

BFF331 Asaph and the Sons of Korah

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: Many, many years ago, I remember reading through Kings and Chronicles and thinking I would really like to have been one of David's mighty men. I would like to have been in battle with David. I would have liked to have been with him in the wilderness. I love David.

Fighting the Lord's battles and worshiping God. Everything in me resonated with this man and his followers. There is another fellow that I wanted to be if I could have gone back to that time, Asaph. We're going to talk about Asaph today, and the Sons of Korah.

Steve: Father help us today. We're all in different places. Some of us need sleep, some of us need rest, and some of us need a little jolt, but you know exactly what we need. We draw near to you, through the blood of Jesus, help us by Your Spirit. Fill us afresh and encourage us from Your word, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: We're going to read a bunch of Scripture to lead into this. Psalm 149, "Praise Jehovah. Sing to Jehovah a new song, His praise in the assembly of the godly. Let Israel be glad in his Maker. Let the children of Zion rejoice in their King. Let them praise His name with dancing, making melody to Him with tambourine and lyre.

"For Jehovah takes pleasure in His people. He adorns the humble with salvation. Let the godly exalt in glory. Let them sing for joy on their beds.

"Let the high praises of God be in their throats, and two-edged swords in their hands, to execute vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute on them the judgment written. This is honor for all His godly ones. Praise Jehovah."

The psalm was so good I couldn't just read the last verse. I woke up to the last phrase this morning. "This is honor for all His godly ones," or, as the King James puts it, "this honor have all His saints." This is not relegated to just a few. This is an honor for all the saints.

We all have the capacity and the calling to praise God, to sing new songs to Him, to rejoice in our King, to dance and make melody to Him with tambourine and lyre. This is something that we can all do.

I used to quote the sixth verse alot, where the high praises of God are side by side with two-edged swords in their hands. In one sense, we were created to praise God. We were created to be worshippers. We were also created to be warriors.

We're worshipping warriors. We are created and designed to be worshipping warriors, to fight God's battles by faith now, David's men did it in person in a sense, and at the same time, we were designed to praise God. This is the honor for all His saints.

That's the thought I want to plant now, there is nothing that's off limits to God's people. It's not just for Abraham and Moses and Joseph and David or those saints mentioned in Hebrews 11, the faith Hall of Fame. I believe that this honor is for all His Godly ones and that we all can aspire to.

There's a couple of scriptures that have led to this. Do you recall how many giants were there back in the days of David? It's a tricky question. How many giants were there? We know about Goliath. Do you know any more?

Scott: I don't know. Wasn't there a whole race though? It's like somewhat larger than the rest, if not giants.

Steve: Let me go back and read this passage in 2 Samuel 21:15–17. "There was war again between the Philistines and Israel. David went down together with his servants. They fought against the Philistines and David grew weary. Ishbi-Benob, one of the descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed 300 shekels of bronze and who was armed with a new sword, fought to kill David.

Abishai the son of Zeruiah came to his aid and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, you should no longer go out with us to battle lest you quench the lamp of Israel."

David meant well, but he was tired. It says, "David grew weary," and this giant spotted him and thought, "This is my chance." What glory would have been for him to take out David? But Abishai stepped in and came to his aid. Then in the 18th verse, it says, "After this, there was again war with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbekai the Hushathite struck down Saph who was one of the descendants of the giants.

Verses 19–22, There was again war with the Philistines at Gob and Elhanan the son of Jaare-Oregim the Bethlehemite struck down Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. There was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, 24 in number and he also was descended from the giants. When he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimeah, David's brother struck him down. These four were descendants from the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David."

Here's the best part, "And by the hand of his servants." We know David, he's in a class all by himself, but what blessed me was, somehow when these other men, Elhanan and Jonathan and Sibbekai, when they saw David take out Goliath they were encouraged that they could too.

They received fresh courage and thought, "If David did that, I can do that." When these giants appeared, and you can add Abishai to that because he's the one that came to his aid the first time, all four of these giants were killed by people other than David.

It was the next generation. I remember reading this and then thinking, "Boy, that's powerful." David's faith spread to others. David's courage had encouraged others and they took out these giants. When David did it the first time it was unheard of.

Science experts used to declare that a man could never run the four-minute mile. That the human body was not meant to run the four-minute mile. I don't have the stats on this, but when the first man ran it, the very next race a couple of men ran it. Before the year was out, several men had run sub-four minute miles because they said, "Hey, if he can do it, I can do it." That's the spirit. Let's shift gears a little bit to my friends, Asaph and the sons of Korah. I looked up the Hebrew roots of these names. Asaph means gatherer, Korah, bald.

