

Why Worship?

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Praise is a powerful tool in the hands of the believer to declare the worth of God. Because of who God is and all He has done, we have all the more reason to lift our hearts and voices in worship every day.

Judges 5

INTRO

The book of Judges is a book of cycles. There is a cycle of the people of Israel that occurs 7 times throughout the book. The cycle: The rebellion of God's people, the oppression of God's people, the repentance of God's people, and the restoration of God's people.

Surely a book applicable for all Christians, as we tend to go through a similar cycle in our own lives!

In chapter 4, we are introduced to Deborah, a strong woman of God, who stood up as a leader in the midst of a nation whose men were not willing to lead with bravery.

- God used her powerfully to lead his people and to motivate a scared, unsure, timid Barak (The general of Israel's armies) to become a warrior and leader of God's people.
- We saw another strong woman, Jael. She was a kind-spirited gentle lady; Well, maybe not... She took the battle into her own hands. Sisera the general of the Canaanite's armies came into her tent looking for refuge as he was running from defeat.
- He asked her for water, but she had a plan. She gave him warm milk, put him to bed and reassured him that everything will be all right. While he slept, ***she softly came*** to him with a tent peg and WHAM nailed his head through his temple all the way to the ground.

APPLICATION

As we come to chapter 5 we have to keep in mind what Deborah and Barak just experienced. The children of Israel without any advanced weaponry just routed the most powerful, technologically advanced army in their region. They possessed 900 iron chariots. So, upon this amazing victory, what do they IMMEDIATELY do?

- They do what Moses did when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, what Hannah did when God answered her prayer for a child, what King David did almost on every possible occasion, what Nehemiah and the children of Israel did after completing the impossible task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, what Mary did when she found out she would give birth to the Messiah, what Jesus did with His disciples before he went to the cross, and what Paul and Silas did at midnight when they found themselves in prison... ***They sang a song of worship to God!***

Judges chapter 5 is one long song in response to what God had done.

- **BUT HERE IS MY POINT:** For all the amazing works that God has done, for who He is and how He has saved us... many times there is no better way to express your joy or gratitude, your brokenness or victory, or His worthiness than worshipping the Lord through singing a song.

I believe that singing is one of the highest forms of human communication and expression.

- Who despises any form of music? Any time music comes on, no matter what kind of music it is, you plug your ears and run out of the room.
- If you do, you are of the vast minority, and most likely you like music, you just haven't discovered it yet.

Music connects us to moments and expresses deep emotions. This is why the world runs to music.

- Music and lyric have a way of opening deep parts of our soul and emotions that we didn't realize were there.
- Why is this? I believe it's because we are created in the image of God, and music originated in heaven, not on earth. Melody and song existed before the physical universe existed. Music predates time itself!

Did you know that the heavens and the earth were created in the presence of singing and worship? Check this out!

Job 38:4-7 NKJV – “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars (angels) sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

APPLICATION

The term “sons of God” (not to be confused with “The Son of God”) is an Old Testament reference to the angels.

- Angels are often referred to as stars. I guess you could call them the first rock stars because as God was forming the earth, they were busy singing praises!
- Sang – ranan – to sing with gladness and joy.

But there's another biblical connection to angels and music, and it's not an encouraging one.

- In **Ezekiel 28** we read about the creation of Lucifer the angel, the cherub that covered, the son of the morning. We are told that he was created with ***timbrels and pipes (28:13)***, forms of musical instruments. Lucifer apparently controlled the flow of worship and praise in heaven.
- ***BTW – This should serve as a warning to every worship leader. Take one look at the world's music industry and you'll see that the devil still keeps music and pride tied together at the hip.***

THIS IS MY OPINION BASED ON AN OBSERVATION: When Satan rebelled and was cast out of heaven, I personally believe the angels stopped singing. I might be wrong, but it's merely based on observation. You say, “No, that's not right.” Did you know that there is no other verse in the Bible that specifically refers to the angels singing?

At the birth of Christ... read it carefully; They were ***“praising God SAYING glory to God in the Highest.”***

- **Saying – LEGOS – to speak, to proclaim.**

- This is true in three places in Revelation. The angels praise God with loud voices “Saying”.
- **You might be able to say that when Satan fell, the songs in heaven ceased.** God’s perfect creation had been tainted by sin and pride.

