## Worship Always Wins

## Matthew 8:1-4

**""Matthew 8:1-2** When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. **2** And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.""

I want to focus in on this leper that came to Jesus.

If you don't know what a leper is, it's someone that has a serious skin disease called leprosy.

Leprosy is an infectious disease that causes severe, disfiguring skin sores and nerve damage in the arms, legs, and around your body. Some of the symptoms are…

Loss of eyebrows and/or eyelashes,
Sores on the soles of your feet that don't heal,
Pain, redness, and burning,
Deformities of the nose, hands, and feet,
Blindness,
Paralysis of your feet and hands

**""Leviticus 13:45-46** And the leper in whom the plague *is*, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. **46** All the days wherein the plague *shall be* in him he shall be defiled; he *is* unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp *shall* his habitation *be*.""

Imagine this man who was considered unclean and an outcast, boldly making his way through a multitude of people.

He had a horrible disease, his life was undoubtedly very hard, but I want you to pay close attention to how this man came to Jesus.

"And, behold, there came a leper and **worshipped** him…"

Even though this leper was an outcast, even though he was considered unclean, he had great ailments in his body, even though he was physically suffering, he still had an attitude and a heart of worship towards God.

In your life, there are going to be times when you’re going through hardship. No one is exempt from trials and tribulation.

In fact, we are promised tribulation in this life.

Don't listen to the prosperity preachers on TV…"If you just sow a seed today, for some of you it's $100 dollars, for others a $1000 dollar seed. You sow that seed and God is about to release a tidal wave of blessings into your life."

They say God is promising you health and wealth if you simply give your money to them.

That is a straight up lie from Satan.

**""1 Thessalonians 3:3-4** That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. **4** For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.""

Think about all the trials and troubles we face as humans. Chronic illness, disability, Sickness, disease, sudden life changing injuries, unemployment, financial hardship, death of loved ones.

Why do these horrible things exist in this world? Many people blame God.

All these things exist as a result of man's rebellion. When sin entered into the world, death also passed upon all men.

**""Romans 5:12** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:""

**""James 1:14-15** But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. **15** Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.""

In those times, you can choose to get mad, you can become bitter, cold-hearted...

You can complain to God and question Him.

Or you can worship the Lord when you are in adversity. You can praise Him for who He is and the life that he has given you.

This leper came to Jesus worshiping and honoring Him.

He could have had an attitude of anger or complaining because of his current condition…
But instead he worshipped Jesus and sought him in faith.

Who here likes to listen to whining and complaining from other people?

If we don't like to hear whining and complaining, then you better believe God does not want to hear whining and complaining from us *(When we are going through trials)*

This leper set a great example for us on how we are to handle hardship and how to approach God in adversity.

I want to show you a few examples of what not to do when we are going through tribulation.

## Israelites Complaining in the Wilderness

The children of Israel were in bondage for over 400 years in Egypt. God brought them out of Egypt.

God was leading them to the land that He promised them. A land flowing with milk and honey.

**""Numbers 21:4** And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way…""

The Israelites were discouraged during their journey. Traveling through the desert is hard…

In your own life, sometimes you're going to get discouraged because of the way. You're going to face those hardships. How you respond to those hardships is very important…

**""Numbers 21:5-6** And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is* no bread, neither *is there any* water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.""

Instead of praising God for bringing them out of bondage (*They were no longer slaves)*Instead of thanking God for the manna they were receiving from Heaven, They complained and spoke against God and Moses.

You don't want to do that in your life…

**""6** And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.""

## Israelites Refuse the Land

God told Moses to send out 12 men to spy out the Land of Canaan. The land that God had promised to give them. 10 of those men brought an evil report of the land to the people.

They said that the people of the land were too strong to go up against. They despised the promise of God.

**""Numbers 14:1-4** And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. **2** And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! **3** And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? **4** And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.""

The Israelites did not believe the promise of God. Instead, they complained and murmured against the Lord.

**""Numbers 14:26-32** And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, **27** How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. **28** Say unto them, *As truly as* I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: **29** Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, **30** Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. **31** But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. **32** But *as for* you, your carcases, they shall fall in this wilderness.""

In your life, when there is an obstacle in your path. When you're going through a hardship that you think is impossible to get through. Remember who you have on your side.

Remember who God is, and what He is capable of. Remember the things that He has already done in your life. Don't question God. Don't murmur against Him.

**""1 Corinthians 10:9-10** Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. **10** Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.""

We need to look back on these events in the Old Testament and understand these are examples for us to learn from. We have example after example of what not to do in our lives.

Let's not look at some examples of what we should do.

