

WOK Conference 2008
Thursday Session One
Here I Am To Worship
Part Two

1). In our first session we had come to see that our traditional idea of worship, expressed through the singing of a particular type of song engendering a particular type of emotion, and that which is presented in scripture concerning worship, are not one and the same.

a). Now this neither denies the use of song or the engagement of our emotions within the framework of our services.

b). Rather I want to make sure that our understanding of worship is scriptural in its foundation, so that we will not be deceived into thinking we are doing something we are not.

c). Such a deception would be unprofitable for us.

d). I don't want us to be deceived into thinking that because we sing a 'worship song' that we are automatically engaged in worship. We may at that moment be worshippers or we may not – it has nothing to do with the song itself.

2). We had seen that in both the O/T and the N/T that the word 'worship' was a translation of a word that means to bow low to the ground, to prostrate oneself in homage to –

a). O/T - *shachah* = to depress, i.e. prostrate (especially reflexive, in homage to royalty or God):--bow (self) down, crouch, fall down (flat), humbly beseech, do (make) obeisance, do reverence, make to stoop, worship.

b). N/T - *proskuneo* = from 4314 and a probable derivative of 2965 (meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand); to fawn or crouch to, i.e. (literally or figuratively) prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore):--worship.

c). What we see here in the use of these words to describe worship is the recognition by the one 'worshipping' of the superiority of the one being worshipped. There is in the action of prostration the implicit idea of the will of the worshipper being subjected to, and therefore becoming the same as, that of the one being worshipped. The act of worship then becomes the voluntary declaration of obedience on the part of the one who perceives himself as the lesser towards the one he sees as the greater.

d). We saw this to be true of Abraham, of Mary and of the Apostles in respect of God – all of whom chose to be the bondservant of their Master and were therefore worshippers.

e). Remembering that a bondservant is someone who has the legal right to their own freedom, but who chooses instead to give up their freedom to serve their master in complete subjugation of their will to his.

f). And this is an attitude that must be true of us also if we are to engage in worship - 1Pe 2:15 *For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men-- 16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.*

3). Now let's return to our foundational scripture from yesterday concerning Abraham in Genesis 22 for a moment -

a). Ge 22:4 *Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." 6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. 7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.*

b). To review, what we see here is that worship has to do with faithful obedience to the Word of God - Ge 22:2 *Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."*

c). And this faithful obedience is represented through the action of making a journey and a sacrifice.

d). And through God's own commentary, is also inextricably linked to resurrection - Heb 11:17 *By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," 19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.*

e). Now notice this carefully – Abraham makes a three days' journey in order to offer the sacrifice, in order to perform his act of worship.

f). And three days in connection with resurrection is unmistakable –

4). It begins in foundation for us in - Ge 1:9 ¶ *Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.*

a). Notice what we see here – the earth comes from beneath the water, out of the place of death, in resurrection so to speak, by the power of the Spirit on the third day and is then fruitful.

b). Jon 1:17 *Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*

i/ Jonah is in the belly of the fish, the place of death, and is vomited onto dry land on the third day, in a picture of resurrection, by the power of the Spirit and is then fruitful, bringing Nineveh to repentance.

c). Ac 10:40 *"Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly,*
i/ Again, Christ comes from the place of death on the third day, in resurrection, by the power of the Spirit, in order to be fruitful - 1Co 15:20 ¶ *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

5). What we see in all these examples is the fact that it is only by the power of the Spirit through resurrection that fruitfulness can take place. All of which is connected with the third day.

a). It is only when we have died, through the death of our old man – our dying to our flesh, that we are able to produce anything of value in the spiritual realm.

b). Only that which is done in the spirit can produce fruit – only that done in the spirit is acceptable to God.

c). And this process is typified in our Genesis 22 scripture as a three days journey.

d). Remember - Joh 4:24 *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

e). That which is done in the spirit can only be done in the power of resurrection, never in the flesh.

e). And the three days' journey is to be made before worship can take place.

