

Claiming the Power through Praise

“...Thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed” (Acts 16:24-26).

Paul and Silas began to praise God at midnight; the darkest hour of their trial. Praising God when you are in trouble shows more faith than praising God at other times. “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Hebrews 13:15). Sometimes we do not feel like praising God but we should press through to offer Him a sacrifice of praise. It allows God to know that we trust Him to take us through every trial and situation, regardless how impossible the case may seem.

“In every thing give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

It is in both the good and bad times that we are reminded, “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7).

I wonder what was going through the minds of Paul and Silas as they sat there chained, in a seemingly hopeless situation. I wonder if they thought of any of the Old Testament Scriptures in order to encourage themselves in the Lord.

- “But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble” (Psalm 37:39).
- “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him” (Nahum 1:7).
- “Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance” (Psalm 32:7).
- “My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:26).
- “There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways” (Psalm 91:10-11).
- “He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee” (Job 5:19).
- “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me” (Psalm 138:7).
- “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all” (Psalm 34:19).

Job, a perfect and upright man in the Old Testament lost everything he owned including his ten children. However, he knew how to praise the Lord in difficult times. He said, “the LORD gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (Job 1:21). “Shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?” (Job 2:10). In the end

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the Lord rewarded Job with twice as much as he had before (Job 42:10).

We need to be like Job, who said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust him: but I will maintain my own ways before him” (Job 13:15).

We do not worship God because of our trials, but we worship God in spite of them. We do not praise God for our tragedies, but we praise God in them. Like Job, we hear God speak to us out of the storm (Job 38:1).

As we begin to become involved in heart-felt praise and worship, the power and presence of God will come down into any situation. David said the Lord inhabits the praises of His people. As we praise the Lord, He comes down into the midst of His people. He dwells in the midst of praise. Worship also takes us right into the presence of God. It provides a transition from the flesh to the Spirit realm. As we worship, we feel God nearer. The disciples waited for the Holy Ghost outpouring by praising God. Acts 2:11, 47 allows us to know the Church was born in the midst of praise. As we magnify God (“magnify” means to make larger) then we see God becoming greater than our situation.

Praises and worship bring victory. When Joshua and the children of Israel finished marching around the wall of Jericho, the priests blew the trumpets and the people shouted with a great shout. Then, the wall fell down flat (Joshua 6:20). When Paul and Silas were in the prison, they prayed and sang praises to their God at midnight. Suddenly, a great earthquake shook the prison and immediately all the doors were open and everyone was loosed. The key to victory in problems is worship. Praise and worship will shake the foundation of any problem and set you free in liberty.

Lesson 48

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17).

Judah (which means “praise”) became the father of a nation that bore his name. From this tribe came King David and Jesus. Jesus is referred to as the “Lion of the Tribe of Judah.” He was born in the midst of praise as the angels praised Him (Luke 2:13). Then the Shepherds praised Him (Luke 2:20). When the Tabernacle was set up in the wilderness, The Tribe of Judah was placed at the entrance of the Tabernacle. It was placed on the east side facing the rising sun. Although the twelve tribes had access to the outer court--only Praise (Judah) dwelt next door. We must always go through the gate of praise (Psalm 100:4) to get into the presence of God.

Study Questions

1. Provide Scriptures that prove we should continue to praise God even when we don't feel like it. _____

2. Provide Old Testament Scriptures that show God is willing to help us when we are in trouble. _____

3. Explain Job's attitude toward his trials and problems. _____

4. What happens when we begin to praise and worship our God? _____

5. What is the key to victory? _____

6. Provide Bible examples of things that happened when people praised God. _____