Just like the leper in Matthew 8 shows us the right attitude to have in hardship *(coming to God in Worship)*, there are many other examples throughout the Bible where we can see how to respond to tribulation.

## Worship Leads to Victory

**""2 Chronicles 20:1-4** It came to pass after this also, *that* the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them *other* beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle…""

Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah in the lineage of David to the sixth generation. King David was Jehoshaphat's great great great grandfather.

There was a great army coming to destroy the Kingdom of Judah…

"" **2** Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they *be* in Hazazon-tamar, which *is* En-gedi. **3** And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. **4** And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask *help* of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.""

**""2 Chronicles 20:13-22** And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. **14** Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation; **15** And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle *is* not yours, but God's. **16** To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. **17** Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*: set yourselves, stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD *will be* with you. **18** 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. **19** And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high. **20** And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. **21** And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever. **22** And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.""

God promised Judah that He would fight for them. The only thing they had to do was to believe, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

I want you to notice that as they went out before the army, what did they do?

They sang praises and worshiped God. "And when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments against their enemies.

Remember that in your life. Maybe you have health issues or any kind of hardship that is bringing you fear and worry.

Don't murmur and complain against God, just trust in the Lord, worship and praise Him, stand still, and see the salvation of God.

Who do you think God is going to be more inclined to help, someone that is complaining, or someone that is worshiping Him?

## Paul and Silas

In Acts 16 we see the account of Paul and Silas casting a devil out of a young woman. She had a spirit of divination, and two men were using her to make money.

The men were angry because they commanded the Spirit to come out of her. They had lost their means of making money from her. So they stirred up the people against Paul and Silas.

**""Acts 16:22-25** And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. **23** And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: **24** Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. **25** And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. ""

Paul and Silas could have been discouraged. They could have complained.

But instead, they prayed and sang praises to God. They worshipped. Because they chose to worship God, a great miracle took place.

**""Acts 16:26-33** And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. **28** But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. **29** Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, **30** And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? **31** And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. **32** And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. **33** And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.""

The best thing you can do in your trials and tribulations is to worship God. Give Him the opportunity to do great things in your life.

Paul and Silas' praise and worship of God in hard times, led to one of the greatest examples of salvation…

You can't expect God to work in your life if you are complaining and disobeying.

There are many more examples throughout scripture of people praising and worshiping God in times of need.

And remember, just because we worship God in trials doesn't mean God has to deliver us from those trials.

**""Job 1:20-21** Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, 21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.""

**""Job 13:15**  Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.""

We need to have the mindset that Job had. Worshipping and glorifying God in our infirmities.

Paul was also no stranger to hardship…

**""2 Corinthians 11:23-30** …in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.""

Some of the things that we go through don't compare to what Paul and many of the other apostles went through.

**""2 Corinthians 12:7-10** And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. **8** For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. **9** And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **10** Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.""

Paul had a thorn in his flesh, some sort of physical ailment that he struggled with.

He asked the Lord to remove it, but it was not God's will to remove it.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Because of this, Paul chose to take pleasure in his infirmities.

We also need to have that same mindset, always worshiping and praising God no matter what we are going through in life.

## Closing Thoughts

Let's go back to Matthew 8…

**""Matthew 8:2-3** And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.""

Even though this man was a leper, even though he was going through hardship,
he came to Jesus, worshiping Him in faith. He knew that Jesus was able to heal him.

He said “Lord, if thou wilt, thou can make me clean.” In your life, are you worshiping God in faith?

**""Hebrews 11:6** But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.""

Because this man worshipped God, and believed that He was able, what do you think happened?

**""Matthew 8:3** And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.""

I want to leave you with a challenge. Think about things that you are going through in life right now. You know what those things are. Maybe you are dealing with very difficult situations. God knows what you're going through.

The question I have for you is, What is your attitude toward those hardships in your life?

Are you complaining, murmuring, and questioning God like the Israelites did in the wilderness?

Or are you coming to God in worship and faith like the leper?

You can't expect things to change in life if you are walking in disobedience and having the wrong attitude.

Set your heart toward the things of God, Do your best to obey Him in all things, and worship him even when it gets tough.

**""Romans 5:3-6** And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; **4** And patience, experience; and experience, hope: **5** And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. **6** For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.""

When you glory in tribulations, continually praising God through every situation. You will always come out victorious because you're leaning on the one who has already won.

Jesus Christ conquered death and hell. No matter what happens in this life, if we put all our faith and trust in Him, we already have victory over this world.

**""Habakkuk 3:17-18** Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls: **18** Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.""

Let's Pray.