

BFF347 Priests Sing Praises

Steve Demme: Sometimes the best thing we can do, when we have our own spiritual battles is to sing, and declare the truth, and worship God.

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, are you ready?

Steve: Yes, part two of "Priests Worship." Father bless us today as we consider this topic. We, those of us, that have grown up in church and around church and around other believers, we know that music is somehow part of it, but it's become almost just a part of our culture.

I pray that You'll revive our understanding of music, and revive our understanding of worship and our role as priests as we do worship and sing before You, in Jesus name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: As we talked a little bit in the first podcast on worship and singing, singing a hymn is a whole-souled activity. When you sing well, and as in the spirit and fully engaged, singing incorporates your body, your mind, your soul, your spirit. It emanates deep in our hearts, mind, and spirit.

As I was preparing for this podcast I thought this concept is similar to 'Love me with all your heart, soul, mind, strength. Love me with everything in you.'" Singing parallels that. When you're completely committed to singing, you are all in.

One man, who exemplifies this posture is King David. In 1 Samuel 16, David was anointed by Samuel to be the future king. Verse 13, "Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward."

It was only a few verses later that Saul is going into a dark place. One of his young men says, in the 18th verse, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite that is skillful in playing, and a mighty man of valor and a man of war, and prudent in speech and a comely person and Jehovah is with him."

Whenever an evil spirit would come upon Saul, David would play with his instruments and the Spirit of God that had came upon him with that anointing, would drive out the evil spirit.

Before David confronted Goliath, he first appears on the scene as an anointed musician. At the end of his life, we read this benediction, 2 Samuel 23:1, "These are the last words of David, the oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, a sweet psalmist of Israel."

I don't know why that phrase just touches my heart, but David is the sweet psalmist of Israel. He could have been described as so many different things, a warrior, a king. He was the sweet psalmist of Israel.

I have referenced the studies I read twice a day focusing on being a priest, and also on attributes of God. Most of the time I find myself in the Psalms because David knew God. His sweet Psalms were filled with descriptions of God and His character.

He's a shepherd, He's our rock, He's our refuge, He is faithful, all these wonderful vignettes are sprinkled throughout the Psalms. Worshiping is the preeminent topic in the Psalms.

This morning I read Jonah, and yesterday Obadiah, a day before I was in Amos, since I am finishing up my reading of the Old Testament in December. I noticed this phrase in Amos 6:5, "Like David, they invented for themselves instruments of music." I had never noticed that before, but not only did David write the Psalms, but apparently, he invented for himself instruments to play these Psalms.

David was quite talented. Psalm 108:1–2, and it's interesting because when I got up this morning and I'm having my devotions it was dark.

Scott: Wait. Let me see if I can get it, "My heart is steadfast, O God. I will sing and make music with all my soul." Is that 108:1?

Steve: Yes.

Scott: Rock on. I love that verse.

Steve: I woke up, and it was dark. I'm sitting out on the couch, and I'm reading my Bible, and I can see the sun coming up in the east. This verse came into my mind, "I will awaken the dawn."

I thought, "You know, this must be what David did." I looked it up, and then later I'm preparing for the podcast and I see that exact same verse that you just read. "My heart is steadfast, O God. I will sing and make melody with all my being. Awake, O harp and lyre. I will awaken the dawn. I will give thanks to you, O Jehovah among the peoples. I will sing praises to you among the nations."

David awakened the dawn many, many times perhaps with musical instruments, perhaps just singing himself, perhaps he was out on some mountain side taking care of the sheep, and he watched the sun rising and he was already worshiping God.

1 Chronicles 16:4–8 is when David commands praise to become a part of the worship experience. "He appointed some of the Levites as ministers before the ark. They were to invoke, to thank, and to praise Jehovah, the God of Israel. Asaph was the chief, second to him were Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed–edom, and Jeiel, who were to play harps and lyres. Asaph was to sound the cymbals, 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. Oh, give thanks to Jehovah, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to Him, sing praises to Him. Tell of all his wondrous works."

This language is very similar to Psalm 100. I'm going to read Psalm 105:1–4. "Oh, give thanks to Jehovah, call upon His name. Make known His deeds among the people.

