

## Introduction

One of the great truths of salvation is the blessing of not only calling God “Father” but in reality having Him as such. When the Lord was teaching the disciples how to pray He began with the words, “Our Father”. The beauty of His knowledge and truthfulness is observed in this expression in that it does not say, “Our God who art in Heaven”. The reason is, while God may be our God in a relationship, He is not always that in behaviour, but thank God He is always “father” no matter what our spiritual condition is. The knowledge of this ought to cause our hearts to bow in worship.

This is a continuation from October’s Front Page which dealt with “Biblical Illustrations of Worship”. They are not meant for the intellect, while that is a necessity, but for the heart so that while reading them there may be a response from us in that we will worship God and Christ.

## More Illustrations Of Worship

The situation in 2 Chron. 7 has got to be one of the great highlights of ancient Israel. The great “house for the name of the Lord” (2 Chron. 2:1) had been built on Mount Moriah (2 Chron. 3:1). Interestingly it is not said to be built where Abraham offered the sacrifice of Genesis 22, but “in the place where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite” (2 Chron. 3:1). The reason is quite simple. We do not know where Abraham offered Issac, it was in “one of the mountains” of the land of Moriah (Gen. 22:2), but it is never said it was on Mount Moriah. Again, it was against the background of David’s sin when having been instigated by Satan he numbered the people (1 Chron. 21:1), yet such is the fulness of God’s forgiveness not only to David, but in the full knowledge of the ways Solomon would turn from God, he is permitted to build the Temple. What a magnificent structure with its abundance of gold and richly carved exotic woods. Yet, glorious as it was, it did not prompt worship, awe yes I am sure, but not worship. Then King Solomon kneels down and prays, but that did not cause worship. Then at the dedication, fire came down from Heaven and without any earthly ignition it burned the sacrifice and the glory of the Lord filled the house (2 Chron. 7:1). The priests could not enter the “house of the Lord” and for a second time there is mention made of the “glory of the Lord filling the house (2 Chron 7:2). When the children of Israel saw the fire and the manifested glory of God they bowed and worshipped. This must have been a stupendous sight, but it was not like the cloudy pillar of fire which led them through the wilderness. This was a manifestation of much greater magnificence. God was manifesting His glory, and aware of the infinite greatness of God, they worshipped. I have no doubt that if we knew more of the manifested glory of God there would be more worship individually and collectively.

How wonderful it would be if at the end of our days we, like Jacob, ended them in worship. There are statements which would be superlative epitaphs for any saint, such as “He/She trusted in God”, or “When he/she was a dying worshipped” (Heb. 11:21). As this old saint was dying he speaks of God as, “GOD ALMIGHTY” (Gen. 48:3, the Hebrew word is “El Shaddai”); “God” (Gen. 48:11, that is Elohim); and “The Angel” (Gen. 48:16).

- 1) Jacob saw God as the Almighty. It was how his grandfather Abraham and father Issac knew God (Ex. 6:3) and knowing God as such resulted in worship. This was not his knowing about God, that is in a theoretical way, but he knew God as such from the experiences of life (Gen. 48:3). There had been a happening or happenings in his life when the truth of God as “El Shaddai” had been more fully revealed by the Holy Spirit, then the title changed from intellectual to reality, and Jacob lived in the light of it.
- 2) Since we cannot determine exactly what the name “Shaddai” means, for when there are several definitions and assumptions then it indicates obscurity, however, we can determine something of its significance by the other name associated with it, “El” and how the word “Shaddai” is used of God, either in connection with EL or alone as Almighty.
  - a) Jacob does not in this instance call God “Eloah” or “Elah”, he does call God “Elohim” (Gen. 48:15), but in the first statement God is “El”. The first time this descriptive term is used is Gen. 14:18 concerning Melchizedek, priest of the most High “EL”, and the next statement, “Possessor of heaven

and earth” He is the God of all provision and blessing. Jacob, like his grandfather Abraham, had been putting his security and perhaps his glory in possessions, but they came to realize God is the giver of every good and perfect gift (Jam. 1:17) and no good thing will He withhold (Psa. 84:11).