PEOPLE

But, there is one group that does sing in heaven. There is another place, at the end of the age where we see melodies filling heaven’s hallways. Did you know that?

Rev 5:8-10 NKJV – Now when He (the Lamb, Jesus) had taken the scroll the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song... “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals; For You were slain and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”

This is incredible! LET ME ASK YOU:

- Who has been redeemed by the Lamb’s blood out of every tribe and nation? Who has been made kings and priests unto God? Who will reign with Him in His kingdom? **THAT’S RIGHT... it’s us!**

Music has been given for us, the church, to use in our worship to God for the redemption that He has purchased by His blood. When we sing, the angels must listen in wonder as our songs rise to heaven! I think when the church worships, angels look with awe and amazement at our connection with God through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 13:15 – “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

Hosea 14:2 – Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.

APPLICATION

This scripture implies amazing things. The word “calves” is the same word used for a calf used in animal sacrifices. Now that we are under the new covenant and the blood of Christ how much more should we long to offer the sacrifices from our lips!

You see, God cares about our singing because He cares about having our affection and love. God doesn’t need our worship. Paul tells us in Acts 17 that God is not in need of anything.

- **Although He doesn’t “need” our worship, He seeks those who will worship Him in Spirit and in truth (John 4). He desires praise and affection from those whom He paid the ultimate price to redeem.**

EXAMPLE:

In a recent survey done of Evangelical, Bible-believing Christians, 8 out of 10 people surveyed said that they don’t experience a personal connection with God at church. Why is this so? We come together with the promise that “God inhabits the praises of His people” and yet do we sense His presence when we worship? Are we seeking a personal interaction with God when we worship?

Author Joseph Garlington makes this observation. In his book on worship, he writes,

QUOTE

“Many Christians and church congregations have abandoned the dynamic power of true Spirit led praise, worship, and the sacrifice of their lips to God. They have fallen into the rut and rote worship of religion by the letter when God really wants them to worship in Spirit and truth. We ought to know better, but too many of us don’t act like it.”

Garlington,

APPLICATION

We should engage every part of ourselves in worship. Not merely our hearts but also our hands; Not only our intellect but also our emotion. Our voices should be lifted high! Often in the Bible, you will find physical actions used in connection to praise and worship in order to express that which is going on in our hearts.

Psalm 95:6 says, “Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”

The feeling of humility in our hearts should drive us to our knees.

Psalm 47:1 says, “Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!”

The victory and joy we feel races out of our hearts in the clapping of our hands.

Psalm 63:4 exclaims, “Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name.”

Our hands are lifted to express the surrender that is in our hearts.

We need to engage ourselves completely in worship! In the songs of praise clap your hands. In the songs of prayer lift your hands. In the songs of brokenness bow your knee. And in every song sing with a loud voice unto God. I promise you that the more you give to God in worship the more effective and meaningful your worship experience will become.

I’ve often found that sometimes God matches intensity with intensity. I don’t mean to imply that we can force God’s presence or movement. There is, however, a scriptural principle when it comes to God’s response to us.

- If you seek Me you will find Me IF you seek Me with all your heart (intensity for intensity)
- Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (intensity for intensity)
- The 30 minutes we have on Sundays before we dive into the word of God is not just the “time of music” before the message. It’s not the buffer zone to get to church because I, “stayed up too late watching a movie the night before.”
- **No, it is much more. God inhabits the praises of His people. AS God’s people corporately engage Him with zeal, passion, truth, and sincerity, get ready to experience the power and presence of the living God!**

Psalm 111:1 – Praise the LORD! I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation

APPLICATION

OBEY: Yes, singing to God is a command:

- 6 Times in the OT we are commanded, “Sing to the Lord a new song”
- 4 times in the NT we are told to sing. ***Sing in the Spirit, sing to God, sing to one another, sing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and make melody with all our hearts, etc.***

The Bible makes it painfully clear: ***Christians are to be a “singing people!”***

Let’s dive into the text. Let’s take a look at this amazing song and ask the question, “**Why did Deborah, Barak, and Israel awaken to worship?**”

Verse 1: **[Judges 5:1 NKJV] 1 Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying: [Judges 5:2 NKJV] 2 “When leaders lead in Israel, when the people willingly offer themselves, bless the LORD!**

When did they sing? ***On that day!*** – the same day God gave them the victory they wrote a song of praise to God. What does this tell us?

