

Day One: I Know. Do You?

Author: Brent Colley

Last week began with the news that Boots Grigsby had gone home to be with the Lord. I know our entire music ministry grieved for our sweet organist, Deb. I remember thinking about the old hymn that says "Trials dark on every hand and we cannot understand." Life seems to deliver more than our fair share of blows. Death, financial struggles, struggles within our families, the list is endless. How can a person serve God? How can I worship a Savior that allows these terrible things to come upon His people? Journey with me to chapters 18 & 19 of Job. I think this passage will help us gain some perspective.

The scene in chapter 18 is an ash heap. Bildad shows up for his early morning jabs at Job. He tells Job that God has found him out. That he is wicked and his lamp is going to be snuffed out. He tells him that he is losing his strength because of his evil schemes. Bildad describes Job as a fish caught in the mesh of a net, then he starts to say some really hateful things. In chapter 19 Job is so weary from the sickness and the relentless attacks from his "friends." Not only do his friends reject him, but He feels that God has rejected him. Look with me to 5 of the most awesome verses in the Bible.

"Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes- I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:23-27)

WOW! Despite all the trouble, Job says he is sure that his Redeemer lives. He knows that he is headed for the grave, but he also knows that one day God will raise a flag of victory there, and with his own eyes he will see the Lord. That is **hope** my friends. Knowing that one day we will see God is more than enough fuel to carry us through the difficult times of our lives. Our Redeemer lives, and one day believers will see Christ and live with Him forever.

Day Two: And They Sang a New Song

Author: Shelly Hollis

When I think about which song "moves" me to whole-hearted praise at this time in my life, I would have to say "Revelation Song" by Kari Jobe. What is it in that song that makes me long to stand to my feet and raise my hands to the heavens? I get chill bumps, a lump in my throat, and tears in my eyes every time I hear it!

Take a look at the first verse:

*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Holy, Holy is He*

*Sing a new song, to Him who sits on
Heaven's Mercy Seat*


You can certainly see why it is called the "Revelation" song. These words are from Revelation 5:9, "And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.'"

Wow! Can we just unpack this for two seconds and appreciate the power in these words? This verse describes the scene as the Lamb of God (Jesus) steps forward as the only one worthy in heaven to open "the book." John records how all of the creatures and the elders fell down before the Lamb (Rev. 5:8) and began singing a new song! Nothing else would do at this point. Any doxology they had ever sung before must have seemed utterly inadequate for this One who purchased our redemption with His own blood. This makes me wonder what my "new song" will sound like. I am sure when I someday see the Lamb of God, there will be fresh thoughts of praise on my lips - thoughts that I have never even conceived!

Don't miss the significance of the "mercy seat" reference. The Ark of the Covenant was covered by a lid flanked by gold-covered cherubim (angels) called the mercy seat (hilasterion or atonement cover). This is where the blood was sprinkled by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement each year. This is also the place where the Shekinah glory cloud would descend to represent God's presence. Think back to the picture that we see in John 20:12 at the tomb of Jesus - Mary saw two angels in

*Blessing and honor, strength and glory and power be
To You the only wise King*

white, sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus (God's glory wrapped in human flesh) had been lying. Is this a perfect picture of the mercy seat, or what? Christ became the mercy seat for all of us by the shedding of His perfectly sinless blood. This should bring us face down in praise and worship as it did here in the book of Revelation.

The next time you hear this song during our worship service, just give up your whole-hearted praise as a sacrifice to LORD Sabaoth - The LORD of Host! There is intrinsic power in scripture. Turn that intrinsic power into a song of praise and watch out! Holy, Holy, Holy...

Day Three: Our Relationship with the Father

Author: Myra Carter

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life, whom shall I dread." (Psalm 27:1)

I read a story one day about a man that took his child into an ice cream shop. The Dad ordered a double dip

chocolate cone and the son ordered a single vanilla cone. The young lady behind the counter quickly dipped the chocolate ice cream into the cone and right before she handed it to the man she licked the ice cream. He was shocked that this worker had licked his ice cream cone. He told her that he did not want it and for her to put it in the trash, and he and his son left the shop. They got into their car and went around the corner to another ice cream shop. Once again they went inside and ordered their ice cream. The young lady behind the counter turned and began dipping the double chocolate cone first. She handed the cone to the Father and then started dipping the vanilla one. The double chocolate cone looked so good to the son that he asked, "Dad, can I have a lick?" Without hesitation the Dad turned and gave his son his cone.

