

The Pattern And The Point Of Worship.
Hebr. 8:1-5; 9:11-14 and 23-26; 10:19-26; and 12:22-29.
Sunday Morning, January 6, 2008

I. Worship in the garden. Genesis 2,3.

(As it was meant to be.)

A. Listening to the word of the Lord.

B. Responding with faith and obedience.

C. Partaking of the tree of life. (the fellowship meal with God.)

(Instead, they listened to the word of the serpent; responded with unbelief and disobedience, and ate judgment to themselves from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.) Remember the two trees, representing two meals!

II. Worship in the Old Covenant.

A. At Sinai at the ratifying of the covenant. Exodus 24:4-11

1. Israel brings burnt offerings and peace offerings to God. Vs. 4-6.

- Burnt offerings to signify the removal of sin.

- Peace offerings to signify fellowship with God.

(they connect with the two trees and meals in the garden!)

2. Moses proclaims the Lord's word by reading the book of the covenant. Vs. 7a

3. The people respond with faith and obedience. Vs. 7b,8.

(By promising obedience and by receiving the blood of the two kinds of sacrifices of the covenant to themselves.)

4. Israel, through its representatives, ascends in the presence of God, beholds the glory of God, and fellowships with God through the eating of the peace offerings. Vs. 9-11.

B. At the dedication of the temple of Solomon. 2 Chronicles 5-7:10.

This is the most detailed worship service recorded in the Old Testament.

A. Solomon calls Israel to worship. 5:2-5.

B. Sin is dealt with through burnt offerings. 5:6.

C. Israel enters into the presence of the Lord through her representative priests. 5:7-10.

D. A Psalm of praise is sung. 5:11-14.

E. The word of God is proclaimed by Solomon. 6:1-11.

F. Solomon prays a prayer of intercession. 6:12-42.

G. Fire consumes the sacrifices, and glory fills the temple. 7:1,2.

H. A psalm of praise is sung. 7:3.

I. Israel rejoices and partakes of the peace offerings. 7:4-9.

J. Israel departs in peace and joy. 7:10.

III. The pattern of worship.

A. Entering God's presence by way of the removing of sin.

B. God's word is proclaimed, reminding people of God's gracious provisions for them, and calling them to live as His people.

- C. God's people respond in faith and obedience expressed in presenting themselves to God through, and with, Christ.
 - 1. In their prayers.
 - 2. In their praises.
 - 3. In their offerings.
- D. God's people fellowship with God in a covenant meal, partaking of the peace offering, and then go forth with the blessing of God.

IV. The point of worship.

- A. Moses was instructed to build the tabernacle / temple according to the pattern he saw on the mountain. Exodus 25:40.
- B. The real temple and ministry is the ministry of Christ in the heavenly temple. Hebrews 7-10 and 12:22-29.
- C. There are some changes from the OT pattern:
 - 1. The ministry takes place directly in the presence of God. There is no more a veil of separation. It was rent at the death of the Lord.
 - 2. There is no more representative priesthood. There is now the universal priesthood of all believers as a result of their union with Christ, the great High Priest.
 - 3. The ministry is no longer tied to a certain earthly location. Rather it is tied to the heavenly sanctuary which we access with the help of the Holy Spirit. This is why worship is now in Spirit and in truth (the true temple).
- D. The point then of all Christian worship is the participation with Christ in the ministry of the heavenly sanctuary. It consists in offering prayers, praises, and gifts to God.
 - 1. We do so, not without dealing with sin first. That's why there is a prayer of confession.
 - 2. We do not want to do so ignorantly, lightheartedly or unadvisedly, but soberly, reverently, advisedly and in the fear of God. That's why there is a sermon.
 - 3. Both these elements are not ends in themselves, but were meant to prepare and enable us to carry out our calling of participating with Christ in the service of the heavenly temple, in offering prayers, praises and gifts to God. Hence the term "service" is attached to Christian worship.
 - 4. This service is concluded in a covenant meal, in which we fellowship with God, and is concluded with the Lord extending His blessings to us in the benediction.