Don’t let your praise wait!

When God does something in you, or through you, or for you, praise Him right then and there.

APPLICATION

You might say, “Well, I just don’t feel like singing!” Hey, welcome to the club. I love singing and there are times I don’t feel like it. But in the end, who cares about what we feel like doing!

Since when has the worthiness, holiness, and worship of God ever been predicated on how we feel about it?

- **What if you only read the Bible, went to church, preached the gospel, or served in ministry when you felt like it? We wouldn’t do much of anything. Here is a good Biblical principle:**

QUOTE

When you don’t feel like singing to God sing anyway. God is still worth it even if you don’t feel it.

Josh,

1

Because they wanted to be heard

[Judges 5:3 NKJV] 3 “Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, even I, will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

APPLICATION

Notice their song has two audiences: The kings and princes of the surrounding nations, and the Lord.

- They wanted their praise to be heard so that all those around would marvel at the works of God. They wanted to send a message to their enemies that the Lord was mighty in Battle and strong to save.

- In the same way, our songs should communicate to the world the mighty victory of Christ.

You've heard the phrase, ["worship to an audience of one."](#) While I understand the sentiment, I don't totally agree. Yes, worship is firstly for and to the Lord alone. He is the only one who is to be the object of our worship. But our audience is greater... others are listening!

ONE OF MY FAVORITE STORIES: Acts 16 – When Paul and Silas were in prison for casting a demon out of a girl. They got thrown into a prison where there was a divine appointment for a suicidal jailer to be saved. They weren't just in jail, they were wrestling against principalities and powers. At midnight they began singing praises to God. The Bible says this...

[Acts 16:25 NKJV] But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

You never know who's watching your worship. You never know who's listening in on your midnight hour to see how you will respond to great difficulty and trial.

APPLICATION: Midnight is the darkest hour, but it's also the first hour leading from night into day. In their greatest distress, Paul and Silas chose hope. They chose the attitude of Job, "Though He slay me, still I will praise Him!" They could have been sitting there **WONDERING** how they got there, or **WORRYING** about how they would get out, but instead, they were **WORSHIPPING** and inviting the power of God into their trial.

- When you're in your midnight hour, you can spend your time wondering how you got there, worrying about how you'll get out or worshipping the God who is holding it all in His hands! You might feel as though you're locked in a prison cell, but the reality is that you can be transported directly to the throne room.
- And the prisoners were listening to them! It's amazing what can happen when lost and broken people watch the church worship God and have something that they don't have in the middle of their darkest moments. Right in the middle of the chorus of Amazing grace, the power of God showed up, the earth shook, the foundations were displaced, the doors were open, and all the chains fell off the prisoners.
- Oh, that we would experience praise like that. That God would shake our foundation, open prison doors and cause chains to fall off the spiritually imprisoned soul.

In 1st Corinthians 14, Paul says that an unbeliever should walk into a Christian gathering and see them worshipping and hear the prophetic word of God to such a degree that, **"the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you."**

2

Because they saw God's mighty works

[Judges 5:4-5 NKJV] 4 "LORD, when You went out from Seir, when You marched from the field of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens poured, the clouds also poured water; 5 The mountains gushed before the LORD, this Sinai, before the LORD God of Israel.

APPLICATION

There is something about observing the works the Lord has done that should cause us to praise Him.

- Chapter 4 tells us that it was the LORD who routed Sisera's army with all of its chariots. Apparently, God flooded the valley with a storm and the heavy chariots didn't stand a chance on the muddied battleground.
- Some might have just looked with their rational minds and said, "It wasn't God, it was just luck that it rained."
- **Here is one of our problems today. We like to steal away God's glory from our circumstances, or other people's circumstances. We have a rational answer for everything.**

Here's what it sounds like, "God healed me!"

- "No, it was just all that medication they had you on. That's the real scientific reason you were healed!"
- We often try to discredit God. This is what evolution does... it takes away the credit to God as creator and manager of all created things.
- There should only be one response to a brilliant sunset, a powerful thunderstorm, or a starry sky, a healed body, the human mind that God created to excel in science, arts, and technology... GOD IS AWESOME!

