of many waters.

And as the voice of mighty thundering saying, Hallelujah for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Praise God. What glory we see in these examples.

What enthusiastic praise. With such uninhibited worship we see in heaven. It seems their tongues are loosed.

And we can see why as we catch a glimpse of this vision of the majesty and glory of God. We can see why. These heavenly scenes make us join in with the prayer that the Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. On earth.

Even as it is in heaven. That's a good prayer to pray, isn't it? God help us to pray it. Concerning worship.

Somehow that, yes, tune my heart to sing thy praise. One of the songwriters said, Lord, tune my heart to such a way that it longs to sing thy praise. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And history would tell us that at times of holy anointing, God's people have touched these very scenes in their corporate times of worship. In fact, that man who wrote that song that we sang in the beginning here, Gerhard Terstigen, I think is how they say his name.

That man touched those things whereof he wrote. In fact, when God's people are in the clear, heaven is opened and they are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So Paul said, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews chapter 12 says, Ye are come, brethren. Ye are come to Mount Zion. And unto the heavenly Jerusalem.

And to an innumerable company of angels. And to the general assembly of the firstborn. And to God the judge.

And to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator. And to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Ye are come. We can enter in to the realms of this worship. God wants us to.

He is longing for us to. Not in a foolish way. But in an awesome way.

Not in a laughing way. But a reverent, jubilant way. God would have us to touch these holy scenes.

Next, I would like to consider some of the history of worship among God's people. It was very interesting to me as I began to study. As near as I can tell, the first time recorded of singing among God's people was on the other side of the Red Sea.

Oh, they sang. They sang. They sang the song that Moses wrote for them to sing.

And they sang it with all of their heart. The first time. The second was the song of Deborah.

Remember, when she and Barak delivered Israel from the hand of, I'm not sure which one of their enemies it was. But a song was sang then. But please note this.

There was no mention of praising God in song in the Pentateuch. When God gave to Moses in the book of Exodus and in the book of Leviticus all of the order that should take place in the tabernacle, there was no instruction given to sing this whole matter of public and corporate worship of God in song and praise and adoration. It began out in the field.

David, with his simple handmade harp, began to love God from his heart with song. All by himself out there. The sheep were there.

The stars were there. God's creation was there. David was there.

And God was there. David took a little makeshift harp that he probably made with his own hands and began to worship God. Oh, how he worshipped God out there.

He found some of the most sweet and powerful experiences in his heart out there with those sheep. It seems out there that David had some glimpses of those scenes we read in the book of Revelation. You read the songs, you'll know what I'm talking about.

He saw into the other world, I guarantee it. He saw into this heavenly worship. But as David was out there in the wilderness with his father's sheep, he picked up his little harp and he began to pluck those simple strings, worship his God.

Little songs came to him and he began to make up the songs himself. He would pluck the strings and sing. He found a few things there.

He found that it caused his heart to be lifted up more doing that. His heart was just lifted up when he did it. He found also that it caused God to draw nearer to him.

He found that it caused even a peace to settle over the sheep. Even the sheep were more at rest when he did that. So he would do it night after night.

Oh, just for the sheep's sake, get them to calm. You know, it's nighttime. He would just pluck on those simple strings and love God from his heart and worship in song.

He found that it made him love God more. He found the hours just flying by. He found that it caused him to be strengthened in his faith and his trust in God.

He found all those things out there. And I don't know, I can't prove some of these things that I'm saying, but they're just my scriptural speculations and meditations. But it seems to me that when God said, I found me, a young man after my own heart.

It's hard to know all what God meant by that. But I'm sure that this had to be a large part of it. There is a young man there singing and worshiping in the wilderness who is coming close to my heart's desire for all men to know me, to love me, to glorify me and to worship me.

There is a man after my own heart. What a place to find a king, huh? Out in the wilderness, playing songs, singing songs to God and the sheep. So David was anointed to be king.

Beautiful thing there, as we read in Samuel. But he didn't become the king for seven years, as I understand in my studies. Seven years of trials.

Seven years of God's schooling. Seven years of sufferings. Seven years of his motives being purified.

Seven years of special training by God in the wilderness. And one of the things which God was having him work on out there, was a songbook. He was working on a songbook out there.

