

Worship

In a Jewish *worship service* the ancient blessings of praise and thanksgiving to God such as *Sh'ma*, *Amidah* (Standing Prayer) or *Tfilah* (*The Prayer*) are often recited and Psalms might be sung.

The modern Christian *worship service* often includes singing both traditional Christian hymns and choruses or more modern renditions of songs and praises, scripture reading and a sermon.

Such communal activities give participants a sense of fellowship and solemnity but is this what worshipping is about? Does God want singing and praise or justice and mercy?

Psalms 89:14 Justice and judgment [are] the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

In the military the day starts with a pledge of allegiance and solemn raising of the flag. It is common to see several hundred men marching in cadence singing in union. Are these also forms of worship? Could we also include as worship the staid rising to sing the Star Spangled Banner at political conventions or ball games or rising for a judge at his entry into the courtroom?

The word **worship** in modern dictionaries is defined, "The reverent love and devotion accorded a deity, an idol, or a sacred object." Before early Americans came from England it was common to use the word **worship**, "as a form of address for magistrates, mayors, and certain other dignitaries."¹

Nothing has contributed to the control of the mind of man than the ability to alter the meaning of words. Words may be changed but the original meaning is for ever locked in time and history.

A little over a hundred years ago, in Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary the word **worship** is found defined, "homage rendered to God which it is sinful (idolatry) to render to any created being (Ex. 34:14; Isa. 2:8). Such worship was refused by Peter (Acts 10:25,26)² and by an angel (Rev. 22:8,9)³".

Easton says worship is homage which is "Ceremonial acknowledgment by a vassal of allegiance to his lord under feudal law." This seems closer to the meaning of the authors of scripture than singing on Sabbath or Sunday. What any word means in a Biblical sense is dependent upon the meaning and intent of the author and does not change with modern opinions, philosophies or doctrines.

The word worship in the New Testament is consistently from the Greek word *proskuneo*⁴ which is formed from two words, the preposition unto or to and the word for dog. It literally meant "meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand."

1 *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*

2 Acts 10:25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshiped [him]. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

3 Revelation 22:8 And I John saw these things, and heard [them]. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

4 4352 ~proskuneō ~ proskuneo defined 1) to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in token of reverence 2) among the Orientals, esp. the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence 3) in the NT by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication

the people may live according to the perfect law of liberty.⁸

In the Old Testament the words "gods" and "God" are translated from the single word *'elohiym* in the plural. *'Elohiym* is defined "rulers, judges" and "occasionally applied as deference to magistrates"⁹ while in the New Testament the word God is translated from the Greek word *theos* which figuratively means "a magistrate." Emperors and Presidents often hold the office of Apotheos, appointer of gods,¹⁰ because they are the appointer of judges within their jurisdictional states.¹¹

The most common word translated into *worship* in the New Testament is *proskuneo*. It does not mean bow down but rather *to kiss the hand*. This translation does not do justice to its meaning. Among the Orientals it did include the idea of falling upon the knee and is simply a *token of reverence by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance*. *Proskuneo* was a word *used of homage shown to men and beings of superior rank*. But obeisance¹² alone is not enough for rulers for there is no profit in bowing alone.

The word *latreuo* from *latris* (a hired menial, employee); is also translated *worship* and *worshiper* in the New Testament and means *to serve for hire* and also includes the idea of homage.¹³

What worship truly means in the Bible has a common theme and significance. It has to do with homage and rank of a superior and inferior citizens of a political state. Jesus and John the Baptist preached a kingdom not a religion.

At the time of Christ there was a complaint of the Hellenization of the Jewish traditions. In Plato's *Laws On Musical Worship* for Apollo he states,

"In order, then, that the soul of the child... obey the law... I say, to produce this effect, chants appear to have been invented, which really enchant, and are designed to implant that harmony of which we speak."

"And similarly the true legislator will persuade, and, if he cannot persuade, will compel the poet to express, as he ought, by fair and noble words, in his rhythms, the figures, and in his melodies, the music of temperate and brave and in every way good men."¹⁴

I suspect that the modern transformation of the word *worship* from a political act of homage and recognition of superior rank is a completion of that ancient demagoguery of the Greeks. Certainly the

8 The book *Thy Kingdom Comes* by Brother Gregory Williams

9 Strong's Concordance

10 The Apotheos of Washington <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/apotheos.HTM>

There Are gods Many <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/theosgod.HTM>

11 Rome vs. US <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/romeus.HTM>

12 Obeisance. A gesture or movement of the body, such as a curtsy, that expresses deference or homage. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*

13 Homage. Ceremonial acknowledgment by a vassal of allegiance to his lord under feudal law. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*

14 Translated by Benjamin Jowett

modern preaching has more in common with the Greek orators than the question and answers coming during the New Testament sermons.

Israel was a kingdom not a religion. Judea was the remnant of that kingdom steeped in apostasy with usurpers occupying the office of the crown and the public service in the temple. Jesus came preaching a kingdom at hand not a religion. The worship in the kingdom of Heaven is not merely lip service or verbal praise and melodious singing, but is a manifestation of the homage owed the King and His Father.

Homage is a ceremony that gives evidence of submission but with that submission the people are required to give their substance to their master or masters, their law makers, rulers and judges. Religion is an aspect of every government. It is in essence the caring for the widows, orphans and needy of society. In the kingdom there is also an aspect of religion that requires us to accomplish this task with free will offering in faith, hope and charity. Pure religion is well defined in the bible.

James 1:27 *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

Being unspotted from the world is being untouched in spirit and in truth by the ways of the world. The world¹⁵ was the government of Rome which like Cain now forced the offerings of the people, like Saul compelled the sacrifice of the people and like Solomon and Rehoboam oppressed them as if they were whipped with whips and scorpions.¹⁶

Jesus was the king. The Angels announced it, kings recognized it, shepherds accepted it, the the voice of the people hailed Him,¹⁷ Rome proclaimed it.¹⁸ The only ones who denounced him were the Pharisees and they said they had no king but Caesar.

