

## Lord, teach us to Worship Part 3: The Biblical Model for Worship

FUNNY JOKE [Insert here... on phone: Man and imprisoned son]

So, Scripturally, we have learned a few things about worship in our first two teachings of this series:

- God seeks true worshippers who worship Him in spirit and in truth (**John 4:23, 24**)
- God is constantly revealing Himself and it requires a proper response: worship (**Romans 1**)
- God is looking for sacrificial worship / Does your worship cost you something?
- When we worship (place highest value) on something other than God, that's idolatry
- We are created for God's glory (His thoughts and opinions about our identity and our destiny) and to experience His glory (His weighty presence)
- Worship is a lifestyle, not an event. Everything we do can and should be worship

Having said these things, musical worship is something that has always been prominent in the Scriptures and in God's design of how He was to be worshipped and how He desires to be worshipped. A cursory read through both Old and New Testaments shows us this.

God told Moses to build the Tabernacle according to the pattern He showed Moses:

***"See that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain."*** -Exodus 25:40

God had very specific plans that included specific elements and spaces and ways that worship would be offered in both the Tabernacle and eventually the Temple that was built by Solomon. Some of it was spiritually pragmatic, such as the altar and sacrifices that were necessary to atone/cover over the sins of the people through the blood of bull and goats (**Hebrews 10**); much of it was a type or symbolic of things that take place in the spiritual realm or things that would be a prophetic type of future events; and all of it is patterned after the actual spiritual Temple that exists in Heaven. Yes, there is a Temple in Heaven...

The way the Temple is laid out in its design is also important. There is an order in which you approach God in the Temple. There are 4 major areas of the Temple: The Outer Courts, the Inner Court, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. **[SLIDE: Picture of the Temple Layout]** Only certain groups of people were allowed in certain areas of the Temple. The Holy Place was reserved for the Priests and in the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant was, only the High Priest could go in once a year.

When we think about the Temple, we often think about it from mankind's perspective towards God: The Nation of Israel, as individuals and families would come to the Temple to worship and to bring sacrifices, but we rarely think about it from God's perspective towards mankind. Why did He want a Temple built?

In that same chapter in Exodus where God tells Moses how to build the Tabernacle, He drops this gem in **Exodus 25:8**:

***“Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.”***

From God’s perspective, it wasn’t just about the sacrifices and the worship, it was about Him wanting to be among His people... to be with them. God doesn’t want to be far off; He wants us to be near Him and He wants to be close to us.

Now with the Temple system, there was a barrier to almost all of His Nation experiencing His presence, but that wasn’t God’s heart.

Moses regularly spent time “face-to-face” with God. Joshua, son of Nun, would also linger in the Tabernacle, which interestingly enough, was also referred to as the “Tent of Meeting” to experience the presence of God:

***“Thus, the LORD used to speak to Moses, face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.” -Exodus 33:11***

How we ended up with a Temple system whereby only 1 person could enter into the presence of God, 1 time a year, had more to do with man’s rejection of God, than God’s rejection of man.

In the Scriptures, there is this pattern of rejection of intimacy and relationship:

What was lost in the Garden when Adam and Eve sinned? Intimate relationship; not just “You’re my God and I’m your servant or acolyte.” God walked with them in the cool of the day.

What was lost at Mt. Sanai? Intimate relationship at a corporate level. The Nation (Tribes) of Israel settled for a mediator (Moses), instead of hearing from and being led by God Himself.

What was lost when Messiah Yeshua (Yeshua ha Mashiach) came and was rejected by the Pharisees and Sadducees, the religious leaders of His day? The chance for redemption of the first 2 sins. Yeshua Ha Mashiach came and “tabernacled” amongst them... and they “received Him not...”

God wants to be near to us, in our midst. The question then becomes: Do we desire Him to be in our midst? Not just sing *about* Him, but to sing *to Him and be with Him...*

Next week we are going to look at musical worship more specifically and why musical worship has an elevated status in the Bible, as far as worship goes; BUT, the pattern of Temple worship was given to show us a spiritual progression (remember: many things were given to us as “types”)

***Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;***

***We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations. -Psalm 100 (emphasis mine)***

Remember the progression of Temple worship: Outer Courts, Inner Courts, Holy Place, Holy of Holies, where the presence of God was, with the Ark of the Covenant. One of our main goals in worship must be to experience His presence. He wants to be with us, to be in our midst.

***Psalm 22:3 God inhabits the praises of His people (He is enthroned upon...)***

When Jesus died upon the Cross, if you remember, the Curtain in the Temple that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies was torn in two. It was a foot thick and it tore from the top to the bottom. God Himself, through the sacrifice of His Son, removed the barrier that separated us from His presence.

As believers, we can choose to live in a place of fullness, as it relates to experiencing God and His presence on a daily basis:

- We are spiritually seated in Heavenly places with Christ according to **Ephesians 1 & 2**
- We can be continually filled with His Spirit according to **Ephesians 5:18**
- We can experience God's presence tangibly when we worship Him, both individually and corporately according to **Matthew 18:20**

If you remember, I once taught that Bible declares that: God does not dwell in a Temple made with human hands (**Acts 17:24**). We are His Temple, both individually (**1 Corinthians 6:19**) and Corporately (**1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:5**)

There are so many benefits to being in His presence and having His presence among us, in our midst. Next week we will look at Biblical expressions of Worship and how those play a part in our inviting God into our midst.