In the caves, under the stars, in that area of woods where the trees are, where he can't be seen. He was working on a songbook. That Israel might use it to sing phrases on the God.

Now the Bible doesn't say when all of this took place, when Israel began to sing. But I can give you some of the history. After David became the king, and I believe it was in his heart for a long time before then, out there in the wilderness, knowing someday I'm going to be the king, having gotten through to God again, in the midst of the struggles of his life, and knowing of a surety, yes, yes David, I said you will be king and you will be king.

I know you're hiding in the wilderness right now, but you will be king. I believe that it was in David's heart as he was out there in that wilderness, someday I'm going to be the king. And I am going to lead God's people into this beautiful, sweet worship that I've found as I've been singing and praising God out here in the wilderness.

For it came to pass that David did become the king. And it was in his heart to take the ark and bring it to Jerusalem. And there he pitched a tent or a tabernacle for it.

And he put the ark, the ark of the covenant in this tabernacle. And by the way, he didn't put it in a dark place where no one could see it. Not at this point.

It was just there in that tabernacle. He put it there. At the time that David brought the ark up to Jerusalem and placed it in the tent, he commissioned Asaph and a large number of other Levites to play instruments and sing several times through the day before that ark.

And he also commissioned them, when we take that ark and move it to Jerusalem, you will do that in front of the ark all the way to Jerusalem. This is the first time that you find it in the Scriptures. It was in David's heart.

Then David passed all of this on to Solomon to be instituted in the temple worship. And when Solomon built the temple, it's recorded in the book of the Chronicles, that they did just that. They instituted singing.

The singing of psalms and worship and praise before God. Well, did David just dream this whole thing up? Was it just his good idea? As some have said, 2 Chronicles chapter 29 and verse 25 says this, it says of David and of Gad, the king seer, and Nathan, the prophet, that all three of them said, this worship shall be instituted in the new temple. And the Bible says these words, for so was the command of the Lord by His

prophets to do this.

So it was the command of the Lord by His prophets, His prophet David, and His prophet Gad, and His prophet Nathan, to do these things. Now, this was quite an organized system of worship, and it appears to me that it was a bit later in Israel's history that the congregation began to enter into the singing, but at first they didn't. It was just the Levites, 8,000 men, 8,000 of them divided into 24 courses to play and sing praises and to give thanks before the Lord continually and several times through the day.

It was a major part of the temple worship. And these 8,000, they were helped by the children of Israel financially so that they could give themselves to preparing their hearts for the service of God in singing and praising God before Him continually, says in the Bible. Three men who were placed specifically in charge of this work.

Their names were Asaph, and Haman, and Jaduthun. These three men, each one represented the three sons of Levi. These three men, the Bible says, and calls them all prophets.

Prophets! Men in whom the Spirit of God dwells, that they prophesied, called them prophets. And the Bible says that they did prophesy. Now, it's hard for me to tell, as I was studying this in the Scripture, whether God is saying that they prophesied, that is, they spoke words, or if their prophesying was simply singing under the unction of the Holy Ghost, just like speaking under the unction of the Holy Ghost was prophesying.

It's hard for me to tell, but the Bible says that they prophesied, and they were commanded to prophesy before the Lord as they sang and as they played. These three men. David knew, and God knew, the power and the influence that this singing would have on the temple worship.

And therefore, God, through David, instituted this beautiful thing which we do so freely here now, singing like this with all of our hearts. I get the picture as I study and see how Asaph and the others prepared themselves to lead the Levites in worship, that it was no little thing to them. It was not a little thing.

It wasn't, you know, oh, it's my turn to lead the singing today now. Okay, let me see now. I like this one, and I like this one, and oh, that's a good one, and we'll sing that one.

It wasn't that way with Asaph. It wasn't that way. I get rather the picture that Asaph saw this work that was given to him by God through David the king and the prophet David, that it is a spiritual work, that it must be anointed, and like the prophet prepared himself to prophesy, so also shall Asaph prepare himself to lead the people of God in temple worship.

And as I studied, it seemed that all the others did the same also. There were times of training. There were times of preparation.

