

# ***Teaching Sound Doctrine***

## ***BUILDING BETTER WORSHIP Pt. 3***

### **JEHOVAH'S GLORY**

In building better worship, we not only need to realize that God is the only one worthy of worship, we actually need to get a proper view of God and His majesty.

#### **Isaiah**

The call of Isaiah is a perfect illustration. The prophet gets a view of God's majesty, kingship, holiness, and glory.

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory (Isa. 6:1-3).

Upon seeing the awe-inspiring view of God, the prophet realizes his own unworthiness. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (6:5). When one sees the greatness of God, as Isaiah did, and then considers his own unworthiness, then it brings him to worship that One Who is so high and lifted up.

#### **John's Vision**

John saw God sitting on a throne in heaven in Revelation 4. Consider how John describes the majesty of God to show that He reigns from the center of the universe, and He is in control.

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the

throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within (Rev. 4:2-8a).

John discusses these four living creatures (beasts—KJV) which are around the throne of God. He uses figures to show their strength, service, intelligence, and swiftness. Each of them having wings shows their mobility and being full of eyes shows their all-seeing nature. We are then told that these four living creatures “rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (4:8b). These living creatures get a view of the greatness and holiness of God and continue to proclaim that holiness. However, notice the result of seeing the majesty of God and His holiness.

And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (4:9-11).

When those around the throne hear the creatures giving this praise, glory, and honor they fall down and worship God. They recognize the worthiness of God to be worshiped which led to their worship of Him.

## **Israel**

The children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt. They cried out to God for deliverance. God heard their cries and raised up Moses to deliver them from Egypt. God sends Moses to Pharaoh with the message: “Let my people go” (Exo. 5:1). However, God knows that Pharaoh will not acquiesce to His demands. “And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand” (3:19). The English Standard Version says, “unless compelled by a mighty hand” while the NASV has “except under compulsion.” As God *predicted*, Pharaoh refused to allow them to leave. Thus, God brought upon Pharaoh and Egypt ten plagues to “compel” him. God showed total power over the various gods of Egypt. Israel, living in the land, saw the plagues God brought upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians. After the first three plagues, God separated the Israelites from the Egyptians so the rest of the plagues only came upon the Egyptians. In instituting the Passover, God states: “And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to

come, saying, What *is* this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage” (13:14).

Upon bringing Israel out of Egypt, Pharaoh’s heart is hardened, and he follows after them. When Israel sees Pharaoh and his army getting close, “they were sore afraid” (14:10). God then prevented Pharaoh from coming near the Israelites.

And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night (14:19-20).

God not only gave Israel protection from Pharaoh’s army, but also deliverance.

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left (14:21-22).

When the Egyptians tried to follow, the water swallowed them up and they were destroyed. God through all this is showing Israel His great power.

God then leads Israel to Mount Sinai. He calls Moses up to the mountain, where He tells him: “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself” (19:4). He has Moses go down to the people and prepare them for when He could come and speak to them.

And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice (19:16-19).

God was preparing the people in all these events to have a proper respect for

Him, and to be able to see His great glory and power. As recorded in the next chapter, God speaks to them giving them the ten commandments (20:2-17). Notice how the people reacted:

And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God *was*. And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold. An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee (20:18-24).

The Israelites got a glimpse of the greatness of God with the result that they had a proper fear (dread and respect) for God. However, notice how worship is connected with this. The first two of the ten commandments have to deal specifically with worship (not to make any graven image and not to bow down and serve them) as does the fourth (remember the sabbath). After giving the ten commandments and the people requesting Moses to speak to them instead of hearing God directly, God tells Moses to reemphasize the aspect of worship. Moses is to inform the people that they are not to make idols but to worship only Him: altars and all sacrifices shall be only to God.

While the majesty and glory of God made an immediate impression upon the Israelites, sadly that impression did not remain. They soon lost sight of the awesomeness of God and forsook Him when He brought them to the promised land. After hearing a negative report by ten of the spies who had been sent into the land to spy it out, they showed their lack of faith in Him. “So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief” (Heb. 3:19).

Next week we will start looking at Worship today.