As King, He appointed a kingdom to certain chosen men¹⁹ so that they would serve that kingdom at hand and maintain it. Their rank in that kingdom is always one of service not *exercising authority*.²⁰ They do not receive homage or obeisance which is reserved only for the Son, the king of the Kingdom and His Father.

Acts 10:25 *And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped [him]. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.*

From the beginning the true bondservants of Christ have always refused to receive the homage due the King. They were true to the commands of Christ as servants of His kingdom. But there are those who have chosen from the beginning to dilute, deny and even usurp His kingdom at hand with other ways that bring the people into bondage and under the ways of the would be Caesars of the world..

15 2889 KOSMOV kosmos an apt and harmonious arrangement or constitution, order, government

16 Eucharist <http://www.hisholychurch.net/sermon/eucharist3.PDF>

17 The Voice of the People <http://www.hisholychurch.net/news/voteking.asp>

18 A Vision of Redemption <http://www.hisholychurch.net/news/redemption.asp>

19 Luke 22:29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, ...

20 Luke 22:25-26 ...The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

Thou hatest the deeds

Revelation 2:6 ***But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.***

What was the doctrine of the "Nicolaitans"? There was a connection between them and Balaam. Balaam is from the Hebrew word '*Baal*' meaning *lord* or *master* and '*am*' references the *people*. It is an expression of superior rank over the people contrary to the directive of Christ, the King.

Nike is the Greek word for *conqueror* with *nikos* meaning *victor*. *Laos* is a word for *people*. Nicolaitan and Baalam are two different forms of the same idea. Both include the idea of rank, lordship and submission to an exercising authority who can judge the people. They are systems that make gods, or judging rulers, of men, who other men must pay homage too. Homage being fealty or allegiance.

Cain did the same in the first city state and the kings of Israel chosen by the people, when the people rejected God, also forced the homage and sacrifice²¹ of the people, whipping them with whips and scorpions.

There is a controversy concerning who is the clergy and laity or people in the kingdom of Heaven. It is clear by the Biblical text that Jesus appointed certain individuals to positions of service. Those individuals also made appointments of ministering trustees chosen by the people.²² The word *clergy* is simply the clerks of the kingdom, the bondservants of the King and public servants of the people. While the laity are the people who enjoy the perfect law of liberty with its burden of individual responsibility and its reward of redemption in spirit and in truth.

The problem arises in distinguishing the Nicolaitan or Baalam system of clergy and laity from that which was established by Christ is the result of religious doctrines that preach that the kingdom of God is not at hand. They do not seem to realize that the kingdom comes when His will is done. It does not come through observation but it is the fruit of faith and consequence of charity.

Some religions have a top down clergy that *exercises authority* but this is contrary to the Kingdom of Heaven. "He taught that the authority of kings and princes was originally derived from the people"²³ How do Kings get their power of authority which originally belonged to the people by God's granted grace and dominion? They get it because the people reject God and cry out for rulers who may exercise authority over them. They covet their neighbor's goods through the agency of these governmental rulers and judges who they choose for themselves.²⁴ Through that covetous nature they are made into human resources and brought into bondage again.²⁵ These worldly institution which men create with their own hands demand that the people serve them, they oppress their neighbor, denounce the king, claim no government but Caesar and turn their hearts from the ways of God.

"And with regard to our not swearing at all, and always speaking the truth, He enjoined as follows:
'Swear not at all; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these

21 1 Samuel 13:12 – 15.

22 Acts 6:3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men ... whom we may appoint over this business.

23 *The life of John Knox* by Thomas M'Crie

24 Judges 10:14 Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

25 2 Peter 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

cometh of Evil.' [Matt. 5 34-37]. And that we ought to worship God alone, He thus persuaded us: 'The greatest commandment is, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shall thou serve, with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, the Lord God that made thee.' [Mark 7]."²⁶

Here we see Justin the martyr equating swearing oaths to anyone as a violation of the commandment to worship God. This is one way governments gain power and men and society are made weak by their dependency on that government of allegiance.

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
Matthew 4:17

Jesus was not preaching the religion of heaven is at hand but the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It is not like the government of the other nations but was and is very real. It is seldom recognized because it does not exercise authority one over the other as Jesus forbid.²⁷

The reason early Christians gathered together was to take care of the business of that government of God. This is also why they were persecuted out of jealousy and envy for their liberty. There was religious freedom guaranteed by Roman constitution so you could look to any government for your needs. Christ was turning the world right side up and to those who did not want to change they were seen as turning the world upside down.

The governments of the gentiles were top down, but the government of God is bottom up. It begins in the bottom of every man's heart. It is a system of choice and liberty where no one taxes you but your own conscience.²⁸ Everyman is king in his own house²⁹ and priest in his own family.³⁰

Jesus came to serve.

... I am among you as he that serveth. Luke 22:27

In Gibbon's Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, he praised "the union and discipline of the Christian republic." This personal discipline included the rights and responsibilities of freedom. It was a kingdom that depended on faith hope and charity.

He also pointed out that "it gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire." The early Christian ekklesia was a republic that was recognized by Rome through the proclamation nailed to the cross by order of the Proconsul of Rome, Pontius Pilate. When Jesus rose

26 First Apology of Justin Chap.16.-Concerning Patience and Swearing.

27 Luke 22:25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; also Mark 10:42, Matthew 20:25

28 Judges 17:6 In those days [there was] no king in Israel, [but] every man did [that which was] right in his own eyes.

29 1 Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

30 Leviticus 25:10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout [all] the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