6). Now let's observe the children of Israel - Ex 5:2 *And Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go."* 3 ¶ *So they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."* 4 *Then the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Get back to your labor."* 5 *And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are many now, and you make them rest from their labor!"*

a). God had commanded Israel to make a three days' journey into the wilderness so as to offer sacrifices.

b). Can you see clearly what is happening here? In order to make sacrifices, to perform an act of worship through obedience to God's command that must involve death through sacrifice, they are to make a three days' journey first – only having made the journey would they then be in a position to worship without the Lord falling upon them 'with pestilence or with the sword'.

c). This is an identical picture to that which we saw with respect to Abraham and Isaac.

d). And the three day's journey again speaks of death, burial and resurrection – the sacrifices to be made, the act of worship to be performed, only on the third day – by the power of the Spirit. By the express command of God.

7). And notice something else from our Exodus scripture – Pharaoh who is a type of the god of this world, Egypt being a type of the world – does not want Israel to make the three day's journey so that they can offer sacrifices, because he does not want them to have 'rest' – an obvious reference for us to the Day of Rest, the 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom.

a). Do you see this? The three day's journey = producing acceptable sacrifices/worship = rest.

b). Not making the three day's journey would mean no acceptable sacrifices, no rest. It would mean staying in bondage under Pharaoh, laboring in his field.

c). And Pharaoh does not want them to go. So what would this mean for us? Simply the god of this world does not want us to make the three day's journey either – because he knows that if we do make that journey we will offer acceptable sacrifices, we will die to our flesh, we will become true worshippers and our faithful obedience will result in us taking the Kingdom, and entering into the Rest - Heb 4:9 *There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.*

d). If we do not make the journey there will be no acceptable sacrifices and therefore no rest – we would allow ourselves to remain in bondage to sin and find ourselves laboring in Satan’s field instead of Christ’s.

e). Ro 6:16 *Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?*

f). Clearly then, if we are to be the true worshippers of John Chapter 4 and worship in spirit and truth we have to make the three days’ journey also.

g). Now for us this does not speak of a literal three days or a physical journey, but the present continuous process of dying to our flesh and walking in the spirit – and the length of our journey, characterized as three days, will be the course of our Christian life from the point of our eternal salvation to our physical death or rapture.

h). 1Pe 2:11 *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,*

i). Ga 5:24 *And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

8). Now we have not quite finished with Pharaoh and Moses yet. Look what we find later in Exodus - Ex 8:27 *"We will go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as He will command us."* 28 *And Pharaoh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away.*

a). Again we see the three days’ journey to offer sacrifices, to perform worship through faithful obedience to the command of God.

b). But now see Pharaoh’s compromise – do whatever you want to do for God, but don’t go very far away – do it without making the three days’ journey.

c). They could have gone and sacrificed animals until they were knee deep in blood, but without travelling the three days first none of it would have been acceptable to God.

c). For us we can call it worship, call it praise, call it what you like, but without the three days’ journey made first, it’s nothing but hot air – ‘the sound and the fury, signifying nothing’.

9). We see the same thought from a slightly different perspective with Israel at Sinai - Ex 24:13 *So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. 14 And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them."*

a). Ex 32:1 ¶ *Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." 3 "So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. 4 And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" 5 So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD." 6 Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*

b). Moses, from their perspective, was delayed on the mountain and they didn't know what had become of him, so they had their religious leaders make a molded calf which they called 'elohyim', 'that brought them out of the land of Egypt'.

c). They hadn't stopped believing there was a God, rather they wanted God on their terms, rather than they being on His – they were in their own minds sacrificing to God, but they hadn't gone very far away – this was out of their flesh, not out of obedience - and what they believed to be worship was in fact idolatry.

10). Now Christ has also gone up to the mountain and also gave a command before leaving - Lu 19:13 *And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

a). For many though it appears as if He is delayed and they have wondered, 'where is the promise of His coming?'

b). As a result we find - 2Ti 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;*

c). Do you recall where the gold came from for the molded calf?

d). And here is our warning - 1Co 10:6 ¶ *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."*

e). The question is, is the church at large following the command of Luke 19, or has it sat down to eat and drink and risen up to play and fashioned for itself a molded calf?