The fact is God is the source of everything! Every good and perfect gift comes from Him, and that should inspire worship in us.

3

Because they desired revival

[Judges 5:6-12 NKJV] 6 "In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, In the days of Jael, The highways were deserted, And the travelers walked along the byways. 7 Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel, until I, Deborah, arose, arose a mother in Israel. 8 They chose new gods; Then there was war in the gates; Not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel. 9 My heart is with the rulers of Israel Who offered themselves willingly with the people. Bless the LORD! 10 "Speak, you who ride on white donkeys, Who sit in judges' attire, And who walk along the road. 11 Far from the noise of the archers, among the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous acts of the LORD, The righteous acts for His villagers in Israel; Then the people of the LORD shall go down to the gates. 12 "Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away, O son of Abinoam!

APPLICATION

Verse 12 – parenthetical insert, an aside.

I can imagine this picture. Barak is leading the captives away from the battle and Deborah is riding next to him singing this song while all the prisoners are sitting there listening.

- They sing of how the spiritual life of Israel had died, but now they can recount the works of the Lord and awake out of their slumber.
- Their song is going to serve as a monument of the revival of Israel's spiritual life and God's victories.
- Awake! I love it.

- Spiritual apathy comes from Christians who are content to be spiritually asleep. They don't want anyone to wake them up.
- But your town, your community, your church, and your country needs Christians who are willing to get out of their spiritual beds and display their worship to the Lord in every way!

[Romans 13:11 NKJV] 11 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

- Christian, when revival comes and the Holy Spirit moves you cannot sleep! It's time for us to arise and awaken new songs of praise in our hearts as we serve the Lord!

4

Because the people of God answered the call

[Judges 5:13-18 NKJV] 13 "Then the survivors came down, the people against the nobles; The LORD came down for me against the mighty. 14 From Ephraim were those whose roots were in Amalek. After you, Benjamin, with your peoples, From Machir rulers came down, and from Zebulun those who bear the recruiter's staff. 15 And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; As Issachar, so was Barak Sent into the valley under his command; Among the divisions of Reuben there were great resolves of heart. 16 Why did you sit among the sheepfolds, To hear the pipings for the flocks? The divisions of Reuben have great searchings of heart. 17 Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan, And why did Dan remain on ships? Asher continued at the seashore, And stayed by his inlets. 18 Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives to the point of death, Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield.

APPLICATION

Deborah praises the tribes that united together for the battle and at the same time challenges and questions all the other tribes who sat back and watched while the others fought the enemy.

- This is still a problem today. There are people who fight the battles and there are people who sit back, watch, and then want to reap the benefits.

As Christians, we are all called to the line of battle in some form or another. Don't be those who:

- ***Reuben – Sit among the sheepfolds***
- ***Gilead – Stay beyond the Jordan (close enough to hear of the war, but far enough away not to be involved)***
- ***Dan – Remain on the ships (we look like we are ready to be engaged, but never actually do anything)***
- ***Asher – Or continue at the seashore and stay by our inlets (protecting our own interests, but never fighting for something bigger than ourselves)***

Come join the fight... It's worth it! When you see God victorious through you, you will have cause to praise Him!

Because the Lord delivered them

BIBLE VERSE

[Judges 5:19-23 NKJV] 19 “The kings came and fought, then the kings of Canaan fought In Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; They took no spoils of silver. 20 They fought from the heavens; The stars from their courses fought against Sisera. 21 The torrent of Kishon swept them away, that ancient torrent, the torrent of Kishon. O my soul, march on in strength! 22 Then the horses’ hooves pounded, the galloping, galloping of his steeds. 23 ‘Curse Meroz,’ said the angel of the LORD, ‘Curse its inhabitants bitterly, because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.’

APPLICATION

Deborah and Barak recognized that God is the one who caused the course of nature to change in their favor and destroy their enemies (The torrential flood, the stars, and mud).

- Even when no other nation would come to Israel’s aid, the Lord miraculously delivered them.
- God was the one who dismantled the chariots. They witnessed a victory that was brought by the hand of God and they had to sing about it!

APPLICATION

Christian, this is one of the main reasons that Satan and the demonic realm hate it when we worship.

Every time you sing and declare a song of praise and worship to Jesus, you are reminding the enemy that he lost and you have been delivered from his grip!

