



# AWAKENED

TO WORSHIP

## LESSON 3 // CHANGED THROUGH WORSHIP

The Bible exhorts us to be alert in our spiritual journey. We are warned throughout Scripture of the tendency we all have to fall asleep at our spiritual post and the need to wake up (see Romans 13:11-13; Ephesians 5:14-20). Many things can lull us into spiritual distraction or disinterest.

This includes a tendency to slip into spiritual slumber in our worship. We need regular wake-up calls and fresh reminders of the value of worshiping God!

One of the reasons worship is so valuable is because it changes us. When we respond to life's challenges with worship, God changes us from the inside out.

Let's look at an important lesson the Lord taught Israel about this in 2 Chronicles 20:1-22. From this story, we learn that a commitment to worship God changes us through:

### 1. The outpouring of God's Spirit

In 2 Chronicles 20, the southern kingdom of Judah and their king, Jehoshaphat, faced a crisis moment—the threat of a devastating attack. They reacted to this crisis first with fear, but then with resolve (verse 3), worship (verses 3-12) and waiting on God (verses 12-13). Notice these powerful words in verse 13:

**2 Chronicles 20:12b, 13 (NIV)** *“For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”<sup>13</sup> All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the Lord.*

A part of Judah's worship involved waiting on God in silence and anticipation of His response. This is a picture of trust, vulnerability, humility and faith.

As God's people stood in this attitude of worship, verse 14 describes a tremendous result: “Then the Spirit of the Lord came.” The word “then” signifies the importance of worship. It indicates that God responded to the worship of His people by sending His Spirit.

Worship sets the atmosphere for the Holy Spirit and welcomes His presence. It paves the way for Him to come in a fresh way to us. The Apostle Paul taught us how this principle applies to our lives as believers in Jesus:

**Ephesians 5:18b-20 (NIV)** *Be filled with the Spirit,<sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,<sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

## 2. The revelation of God's Word

In 2 Chronicles 20:15-17, we find a second result of worship. A man named Jehaziel was anointed by the Holy Spirit and boldly declared, "This is what the Lord says to you." The spirit of worship resulted in this revelation of God's Word to Judah.

The Lord has spoken to us through His Word, the Bible, and the spirit of worship prepares our hearts for receiving and understanding its application for us. God spoke words of comfort, encouragement, instruction and promise to Judah and He will speak words like this to us as well!

## 3. The demonstration of God's power

Verses 18-22 describe the third result of worship for God's people: they saw the demonstration of God's power. After receiving the word of the Lord, Jehoshaphat led the people in worship again. He then encouraged them to believe what God had spoken and explained the strategy the Lord had given them for victory over their enemy.

God's strategy for victory was simple, but profound. Judah was to continue in a spirit of worship on the battlefield in the presence of the enemy forces. Their worship would be expressed through songs and declarations of praise to God in the face of those who were intent on destroying them. In the midst of their worship, God would demonstrate His power. Worship results in the demonstration of God's power over adversarial forces! Note verse 22:

**2 Chronicles 20:22 (NIV)** *As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.*

The following verses (23-30) provide greater details of the victory and its impact on Judah. In summary, God's victory that He accomplishes through worship involves:

- *The destruction of our enemy (verses 22-24).*
- *The plundering of the enemy's camp (verse 25).*
- *Increased praise and worship to God (verses 26-28).*
- *The reign of kingdom peace (verses 29-30).*

God's people were changed through worship in this story, and He wants to change you as well. Worship the Lord in faith and expectation and He will pour out His Spirit, declare His Word and demonstrate His power through the victories He will bring in your life!

## Discussion questions

1. Read 2 Chronicles 20:12-14. How did worship set the atmosphere for the outpouring of God's Spirit in these verses? How does this encourage you about your worship?
2. Read 2 Chronicles 20:15-17. How does worship open the way for God to reveal His Word to us? What difference should this make as you approach the Lord in worship?
3. Read 2 Chronicles 20:18-22. In what ways does God's power work through worship in our hearts and circumstances?