"Sing to Him. Sing praises to Him. Speak of all His wonders. Glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek Jehovah be glad. Seek Jehovah and His strength. Seek his face continually."

I read Jonah this morning. In the third verse we find the opposite of Psalm 105 twice, where it says, "Jonah was fleeing the presence of Jehovah." In the 10th verse, the men said, "Why are you fleeing?" He had told them, "I am fleeing God. God wants me to go do something, I don't want to do it."

He didn't say, "I'm fleeing Nineveh." He didn't say, "I'm fleeing the call." He said, I'm fleeing His presence."

Psalm 105 and 1 Chronicles 16 are calls to seek His face continually. Anytime you seek His presence, it really means to seek His face.

1 Chronicles 25. I'm going to read the last couple of verses. "All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer, according to the promise of God to exalt him, for God had given Heman 14 sons and three daughters." (Homeschooling family.)

"They were all under the direction of their father in the music, in the house of Jehovah, with cymbals, harps and lyres for the service of the house of God. The number of them, along with their brothers who were trained in singing, all who were skillful, 288."

They just didn't pull out a guitar, a lyre, and begin to sing. They were trained in singing. This was serious stuff. This was their calling. This was what they were set apart to do, just as much as those people who were careful about filling up the golden lampstand, about offering burnt offerings, about burning incense. There was skill involved.

This was not something that you haphazardly do. They had specific robes, they had clearly defined procedures, they had to wash their hands and their feet before they entered into the tabernacle. And these people were trained in singing. They gave themselves to their task.

Now, I'm going to introduce another topic that sounds discordant. Singing can accompany judgment.

Scott: Judgment?

Steve: Yes, judgment. Psalm 98, the first five verses are very similar to what I just read. Sing praises, make a joyful noise, etc.

Then it says, "Let the rivers clap their hands, let the hills sing for joy together before Jehovah for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity."

We know that trumpets accompany warfare. They did in Jericho. When the priests were to set out, they would blow the trumpets. You're also reading not only in Zephaniah, but you're probably reading in Revelation too, correct?

Scott: Yes.

Steve: Consider Revelation 8, "Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. The first angel blew his trumpet and there followed hail and

fire mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth." There were trumpets blasting.

There was singing going on as there was judgment coming upon the earth. There was singing in warfare when they took Jericho. These things go together.

I'm going to tell you a blessed event that occurred when I was way back, young man. Two friends of mine and I wanted to go to a church convention that was beginning, and it was the first night and those were always special. Even though we lived two hours away, and we all had responsibilities the next day, we thought, "Let's go ahead and do it."

We went up, participated in the service, were edified, got in the car, and began driving home, and I said, "I'm really tired." It was my car but I asked, "Would somebody else mind driving?" This other fellow drove. I sat shotgun because I was shot. I didn't think I had two hours of driving left in me.

Then we started talking about the meeting. We started encouraging other about what we'd received from the meeting. The next thing you know, we're starting to get inspired, and then we started singing. I even had a Hymn book.

The guy in the backseat had a little flashlight, and we began to sing, and then we felt like praying. We were so full of faith. We were praying for all these different things, and we were singing, and we were worshipping, and we did this all the way home. Almost two hours, and it was wonderful.

We got home and we were in the parking lot outside the church where we'd all met, and we thought "Should we go wake up the pastor? He would really like this. No, we shouldn't wake him up because now it's late at night."

The next day we got a hold of him and gave him a report. We decided to have a special meeting that night, and that meeting went for a couple hours. It turned out, all that week we met each evening for a couple hours. We stood around the piano, and we just worshiped. It was a special outpouring of the spirit.

There was a man there who was a card-carrying liberal leftist from California. Anyway, you don't need to know all that, but it was fascinating because he'd had lots of hurdles in his mind. He was trying to understand the gospel, he was such an intellect. During this worship experience, he came to Christ as we sang and praised God around the piano. He's still following God to this day.

We thought of Isaiah 30:29–32 that night. "You shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept in gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of Jehovah, to the rock of Israel.