Colossians 1:13-14 NKJV – He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love in whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins.

There’s something about praise that declares to the forces of hell that our God is undefeatable. He will not be intimidated, He will not shrink back in fear or weakness, He will fight on behalf of His people, even to the giving of His own life so that He might raise it again, conquer death and make an undeniable statement to Satan, “You cannot win for I have overcome!”

APPLICATION

What have you been delivered from?

- Sin and guilt?
- Hell?
- Addiction?
- Bitterness and hate?
- Persecution?
- Slander and gossip?
- Physical danger or death?

Whatever it is, it should cause us to sing up when we think of His mighty deliverance of our lives!

[Judges 5:24-27 NKJV] 24 “Most blessed among women is Jael, The wife of Heber the Kenite; Blessed is she among women in tents.

We learn that God can even work in heavy metal and rock music. You remember the story of Jael and the tent peg, right? Well, it made the cut! I imagine it going something like this.

**25 He asked for water, she gave milk;
She brought out cream in a lordly bowl.
26 She stretched her hand to the tent peg,
Her right hand to the workmen’s hammer;
CHORUS:
She pounded Sisera, she pierced his head,
She split and struck through his temple.
27 At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still;
Chorus 2:
She pounded Sisera, she pierced his head,
She split and struck through his temple.
27 At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still;
At her feet he sank, he fell;
Where he sank, there he fell dead.**

ILLUSTRATION

Top 40 Christian worship songs of 2019? Not sure!

6

Because God shattered the world's expectations

BIBLE VERSE

[Judges 5:28-31 NKJV] 28 “The mother of Sisera looked through the window, And cried out through the lattice, ‘Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarries the clatter of his chariots?’ 29 Her wisest ladies answered her, Yes, she answered herself, 30 ‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoil: To every man a girl or two; For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments, Plunder of garments embroidered and dyed, Two pieces of dyed embroidery for the neck of the looter?’ 31 “Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD! But let those who love Him be like the sun when it comes out in full strength.” So the land had rest for forty years.

APPLICATION

In these verses, we read the sad cry of Sisera’s mother. He hadn’t come back in time from that battle. She begins to worry about the fate of her son.

- She tries to put her own fears to rest in verse 29 when she “comes to her senses.”
- Why be worried, this is only Israel we are dealing with. The nation of farmers and villagers with no weapons. There is no way my mighty Sisera could be in danger, I mean he’s probably just spending extra time going through the spoils and getting us some nice clothes.
- **HOW WRONG SHE WAS!** Her son wasn’t just fighting against Israel, He was fighting against God. It’s the same when the world attacks the church.

1 Corinthians 1:25-27 NKJV – Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling brethren that not many wise according to the flesh not many mighty not many noble are called. But God has chosen the

foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

APPLICATION

God takes the expectations of the world and turns them upside down! He takes ordinary people who don't know a lot and don't have a lot and uses them to do things that the world said they could never do!

And when God does extraordinary things through ordinary people and the world stands back in wonder, we should sing...

WORSHIP

Worship can be defined as our overall devotion or commitment to something or someone.

ENGLISH – WORTH SHIP – the overarching worth of one part to another.

What God is worth to us comes out in our worship.

- Worship is sacrificial living (Romans 12)
- Worship is our personal integrity and character
- Worship is gratitude for what God has done.
- Worship is expressed in praise and singing.

CONCLUSIONS

Maybe there are times that we really don't connect to worship not because of the music, not because of the song choice, but because our lives are not connecting with the songs.

QUOTE

“Worship is a deep spring that flows out of the life, actions, and songs of those who are deeply fastened to the realities of God.”

Josh,

APPLICATION

Do I want to be heard – Do I want people around me to see my extravagant love and worship of Jesus?

- Have I been observing the mighty works of God in my own life?
- Am I longing for and living out revival?
- Am I engaging with my brothers and sisters in Christ to fight the spiritual battles around me?
- Have I seen God deliver me from sin and death?
- Have I seen God laugh in the face of the world's expectations and show Himself mighty on my behalf?

If the answer is yes, then singing praises to Him won't be a chore I must endure, but something I can't help but do!

- Jesus must be worshipped and praised. If people stopped, the rocks would literally sing (Rock concert). May we be the people who declare His praises with our whole heart. Amen.