

Swept off your Feet

Beyond Worship-as-Usual

Home

1. Precedent for Worship

2. Foundation for Worship

3. Conviction for Worship

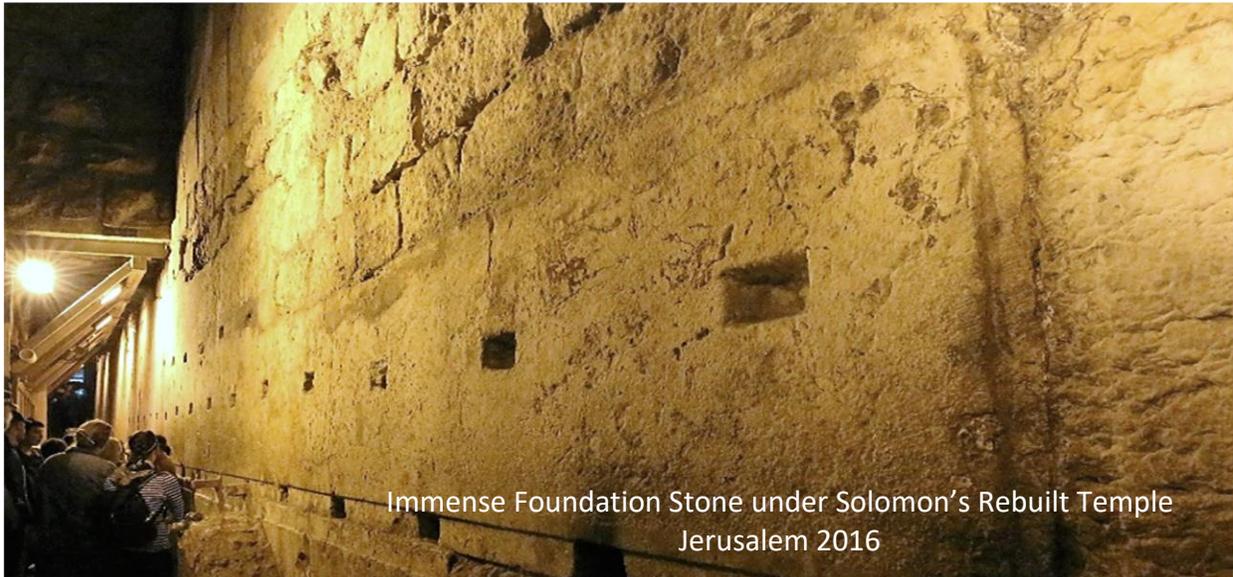
4. Galvanized for Worship

5. Worship Reference

CHAPTER 7

Worship and Praise Converge On Earth

Five biblical narratives describe praise converging with worship. The biblical record describes worshipers **on earth** bowing or falling facedown before God three times in the same context with singing and/or music, and two times in a context of spoken praise. **In heaven**, the biblical record mentions worshipers bowing or falling facedown before God two times in the same context with singing and/or music, and four times in a context of spoken praise (see “Worship and Praise Converge in Heaven”).



Though the Bible does not emphasize singing praise or playing musical instruments as an expression of worship, it conveys an integrated association both historically and prophetically.

Worship or bowing with singing, music, and/or praise—On Earth				
Worshippers	Times	Hebrew	Association	NAS Verse
Israelites at David's Tabernacle	1	Shachah	An exhortation to worship in a context where singing occurs and musical instruments play	1 Chr 16:7-36
Israelites at Solomon's Temple	1	Shachah	Facedown worship occurs in a context where musical instruments praise the Lord	2 Chr 7:3-6
Jehoshaphat and Judah with Levites before battle	1	Shachah	Jehoshaphat and Judah worship facedown as Kohathites praise in a loud voice without music or singing	2 Chr 20:18-19
Hezekiah with Judah establish God's house	1	Shachah	The assembly worships facedown while the Levites sing to trumpets sounding	2 Chr 29:28-30
Nehemiah, Ezra, Israel, and Levites at restoration of Feast of Booths	1	Shachah	Israel confessed sins, gave thanks, and worshiped as Levites exclaimed praise without music or singing	Neh 9:3,5

Worship Associated with Praise on Earth

Most of the time, the Bible describes acts of worship apart from praise. When the two gestures occur together in a narrative, they highlight exceptional moments in history. On earth, descriptions of praise and worship appear in the same context on four occasions. David's Tabernacle offers a fifth occasion where an exhortation to worship occurs rather than an act of worship. Based on 6,000 years of biblical history, these five occasions represent about one instance for every 1,200 years.