"Jehovah will cause His majestic voice to be heard, and the descending blow of His arm to be seen in furious anger, and a flame of devouring fire with a cloud burst, and storm, and hailstones. The Assyrians will be terror stricken at the voice of Jehovah when He strikes with His rod, and every stroke of the appointed staff that Jehovah lays on them will be to the sound of tambourines and lyres." Isn't that a picture?

Scott: Yeah.

Steve: There's something about worship. Sometimes the best thing we can do when we have our own spiritual battles is to sing, and declare the truth, and worship God. Demons don't like singing. You can drive the devil with a good song sung in the Spirit, worshiping God, as well as if you kneel down and resist the devil, and bind him in the name of Jesus and all that. I'm putting that out there, but this is a beautiful picture.

Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God in prison. The prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake. The power of song. "So that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors were open, and everyone's bonds were unfastened." That's Acts 16:25–26.

Sometimes, this is what we need to do is just worship God. I believe that as these priests worshiped God, as you and I worship God, as we sing, as we train ourself to sing, that we will be having an impact, and we'll be setting people free from their bonds.

Many, many years ago when our kids were younger, we went to a training seminar. One of the things that we were encouraged to do as a family was to memorize hymns. And I mused, "What if I'm in prison with Paul and Silas?" Pretty much all I'm going to sing is "Amazing Grace," a few Christmas carols, and the first verses of a couple hymns.

You know what, if you're in prison with me now, we're going to do some singing because I've got a lot of hymns stored up. It helps me in my personal worship, I believe it helps me in my corporate worship.

Jesus -- the night before he was crucified -- after the disciples had just shared the last supper with their Lord, they concluded their final time together by singing.

"When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." That's Mark 14:26. Now, with that in mind, what we need to remember when Paul says these words and get the whole context because there's three passages here that I've heard people preach from independently, but they don't put them all together.

Let's put them all together. Ephesians 5:15–20. "Look carefully then how you walk not as unwise, but as wise making the best use of the time or redeeming the time."

There's usually a sermon text right there. This passage continues, "Because the days are evil, therefore, do not be foolish but understand what the will of Jehovah is. Do not get drunk with wine for that's debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Singing and making melody to Jehovah with your heart. Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Singing is not a church thing, it's not an afterthought, it's not lip service, it is in many ways, it's the heart of it. This is what we're doing. We are worshipers. We're followers and believers in Jesus. We have been set apart to be priests, to give thanks, and to sing, and to make melody.

He says again in Colossians 3:16–17. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

There's a lot to singing, and it's all through the Bible from when the sons of God shouted for joy at creation, and then in Revelation 5:14–15.

"They sang a new song, worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain and by your blood you ransom people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. They were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders."

Revelation 15:3, "They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Isn't that beautiful how Moses and the Lamb intertwined saying, "Great and amazing are Your deeds O Lord God the Almighty. Just and true are your ways O King of the nations."

This morning I've been singing "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." I also read a whole bunch of verses about God's faithfulness, but you know the ones I retain? The ones I sang about it in that song

Singing helps us to remember, it brings to memory stuff. Start your day off with a good song, a good hymn of worship, and you can not only change the world, you can change yourself.

Scott: Right on. I remember seeing Rich Mullins many years ago. It was probably like a month or two before he died, and he said at the concert that...It was more of a worship service than a concert anyway.

Scott: One of the things he said was that, the biggest reason for him to still be doing that at that point in his life was that it's one of the most repeated commands in Scripture.

They sing to the Lord a new song and all that, and it was like, "Huh, I never put that together before as that being a command." I think there was even now listening to you talk about all this and sharing these verses, I'm like, "Yeah, there's more to this than it's just a fun little tune." There's a lot.

Steve: When I'm singing in church, it takes on new meaning because this is meaningful stuff. This is not fill in material for five minutes. Singing is a central part of the worship. It is worship. Amen.

Thank You, Father, for these, as Scott said, commands and exhortations. You know what we need and You know what is right and it's good and right that we worship You because You are worthy of our worship. It's also good for us like all the word of God is. It's good for us to apply it and to believe it. Inspire us to continue to do it in Jesus name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. 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.