Korah we know from the fact that he was the leader of the rebellion. They call it Korah's rebellion. He was the cousin of Moses and Aaron and a great-grandson of Levi. He thought that since he had the same lineage as Moses and Aaron, he could be just like Moses and Aaron.

However Korah overstepped his bounds. He did not stay in his lane and he died a miserable death, very sad. I've wondered, why did his children call themselves the sons of Korah?

We don't know their specific names, it just says the sons of Korah. Let me read through some of these passages and we're going to learn about each of these men. 1 Chronicles 16. I've learned to love this chapter, especially since you'll see how this ties into the ark of God. "They brought in the ark of God and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it." This is before the temple, and after the time of Moses. "They offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings in the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Jehovah and distributed to all Israel, both men and women, to each a loaf of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then he appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark of Jehovah to invoke, to thank and to praise the Lord."

Three points here. To invoke, you might say, to pray, to thank, and to praise Jehovah the God of Israel."

"Asaph was the chief. Second to him was Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel who were to play harps and lyres. Asaph was to sound the cymbals and Benaiah, and Jahaziel the priests were to blow trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of God.

"Then on that day, David first appointed that thanksgiving be sung to Jehovah by Asaph and his brothers. That day, David set in place a new ordinance."

In the eighth verse, "Oh, give thanks to Jehovah. Call upon His name. Make known His deeds among the people. Sing to Him, sing praises to Him. Tell of all His wondrous works. Glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek Jehovah rejoice. Seek Jehovah and His strength. Seek His presence continually."

"We'll give thanks to Jehovah for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever. Say also save us, Oh God of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from among the nations that we may give thanks to Your holy name and glory in Your praise. Blessed

be Jehovah, the God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. Then all the people said amen and praise Jehovah."

David left Asaph and his brothers there before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah to minister regularly before the ark as each day required. I skipped around a little bit. I took out verses 12–33 if you're reading 1 Chronicles 16. The whole chapter is rich. This was Asaph's calling. This is what he was created to do. He was set apart, he and his brothers to stand before the ark and minister regularly. What a special calling. To search the news every day for all the good things that had happened and say, "Thank you, God, for rain." We got rain here yesterday.

These men were to give thanks to God because the rain comes from above. "Thank you, Father, for sunshine. Thank you for our daily bread. Thank you for our freedoms."

It's so healthy to focus on what God has done and who He is. This ties in with my study of Psalm 100. There's a lot of language that I just read in 1 Chronicles 16 that dovetails with Psalm 100. Giving thanks to God, calling upon His name, singing praises to Him. This is what they did.

Notice the 11th verse. I'm chewing on this a lot lately. "Seek Jehovah and His strength. Seek His presence continually." Not just Sunday morning, Wednesday night, during your devotions, but seek to be in His presence continually. Seek God. Have that attitude.

My mind runs to 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, where Paul is talking to believers. He says, "Rejoice always pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." He's talking to believers to be priests. He's talking to people like Asaph when he says the exact same thing -- sing to Him, sing praises, give thanks and praise.

I love David so much that I used to sigh a little bit when I would read through the Psalms and find out that David hadn't written all of them. I don't know if anybody else has ever done this. I did a little research and discovered that Asaph wrote 12 Psalms. He wrote Psalm 50, and Psalms 73–83. Asaph penned 12 psalms.

I think you see my drift here. Just like Sibbecai and Jonathan and Abishai and Elhanan had learned how to fight the good fight because they'd watched David fight the good fight, Asaph had learned how to know God by also watching David.

Asaph had learned how to worship God to the point where this was his calling now. He was David in the temple. I think if you'd have asked David "What would you rather do, go fight battles or sit in a temple?" He'd have said, "I would just like to be in the temple."

We know that from reading Psalm 27. He loved God. He loved God's house. He loved being in God's presence, but Asaph caught it too, and then this anointing fell on him.

The Sons of Korah wrote 11 Psalms. In some places they're called the Korahites, but these are the Sons of Korah. I get some confidence and some hope that even though their dad didn't do well, they did. They stayed on the right course.

We can track the Sons of Korah from Moses down to David. They wrote Psalm 42, 44-49, 84, 85, 87, 88.