There were times when older ones that knew more how to sing took younger ones who didn't know how and brought them under their wing, and this thing was passed on from generation to generation to generation, and if you follow it down through the history of Israel, you'll see that thing was just as important to them as the Levites and as the priests and the words that they spoke, so also it was important that the singing would be done under the unction and the anointing of God. Now, these things I never saw before until I started studying all this. The only thing that I knew was that in my own heart it seemed to me that Asaph was used by God to lead the people of God, to worship God, and that he prepared his heart to do so.

As time went on, the people entered in to the worship and the singing and the praising, and you can see it as you go through the Psalms, some of the commands that are given there. Praise ye the Lord, all ye peoples, praise ye the Lord in song. Very interesting to me as I was studying that when the good kings reigned, in Jerusalem, they always instituted the singing.

And when Israel failed and bad kings reigned, the singing was always lost. Isn't that interesting, Brother Mose? The singing always went down. Now, it didn't just go like that.

It went like this. And then it was gone. But every one of those kings, when all of a sudden they woke up and they realized again who God is, they immediately instituted the worship of God in song.

That God's people and these Levites shall give themselves to God wholly and shall prepare themselves to sing and to praise God and to give thanks unto God continually. And every time there was a revival in Israel, they obtained the singing again. Isn't that beautiful? Oh, it seems to me that when God's people get in contact with the Spirit of God, they just join in with the heavenly choir.

They don't even realize they're being caught up in it. But it just happens. And I've watched it happen so many times, and we're watching it happen here this week, aren't we? What a joy, even from the beginning.

The first song this morning, I thought, oh Lord, this is heavenly. This is heavenly. Now, I'm not saying here this afternoon that we all need to start dancing around here, playing tambourines, blowing trumpets.

I'm not saying all of that. But oh, for that joyful, exuberant, wholehearted singing that the Psalms tells us to do. And I'm not saying here this afternoon that you must have a song leader in your congregation.

I'm not saying that. Let all prepare for worship like Asaph did. Amen? Some say we shouldn't have a song leader.

He shouldn't be standing up there. Okay, amen. No problem.

But if you're not going to appoint somebody to get a hold of God, to lead the people there, then you better all be getting there yourself. And I'll tell you, you probably won't need a song leader if you all get there. But you know how it is.

But I am saying this, if we do have the responsibility, and I know there are lots of song leaders in this room, if we do have that responsibility, oh dear brother, lay yourself out before God. Don't just rush in there, you know, Sunday morning and look both ways and get up on the front seat of the pew and quick find a few songs, you know, because it's your turn. No, no, no, no, no, no.

You don't understand what you're doing. You're just going to get up there and lead the people to sing a few songs. That's not what God wants.

God wants you to lead the people to worship God. God wants you to be in such a spirit of worship that your heart of worship affects them all if they're not in tune. So don't just rush in there and flip through the book, you know, and find a couple songs.

If you are one of those who is called upon to lead the singing, you need to be in that prayer meeting on Sunday morning to get a sense of what God is going to do. And you ought to be up early Sunday morning walking and praying and saying, God, oh Father, it's my turn. It's my turn to be Asaph.

That's what Asaph did. See, they didn't all sing. Not all 8,000 of them.

They divided them up. They divided them up, 8,000 of them into 24 courses and it worked out to be about 300 at a time. So they didn't all do it at once, but when it was their turn, it was big stuff.

Big stuff. So I'm only encouraging you that if it is our responsibility to let us prepare like Asaph, let us get that prophetic, unctionized spirit like Asaph had. Some may say, and I've heard it said before, well, the psalms are Scripture.

Shall we just sing psalms? Just the psalms? No. I don't believe so. And I'll tell you why.

Because the psalms are according to the Old Testament revelation of God and His will. We're now in the New Testament. Oh, such a body of truth has been revealed to the church of Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament, you can't just sing the songs. God wants us to get at the heart of the matter in these things. Some of you have heard of Martin Luther.

Do you know what they call Martin Luther? They call him the father of congregational singing. Do you know where he got that name? Because, as always, but in the dark ages, no singing. No singing.

And when Luther got a glimpse of justification by faith and the grace that can come into the heart of a man who is justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, all of a sudden he was inspired not only to get the people reading in their own tongue the Bible, but to get the people singing the songs of Zion. And so he started writing songs and he got the people singing. And it was said of him that he had all Germany singing.