This puzzled the boy. He asked, "Dad, what's the difference between me and the ice-cream lady licking your cone?" The dad replied, "The difference is that you're my son and I love you with all my heart." That Father had a relationship with his son.

Thank God today for your relationship with our Father. Take a moment to remember your salvation experience and what a difference it has made in your life. I pray that you will have extra courage and strength to tell someone today about all that Christ has done for you.

Day Four: Only One Way to Worship

Author: Jason Moore

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations...God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him." (Psalm 89:1, 7).

Whole-hearted worship comes from the overflow of acknowledging who God is. When we stop to think about the awesome majesty of God's sovereignty and grace, we cannot help but pour out genuine, heartfelt praise. Our adoration is an extension of the indescribable "love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God." (1 John 3:1) But a wrong attitude will rob us of this practice.

Too many people today view the Lord of heaven with a casual glance. We tend to grasp the reality of Immanuel (God with us) and we gravitate toward the aspect that we have a loving, intimate relationship with our Lord and Savior. Though there is nothing inherently wrong with this, we forget to balance the fact that God is still God. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He is transcendent. He is the maker of heaven and earth. All things were created by Him and for Him. He is the holy One who is shrouded in majesty and righteousness. These are the realities that bring the proper balance of fear and reverence into our lives. Without this, our worship is incomplete at best.

I encourage you to search your heart. Do you have a proper balance in your view of God? He is knowable while remaining unfathomable. He is intimate while being unsearchable. He is the Savior while remaining the great I AM! Understanding who He is compels us to worship Him with all of our heart. When we do this, we can truly make His faithfulness known to all generations!

Day Five: Praise the Lord!

Author: Pamela Storz

As normal rite of passage in the life of a missionary kid, I moved away from Honduras (home) and attended boarding school in Tennessee in 11th and 12th grades. Yes, all by myself. I assure you this was considered normal tradition, and not a disciplinary measure. Honestly! But, boy, I was homesick! And sure missed my parental units, if you must know...

Mr. and Mrs. Harper (not their real names) were the resident house parents of the girls' dormitory. Much to our amusement, Mr. Harper's perfunctory, situational assessment was always, I mean, ALWAYS, "Well, Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord!" Being experts in the art of *female teenage behavior*, we tested Mr. Harper's ever-present praise and worship mindset as often and as ruthlessly as possible.

"Mr. Harper! I've just set fire to my room with my curling iron!" He replied, "Well, praise the Lord!" Honest to goodness!

At Homecoming for the half-time entertainment and homecoming queen coronation, Mr. Harper parachuted out of a perfectly good airplane onto the playing field. He landed directly on the 50 yard line, breaking his leg in the process. As the EMTs toted him off the field, from the stretcher he triumphantly pumped his fist in the air, smiled (or grimaced, perhaps), and shouted, "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!"

Oh Father, that hurt, that was harsh, my confidence is shaken.

Have you ever wondered how you can summon up wholehearted praise and worship? *I hurt, Lord.* I assure you, I don't say this to be flippant or subject you to useless, mind-numbing platitudes. Through the Father's gentle instruction, and after a significant amount of personal experience, I can tell you: Praise the Father, thanking Him, whatever your circumstances. If I feel happy, I enjoy myself and praise God. When I suffer, I thank God for the trials because I know, without doubt, that these difficulties will, in time, yield truly *awesome* results. When I hurt, I tell my Father, and my surrendered heart of worship always brings a beautiful, life-changing encounter with God. No matter what my external circumstances, God is with me and for me. He desires and commands my praise. Praise the Lord!

"Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy." (Psalm 126:5) "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and

saves those who are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:18)

Here is another token of assurance: We are part of Christ's family. Have you ever been caught up in a moment of angst or are really struggling, when, all-of-a-sudden, you are overcome by an unexplained warmth, calm? Someone in the Family of Christ is praying for you. You are feeling the arms of Jesus, the Great Comforter, loving you because someone, somewhere, is praying you through. So don't give up! God WILL show up. And while you're waiting, praise Him. Praise Him, Jesus our Blessed Redeemer. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!