I don't want to go place too much credit on just David, Asaph, Korah without recognizing that this is the Spirit of God that came upon these people. It says in 2 Peter 1:20, "No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

We have the same Spirit of God that David had, that Asaph had, and that Sons of Korah had. Just listen to some of the psalms that were written not by David, but by his followers through the spirit. Psalm 46, you'll know this one, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

It's the basis of the hymn A Mighty Fortress is Our God. Psalm 46, written by the Sons of Korah, the 10th and 11th verse of the same song, "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth. Jehovah of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress."

There you go. Powerful song, and it's written by the sons of Korah. Psalm 84 is the best in my mind that has to do with what I've been learning about coming into God's presence in Psalm 100. Here it is, I'm going to read pretty much the whole Psalm.

"How lovely is your dwelling place, O Jehovah of hosts. My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of Jehovah. My heart and flesh, sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young at your altars. O Jehovah of hosts, my King, and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise."

They're talking about themselves right here. This is what they did. They dwelt in God's house along with the little sparrows that found a wonderful spot to lay her young at her altars. This is where they want to be. "How lovely is your dwelling place."

Fifth verse. "Blessed are those whose strength is in You in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs. The early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength, each one appears before God in Zion.

"O Jehovah, God of hosts, hear my prayer. Give ear, O God of Jacob. Behold our shield, O God. Look on the face of your anointed. For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Jehovah of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in You."

Powerful psalms written by these followers through the spirit of God, Who helped them to love God, love His house, and love ministering to Him.

David was the first, then Asaph received this spirit as well as the sons of Korah. You know what? I have it. I have also partaken of this spirit from God's spirit. YOU might also say I was helped and inspired by these men and their Psalms. These devoted servants who loved God and loved being in His Presence and in His courts.

I've prayed and I've sought God and here I am. I understand these men in a whole new way. I'm also encouraged that, as we started with Psalm 149:9, "This honor have all His saints."

I'm going to pray that we all get that today, that we don't feel like, "This is just for David, this is just for Jim Elliott, this is just for Billy Graham, this is just for a few." No, this is for all of us. We can all have this joy of being worshippers who dwell in God's presence.

My spiritual mentor used to speak of the Praise Club. It's mentioned in Chronicles. These were people who praised God the first thing in the morning and praised God before they went to bed at night. He said, "Anybody can be a part of this club."

I'd like to say that anybody can be a priest in God's house and can minister to Him through song, through giving thanks, through praising His name. This is an honor for all His saints. Amen.

Let me pray, and then if you have something to add, Scott, you can add it.

Father, thank You for inviting us into this relationship with You so we don't have to be on the fringes, we don't have to be in the cheap seats, so to speak, looking down at those who are serving You with everything in us.

We can share in this. We can share in this honor. This is an honor for all Your saints to know You, to dwell in Your presence, to be close to You, to worship You, to receive Your favor, and to gaze upon You in Your house.

Thank You for what You've opened my eyes to just in the last year, year and a half. Thank You for what You're opening to all of us. I pray that You'll deliver us from condemnation, deliver us from thinking we don't measure up. Help us to magnify God and what You've done for us so that we can joyfully enter into Your presence and be first fruits, so to speak.

Someday, every knee is going to bow, every tongue is going to confess, every knee on this Earth is going to say, "You are God. We worship You. We know You. We love You." With everything in us, we're all going to shout, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord."

I pray for each of us to get that little seed planted in our hearts that we can be Asaphs, we can be sons of Korah, we can be worshipping warriors. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. A couple of thoughts. First of all, I've heard it said about the Bible, when we are tempted to feel like, "This is just for David, or that was Paul, of course he

could do these things. They're who they are. It's Peter, it's Paul, it's James," whoever. I've heard it said, though, "What good would a book of exceptions be for us? Why would God give us a book that's all exceptions. None of this applies to us. These were those people back then." It's actually meant to be examples for us to follow.

We can, and we do have the same spirit. I have the same spirit. I may not have tapped into it like he did, but I'm working on it.

The verse in 1 Thessalonians, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you." If anybody ever asks what is God's will for you? What's God's will for me? It's right here. Paul said, "This is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances."

There are moments in my life where I've done that kind of stuff. I've felt like, "Oh, yes. My whole purpose is just to praise God and worship Him and enjoy Him forever and it's, to be honest, I've been away from that lately. It's so simple and so perfect that Paul just stated here in one little sentence and now this is what you need to do, and it does refocus you.

Steve: Amen. Thank you. Good insights.

Scott: That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for "The Building Faith Families Podcast with Steve Demme." If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.