11). In our last message we had touched on the scope of the divine worship that was carried out in the tabernacle and the temple in observance of the Law of Moses, and we had seen how this had become little more than the performance of religious ritual.

a). As we bring this back to mind let's look at this from –
Heb 10:5 *Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. 7 ¶ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come--In the volume of the book it is written of Me--To do Your will, O God.'" 8 Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), 9 then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.*

b). Christ came in fulfillment of the Law and His sacrifice fulfilled and transcended all other sacrifices, and note the way in which Christ's sacrifice is characterized – 'I have come to do Your will O God' – the sacrifice of obedience as divine worship replaces the performance of ritual.

c). From our perspective doing the will of God of necessity requires the death of our own will.

d). Ps 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart-These, O God, You will not despise.*

e). This cannot happen apart from the death of self.

f). Isa 66:2 *For all those things My hand has made, And all those things exist," Says the LORD. "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.*

g). He has taken away the first, worship through religious ritual within the temple in Jerusalem, and replaced it with doing the will of God, worship that is to take place in the temple of God - 1Co 3:16 ¶ *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

12). Let's look at one last example concerning doing the will of God –

a). 1Sa 15:3 *'Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'*

b). We are looking here at the Lord's command to Saul, Israel's first king with respect to the utter destruction of Amalek.

c). The Amalekites were the first nation to attack Israel when they came out of Egypt and were descendants of Esau's grandson and as such are characterized through Esau. – a man of the flesh who despised his birthright.

d). In God's command, which is of course the expression of His will, to utterly destroy Amalek we can see a picture for us with regards to God's will for us to utterly destroy the man of flesh, the one whom Amalek typifies –
Col 3:5 ¶ *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

e). Ro 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

13). Now in the light of all we have looked at we will realize that as Saul would carry out the will of God, by destroying Amalek so he would be performing an act of worship. Let's look at what happened - 1Sa 15:16 *Then Samuel said to Saul, "Be quiet! And I will tell you what the LORD said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak on." 17 So Samuel said, "When you were little in your own eyes, were you not head of the tribes of Israel? And did not the LORD anoint you king over Israel? 18 "Now the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' 19 "Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD?" 20 And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 "But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal." 22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king." 24 ¶ Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25 "Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD." 26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel."*

a). The consequence of Saul's failure to obey God is striking – the position of rulership that should have been his is taken from him and he is rejected by God.

b). And did you note the reason for his disobedience? ‘because I feared the people’. Echoes of Aaron at Sinai?

c). And our scripture continues - 1Sa 15:30 *Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the LORD your God."* 31 *So Samuel turned back after Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD.* 32 ¶ *Then Samuel said, "Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me."* So Agag came to him cautiously. And Agag said, *"Surely the bitterness of death is past."* 33 *But Samuel said, "As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women."* And Samuel hacked Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

d). Saul returns to ‘worship the Lord’, but please note his motivation for this – that he might have honor before the elders of his people and before Israel – this is no more than the performance of a religious ritual, in the flesh – Saul calls it ‘worship’ but it has nothing to do with obedience to the word of the Lord. It is not born out of repentance but out of a desire to save face before the people. In fact we would need to see this not as worship but as idolatry.

e). It is Samuel who actually performs the act of worship, by fulfilling God’s will, by hacking Agag to pieces before the Lord.

f). And we will remember that it was an Amalekite, one of those who should have been utterly destroyed who killed Saul and took the crown from his head.

g). Re 3:11 *"Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."*

14). The lessons for us here should be obvious – it must be our determination to utterly destroy our man of flesh. Now this is not a onetime event but a continual process, but nevertheless this should be our aim. And we are to do this in faithful obedience to God’s command as we look to the hope out ahead of us. And failure to do so will inevitably lead to the loss of our crown in that Day.

a). And as with Samuel and Agag we are to use the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God to accomplish this - Heb 4:11 ¶ *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

b). And when we find that we have left Agag alive, which we will often do, then, to continue in our Hebrews scripture - Heb 4:13 *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. 14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our*

confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

c). In the recognition of our sin and in the midst of our weakness we go to our High Priest in repentance, from whom we will then receive mercy and from whom we will receive grace to help – and as we do this, believing what God has said submitting our will to His, so we perform an act of worship –

Ro 12:1 ¶ *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* [latreia – ministration of God. i.e worship, divine service]

d). This is all part and parcel of making our three day journey.

15). As we come to present ourselves before the Lord with a song on our lips, it is neither the song nor the context in which it is sung that constitutes an act of worship. Rather it is the condition of our heart that determines whether we worship God or not.

a). Joh 4:3 *"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*

b). I pray this will be us.