1. David's Tabernacle (1 Chronicles 16)
2. Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 7)
3. King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20)
4. King Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29)
5. Ezra & Nehemiah (Nehemiah 8-9)

Worship appears in conjunction with praise on earth during two dedications, one preparation for battle, and two national gatherings. Simultaneous expressions probably occurred at other times in history both privately and publicly. However, the Holy Spirit deliberately inspired these accounts for the biblical record. Each narrative emphasizes a clear distinction between praise and worship.

1. David's Tabernacle (1 Chronicles 16)



The first reference in the Bible to worship in a context of praise occurs after Israel had gathered to celebrate the placing of the Ark of the Covenant in David's Tabernacle on Mount Zion. At this national gathering, praise gained an indirect association with worship.

David had appointed skilled Levites to celebrate the event by giving thanks and praise to the Lord before the Ark of the Covenant.¹ As the Levites played harps, lyres, and loud-sounding cymbals, other priests continually blew trumpets.² The psalm assigned for this occasion encouraged participants to sing praises.³ This psalm only mentions one reference to worship in the form of an exhortation. The account in 1 Chronicles 16:29 (NAS) includes the phrase:

“worship [shachah] the Lord in holy [qodesh] array [hadarah]”

“Holy array” means holy adornment, splendor, or glory. The NKJ renders this same phrase as *“the beauty of holiness”*. This Hebrew phrase only occurs one other time (2 Chronicles 20:21) where it refers to praise. Before facing his enemy on the battlefield, King Jehoshaphat *“appointed those who sang to the Lord and those who praised Him in holy attire [qodesh hadarah]”* (NAS).

When describing the Tabernacle of David in 2 Samuel 6, the biblical text does not include a Hebrew word for worship. Neither narrative in the Bible mentions individuals or groups expressing gestures of worship in or around this Tabernacle.

2. Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 7)



Solomon's Temple represents the first biblical account where distinct expressions of worship and praise converge (without music or singing). This reference occurs after King Solomon's prayer to dedicate the temple. All Israel watched as fire consumed their offerings

while the glory of the Lord appeared. In response to this sudden supernatural activity, spontaneous expressions of facedown worship followed.

¹ 1 Chronicles 16:4 NAS

² 1 Chronicles 16:5-6 NAS

³ 1 Chronicles 16:9 NAS

*All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house [Solomon's Temple], **bowed down** [kara`] on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they **worshiped** [shachah] and gave **praise** [yadah] to the LORD, **saying**, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."*
(2 Chronicles 7:3 NAS)

3. King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20)

Sixty-one years after King Solomon, praise and worship converged as military troops mustered for international warfare. This occasion followed a detailed prophetic message from Jahaziel, which emphasizes praise. When a vast army of Moabites, Ammonites, and some Meunites united against Judah from Edom, King Jehoshaphat led his nation in a public gesture of worship by bowing down. The priests subsequently arose from the ground to express praise with a very loud voice.

*Jehoshaphat **bowed** [qadad] his head with his **face to the ground**, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem **fell down** [naphal] before the Lord, **worshipping** [shachah] the Lord. The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to **praise** [halal] the Lord God of Israel, **with a very loud voice**. (2 Chronicles 20:18-19 NAS)*

In response to Jahaziel's prophecy, appointed singers and praisers led the troops into battle giving thanks and praise to the Lord. Apparently, the singing and praise became a spiritual force multiplier for an unconventional victory. Judah's military did not fight in this battle because the Lord set an ambush to destroy the opposing force. Their enemies from Edom destroyed one another, leaving no survivors.⁴

