

Worship in a Time of War

In this season of intense spiritual conflict, we must remember that the battle belongs to the Lord.

Our nation is currently at war. But do you realize that the church is also engaged in the highest level of warfare? How do we wage war? It is through worship!

Worship takes us through steps of ascension into the heavenly realms. The Lord Jesus Christ mediates our arrival into His throne room, where we have the incredible privilege of standing boldly before a holy God. As we ascend, we gain more revelation of who He is.

We go to war when the enemy tries to pull us out of that abiding place or block us from ascending to that abiding place in Christ. We often feel this blockade as we ascend in worship. This is when it's necessary to express the sound of war from our spirits toward the enemy.

We learn much about worship from the book of Revelation. What happened when the disciple John saw a full revelation of Christ—and the state of the church in his generation? A door opened, and the Lord asked him to come in.

John not only ascended; he also went in. The Lord then gave him a heavenly perspective. The book of Revelation shows us a pattern of what is released when we worship:

1. God breaks open the seals. As we worship, He releases vengeance on the enemies that have been resisting us as His beloved children. He also releases judgments on those who are resisting His purposes. We don't have the right to judge, but

we have the right to worship. From our worship, He releases judgments.

2. There is a release of trumpets and a prophetic anointing.

When we worship, He releases His Word and redemptive purpose for our lives.

3. Jesus releases woes on Earth. Matthew 23 and 24 list these woes. His first woe came to the scribes and Pharisees. When we worship, we break the power of religious spirits over our lives. We can then receive the prophetic revelation and truth that God sends today.

4. He releases the bowls of prayer that are full of wrath.

Revelation 5:8 says that the four living creatures and the 24 elders each had a harp and golden bowls full of incense, "which are the prayers of the saints." The saints' praying causes bowls in heaven to fill. Then God begins to set Earth in order, and He judges the beast and those who worship his image.

5. We obtain supernatural protection in spiritual warfare. All the blessings of Psalm 91 are available to us because we enter our abiding place. As we ascend in worship, we move from our earthly condition into our heavenly position. True victory in warfare occurs when we get our feet planted on our enemies.

6. New songs from heaven are released to Earth. When King David worshiped he sang a new song. When we ascend into the heavenly realm in worship, we gain revelation, and we begin to sing that pertinent revelation to the Lord or to the congregation around us.

Revelation 5:9 says God's people "sang a new song." This means they responded to God's new redemptive act in history by rejoicing in song over that act. Miriam did it. Moses did it. David did it. The Virgin Mary did it. The elders John encountered in heaven did it. They all sang a new song.

If we will sing this new song we will see God move. The church's worship today needs to correspond to the worship that is going on in heaven. Here are the songs of breakthrough the body of Christ needs to sing in this hour:

New songs of the Spirit. The new song is mentioned seven times in the Old Testament and once in the New Testament (see Rev. 5:9). The church must sing ahead of its theology because our hearts must be changed before our minds are informed. Otherwise we are left with head knowledge only.

Of course, an informed mind can enhance our worship after our hearts are changed. The New Covenant calls for a new song—a new worship response to the finished work of Christ in His death, resurrection, ascension and exaltation.

Songs of enthronement. These are songs that declare the coronation of our King. In Psalm 110:1-2, God calls for His Son to be seated at His right hand until all His enemies are made His footstool. Peter referred to this passage during his sermon at Pentecost, the time when King Jesus was installed on His eternal throne.

Songs of harvest. Jesus will rule all the nations, and the church will reap a massive harvest from every tribe, kindred, tongue and people (see Rev. 7:9). Psalm 126 sings of the harvest coming in after a time of tearful sowing. We need to

worshipfully sing the harvest in.

Songs of prophetic declaration and intercession. John saw visions of harps and bowls in heaven (see Rev. 5:8). Harps speak of worship and bowls of intercession. When the bowls are full, the angel tips them into the Earth realm (see Rev. 8:3-5). When we are faithful to corporately release incense through our intercession, the Lord is faithful to intervene in the situations we have been praying about.

Songs of victory. In Exodus 15, God's people sing of the defeat of their enemies, the Egyptians. Their song had prophetic dimensions. Forty years later, when Rahab met the spies in Jericho, she told them that the men of Jericho had begun to fear the people of God when they heard of the Exodus. The prophetic song put fear into the hearts of Israel's enemies.

Are you ready for war? If so, then let's ascend in worship.

We must remember three keys if we are to operate in war. First, when it is a time for battle, we must go to war. King David had his greatest downfall when the time came to go to war and he stayed home. Passivity in wartime is disastrous.

Second, we must know what the war is about. Defining your enemy allows you to gain your victory strategy. We are at war with an enemy who has set himself against God's will. We will be at war until God's will is done and the Great Commission is fulfilled.

Third, we must war from an abiding place. I never go to war just for the sake of war. I go to war only when the enemy

attempts to remove me from the place of rest, protection and trust that the Almighty has allowed me to experience.

The Psalmist sang: "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust'" (Ps. 91:1-2, NKJV).

Wow! That clearly describes worship and war. When we are in our abiding place, all of the promises of Psalm 91 are available to us.

If you feel weak in the face of the battle, then remember the many choruses we sing that contain the phrase, "'Let the weak say, 'I am strong.''" (Joel 3:10).

This verse refers to people who are getting themselves ready for war. It is an exhortation for those who feel too weak to go out and fight.

We need to arouse ourselves by declaring that we are strong. This was a Scripture passage given for warriors. As a matter of fact, the word translated strong is the Hebrew word gibbor—which means warrior or tyrant. The verse actually says, "Let the weak say, 'I am a warrior.'"

The Spirit of God is prophetically telling us to declare, "We are warriors." As we unite our hearts to sing the song of worship, our enemy will flee in terror.

Chuck Pierce is president of Glory of Zion International

Ministries in Denton, Texas, where he lives with his wife, Pam, and their five children. He is co-author of numerous books, including *The Worship Warrior* (Regal) and *When God Speaks* (Wagner).