And Luther said these words. You mark them. Let me control Germany's singing and I will control Germany.

May God help us to go beyond the little ditties of the day. I love you, Lord. I love you, Lord.

I love you, Lord. I love you, Lord. In 25 different ways with 25 different beats.

May God take us further than that. Further than that. But, lest we get too judgmental here, it's about time we start overflowing with a heart of love in worship to God when we get together.

Amen? Instead of just coming and singing a song. Oh, it's time to sing the songs. No, you're missing it, my friend.

Our heart should be saying, I love you, Lord. I love you, Lord. I love you, Lord.

But with that heart, we should take this book and all the truths of this book and the beautiful hymns that were given to us like the one we sang here this afternoon and let that heart revel in all the truth of the love of God and the revelation of God in song. We should do that. God has secrets hidden in there that we know not of even to this day.

God help us. Spurgeon said it this way. Spurgeon said, I'm sad that the propriety of modern singing frightens our congregations from singing lustily.

And he went on to say, as for me, I delight in full bursts of praise and the heartiness of congregational singing. That's what Spurgeon said. I have to agree with Spurgeon.

I delight in that. I mean, this singing here, like today, this is wonderful. Brethren, I just delight in that when your hearts are just, you know, wholehearted, you know.

Listen to what John Wesley said. He said, Sing lustily with good courage. Beware of singing when you're half dead.

That's what Wesley said. Beware of singing when you're half dead, but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice, says Wesley, or ashamed to be heard.

Sing spiritually and attend to the sense of what you are singing. Good counsel. Good counsel for him.

You know who he was writing that to? John Wesley? All these little Methodist fellowships. Three or four families over here. Three or four over there.

Down here another three or four. Not big churches. Just little fellowships.

That was Wesley's counsel to all the little fellowships. Sing lustily with good courage. Amen.

Beloved, let us move toward worship as it is in heaven. There are many, many more things that I could say. Many more.

This is not a little subject in this book. Not a little one. No.

And I tell you, it's no little hurt when we neglect to worship God with our whole heart in praise, adoration, and song continually. It's no little hurt to us when we neglect that. I have noticed in my travels that where there's a little group of believers who sing like this that I'm saying, heaven comes down into that place.

Whether there's no dynamic leaders there or not, heaven comes down in that place. They don't sing it all in tune. Now, I think if you know how to sing in tune, you ought to sing in tune.

And I believe that's pleasing to God if you know how. But God is not going around listening to all the notes. God is listening to the hearts.

And God looks down upon those little fellowships where the people are who sing lustily with courage, who gather together and worship God just out of love for God. And just like the Bible says the Lord inhabits the praises of His people, God comes and settles down upon them. And I've also noticed that those little fellowships don't stay little very long.

I've noticed that. And I've noticed this also. I've been in other meetings where the singing just kind of drags along and everybody's afraid of their voice.

And nobody will lead out. And I mean, if I'm there, I do, even though I'm not a song leader. But I do it anyway.

But they're all afraid of their voice. Because they're all afraid of their voice, nobody lifts up their voice because nobody lifts up their voice, nobody else lifts up their voice. And by the end of the song service, yuck! It's slow.

It's not here. It's down here. And the whole meeting drags along according to the climate and atmosphere of all the people that were afraid that somebody might hear them worshipping God with all of their heart.

I've seen it. So I want to encourage you. You're going to get a good dose all week long of experience in what I'm talking to you about.

Now, you go home and do the same thing. It doesn't matter. If it doesn't all sound right, it doesn't matter, I tell you.

Don't worry about it. It doesn't matter. God wants you to love Him with all of your heart.

That's what matters. And express it in song when you gather together in the name of the Lord Jesus. Let us pray.

O Lord, we love You, Father. We love You, Lord. And what a joy.

What a joy just to share this message, Father. What a thrill to my own soul. What a joy to see all these men here, Father, who love You.

What a joy to hear them sing. I'm sure You're more filled with joy than I. O lead us, dear Father. Let Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, O Lord, on earth, even as it is in heaven. O God, bring us in tune with heaven that we may join in with all those who fall on their face, casting their crowns and singing with all their heart. I pray in Jesus Christ's name.

Amen. Thank you.

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