*When he [Jehoshaphat] had consulted with the people, he appointed those who **sang** [rinnah, a ringing cry or entreaty] to the Lord and those who **praised** [halal] Him in holy attire [qodesh hadarah], as they went out before the army and said, "Give **thanks** [yadah] to the Lord, for His lovingkindness is everlasting." When they began **singing** [rinnah] and **praising** [tehillah], the Lord set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed. (2 Chronicles 20:21-22 NAS)*

⁴ 2 Chr 20:23

4. King Hezekiah (from 2 Chronicles 29)

Hezekiah became king in 715 BC about 250 years after praise and worship converged in Solomon's temple. During Hezekiah's reign, a national gathering produced structured expressions of praise mingled with facedown gestures of worship.

King Hezekiah ordered priests to sing songs of praise accompanied by music. Specific commands, established by the Lord through His prophets, inspired the words of these songs. Hezekiah *"stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with harps and with lyres, according to the command of David and of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for the command was from the Lord through His prophets."*⁵

King Hezekiah and his officials then ordered the Levites to:

*sing **praises** [halal] to the LORD with the words of David and Asaph the seer. So they sang **praises** [halal] with joy, and **bowed down** [qadad] and **worshiped** [shachah]. (2 Chronicles 29:30 NAS)*

Evidently, the assembly worshiped the Lord while designated Levites sang to the sound of trumpets. This account represents the only description in the Bible where musical instruments and singing appear together in association with stated gestures of worship.

*While the whole assembly **worshiped** [shachah], **the singers also sang** and **the trumpets sounded**; all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. (2 Chronicles 29:28 NAS)*

5. Ezra & Nehemiah (Nehemiah 8-9)

During another national gathering, praise coincides with worship in a time of exceptional spiritual renewal. The significance of this event points to the historic restoration of the Feast of Booths with *"very great gladness"*.⁶ Israel had not built booths and lived in them since the days of Joshua the son of Nun.

Marked with fasting, repentance, and humility, Israel stood erect for a fourth of the day while reading from the law of the Lord. For another six hours, *"they **confessed** [yadah means to confess sins or to confess the name of God; it also means to praise and more commonly to give thanks] and **worshiped** [shachah] the*

⁵ 2 Chronicles 29:25 NAS

⁶ Nehemiah 8:17 NKJ

Lord their God".⁷ Afterward the Levites exalted God's name by exclaiming "Arise [implies a change of position], *bless the Lord your God forever and ever! O may Your glorious name be blessed And exalted above all blessing and **praise*** [t^ehil-lah]!"⁸ The next several verses in this narrative record the praises spoken by Levites.

Worship and Praise in the New Testament

In the New Testament, praise and worship do not appear together until John describes them in heaven.

However, Paul's letter to the Romans may imply a convergence of praise and worship:

*For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, **EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW** [kampto] TO ME, AND **EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD.**"*
(Romans 14:11 NAS)

Seven hundred years before Paul wrote this epistle, Isaiah prophesied that every knee will bow and every tongue will "swear allegiance" (Isaiah 45:23 NAS). Paul repeats this phrase in Philippians 2:10-11 where the NAS renders it "every tongue will confess".

*at the name of Jesus **EVERY KNEE WILL BOW** [kampto], of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that **every tongue will confess** [from the Greek word *exomologeo*] that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* (Philippians 2:10-11)

Paul also quotes Isaiah 45:23 in Romans 14:11. Rather than translating *exomologeo* as "confess" however, the NAS uses "give praise" instead. Though the NAS translates *exomologeo* differently in these two epistles, the NKJ, NIV, and ESV remain consistent, each rendering it as "confess".

Regardless how translators render *exomologeo*, the New Testament does not emphasize praise and worship converging together.

Previous Chapter: [Worship and Praise Speaking, Singing, and Music](#)

Next Chapter: [Worship and Praise Converge in Heaven](#)

[Home](#)

[1. Precedent for Worship](#)

[2. Foundation for Worship](#)

[3. Conviction for Worship](#)

[4. Galvanized for Worship](#)

[5. Worship Reference](#)

⁷ Nehemiah 9:3 NAS

⁸ Nehemiah 9:5 NAS