- b) For “Shaddai” it seems best to me to consider how it is used in other scriptures, then it is seen that it:
    - i) Indicates the unrestricted ability/sufficiency of God to:
      - 1. Meet a need
        - (a) For the provision of protection (Psa. 91:1)
        - (b) To give life in abundance from a biologically dead parent (Rom. 4:19; Job 33:4)
    - ii) His character:
      - 1. When God first appeared to Abraham in this way God said “Walk before me and be thou perfect” (Gen. 17:1). God was the God of moral absoluteness, commanding Abraham to be “without blemish”, “live a life of unbroken fellowship with God”.
    - iii) His inescapable judgment:
      - 1. This aspect Jacob was possibly not aware of since it does not appear until the prophets (Isa. 13:6; Joel 1:15).
  - c) As Jacob became aware of his approaching death, his mind began to ponder what would happen after death. He had a wonderful comfort for as Jacob faced the reality of death he knew the ability of God to bring life from death. Death was not the end of everything but the entrance into abundant life, and he bows in worship. This is the conquest of faith, for faith in the face of death is more remarkable than faith in the face of life’s experiences.
  - d) When he was leaving home, one of the last phrases he heard from his father was, “God Almighty (El Shaddai) bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham . . . that thou mayest inherit the land” (Gen. 28:3-4). Years later the old man looks back on the blessings, and blessed he was. Unlike Naomi who went out full and came back empty, Jacob went out empty and came back full. The old man still had his staff. It had been with him all the years but there was coming a time when the staff would not be able to go with him, he would enter death, what had he then to lean on? El Shaddai! The God of abundant care and provision would be his stay in and after death, and the old man worships.
- 3) In the reviewing of life there are those happenings which are the high points of life. High points in Abraham’s life was when God called him from Ur of the Chaldees, or when he offered his son on the altar. In 2 Chron. 20:18 we come to that which I deem is the high point of Jehoshaphat’s life. He had joined with wicked Ahab in conflict and escaped with his life (2 Chron. 18:31) and returned to his house in Jerusalem (2 Chron. 19:1). God then sent Hanani to rebuke him for helping the ungodly and loving them that hate the Lord (2 Chron. 19:2). At the end of his days he again joins with the very wicked Ahaziah (2 Chron. 20:35) and this time lost his navy (2 Chron. 20:37). In between these two low points he faces a crisis. The armies of the children of Moab, Ammon, and Ammonites all join forces to come against him. It is a huge army of mighty men of battle and naturally speaking Jehoshaphat does not stand a chance. He stands alone, no human allies, and like a pack of wild animals descending on a single hurting animal, they go after Jehoshaphat and Jerusalem. What is the king to do? He durst not join with another evil king, but Israel and the king set themselves to seek the LORD (2 Chron. 20:3-4). In the midst of the people Jehoshaphat stands and prays. Asking God he:
- a) Ascribes to God His sovereignty and unhampered power (2 Chron. 20:6)
  - b) Lays before God His past victories which were by God’s power (2 Chron. 20:7)
  - c) Reminds God of the sanctuary, and the pledge to hear (2 Chron. 20:9)
  - d) Then he presents to God the present situation (2 Chron. 20:1-12)
    - i) Note that this is prayer but it is not called “worship”

- ii) Then the Spirit of the Lord comes on Jahaziel, and the Lord encourages them that victory is secure, the Lord is with you (2 Chron. 20:17). It is at this point we read, “And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the Lord” (2 Chron. 20:18).
- iii) They worshipped the Lord in the recognition that He alone was able to assure the defeat of the mighty enemy, that He was gracious in that He heard their prayers and was going to answer them. Who else but God could give such quietness of spirit in the face of such overwhelming numbers?

### Conclusion

Space forbids the consideration of the worshipping of God after the restoration of the temple and sacrifices (2 Chron. 29:28-20); at the response to the word of the Lord being read (Neh. 8:6); Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4:1-37); or when God shows Himself to be superior to the gods of the nations (Zeph. 2:11). These are but a few of the illustrations of worship in the scriptures. May the Holy Spirit lead our hearts to know what it is to worship God and bow in adoring amazement at His unmerited grace and mercy, His uncircumscribable abilities, and the supremacy of His sovereign exclusiveness.

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