

Biblical Overview, III: David and Solomon

Welcome to lesson five. Eric Zellner, one of our students, will lead us in prayer.

Father in heaven, thank You for the opportunity to study Your Word. Thank You for the opportunity to learn how to better and more properly and with right focus worship You. Lord, we pray that You would bless our time now as we study. We pray that You would be with Dr. Dalbey to encourage and strengthen him, and that You would encourage our hearts through his words. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

We finished last time talking about corporate, public worship in relationship to the ideas of sacrifice and covenant renewal, and I gave a review of Meyers' book, *The Lord's Service*. We ran out of time for discussion, so I want to address a few questions about that before we move forward to David. One question is how would this impact the way the pastor preaches in the context of this type of service? I think the service would still be planned in a way that is designed to coordinate with the sermon. Meyers does encourage following the Christian calendar, for example highlighting that this Sunday is the fifth Sunday after Pentecost. Thus there are sometimes more seasonal aspects of the Christian calendar that are incorporated into other aspects of the liturgy. So this type of service is not as sermon-driven as some other types of services may be, with the whole service leading to and out of the sermon. Meyers also encourages having the Lord's Supper every week. I would say that generally those who hold to this type of worship see the climax of worship as being the Lord's Supper rather than the sermon.

In some of our churches (I am being overly critical here) it feels as if we are coming to service to hear a sermon. In the mindset of many people in our denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), we come together on the Lord's Day to hear a sermon. Whatever we may do before the sermon is just preliminary to the sermon. In one of the churches where I served we had sheets for people to fill out with their name and contact information, and also any comments they wanted to make. We got many strange comments. One man wrote, "Why were there 40 minutes of preliminaries today?" What he meant was why did it take 40 minutes to get to the sermon just doing these preliminary, warm-up things? I do not view those things as warm-ups or preliminaries. I would say one of the very good things about the covenant renewal view of worship (as in *The Lord's Service*) is how it highlights or raises up all the other elements of the service to the same level as the sermon without diminishing the sermon. I find that helpful. I do not think the Bible anywhere instructs us that we have to plan every song, prayer, and reading to directly tie in with the message of the sermon. I think you could take the early part of the service to focus on the holiness of God, even though the sermon may not be on Isaiah 6 or 1 Peter 1 or a passage like that.

Thus in the covenant renewal view of worship the sermon is still given a prominent place. The service is often longer than an hour. It seems to me that in order to have the Lord's Supper weekly, to have a sermon that has some substance to it, and to have plenty of time to sing and pray and do other aspects of the worship service, that requires more than an hour. Many churches in the PCA are now starting to have services that are an hour and 15 minutes. Many church plants are starting out saying, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly and service will be an hour-and-a-half. I think it is important to allow time for lots of prayer and singing, preaching, testimony of God's grace in people's lives, and the Lord's Supper. Allowing time for these things emphasizes that we are coming together not to come in and out so that we can say that we heard our sermon for the week—we are entering into God's presence together to be transformed into greater Christ-likeness. To linger in His presence with His people is part of God's design of the Lord's Day, for our edification, rest, refreshment, being refocused on God's call on our

lives for the rest of the week, and then being commissioned and sent out into it. I think there are many good features in the arrangement of worship as set out in *The Lord's Supper*. Though I would not necessarily say that everyone has to do it this way, I do think they have caught hold of true principles, and this is one way of expressing them. I would like to take hold of these principles and apply them in settings where they may not come across in the same way as they do in this book.

It has also been asked, what is the difference between synagogue worship and temple worship? Temple worship was established primarily with the temple being the dwelling place of God on earth. This is where the sacrifices were offered, in the Holy of Holies (once a year), and on the main altar for offering sacrifices. Temple worship includes all the arrangements as God gave Moses for the tabernacle and then for the temple. The full worship of God was connected to the temple. Now, because the temple was central in Jerusalem with 12 tribes surrounding it, there were the three festivals and times of gathering every year that we talked about in lesson four. The people of God were to go up to Jerusalem for these special seasons of worship. The Levites instructed in the law and led the people in prayer but did not offer sacrifices. The Levites were scattered in the division of the tribes. The Levites did not have one geographic area that they were to possess. Cities were designated for the Levites, four in each of the 12 tribes. If you lived in the northern-most tribe, you would not have been able to get down to Jerusalem as often as the tribes who lived closer. But you had Levites who were among your tribe in their cities. They instructed the people in the law, led them in prayer, and other such things. When the temple was destroyed later, somewhere along the line synagogues were developed.

The synagogues were basically meeting houses for people to come together and worship God. While they did not have a temple, the sacrificial system was kind of put on hold. But they gathered for prayer, reading and exposition of the Scriptures, and singing of the Psalms. In many ways the New Testament, new covenant worship was built on that foundation. You can show links (and many people have) between the elements of synagogue worship and the elements of worship in the early church. We will see some of this as we go along in our course. However, there are aspects of temple worship that are now fulfilled in Christ that ought not to be forgotten. They are not irrelevant to our understanding of what happens in new covenant worship. In many ways, I would argue, you have the elements of synagogue worship now focused on Christ in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which brings forward covenant renewal and sacrifice from the temple into the other elements of prayer, reading and preaching of the Word, and singing of songs that are there in synagogue worship. I think new covenant worship is a convergence of synagogue worship and temple worship, with the Lord's Supper now fulfilling much of what was in temple worship. I think a more robust new covenant is this converging of the Old Testament temple worship combined with synagogue worship. I think this is the theological underpinning of Meyers' book, *The Lord's Service*. He argues for that convergence and then shows what it looks like in the way the service is arranged and put together.

Let us go forward to David and the prophets as we continue our biblical survey. One of the key things regarding the worship of God that happened in the time of David was that the ark of the covenant was brought up to Jerusalem. The ark was brought up to Jerusalem as the new city of God, to Mount Zion. Here the theme of Jerusalem begins that continues forward all the way into the new Jerusalem of Revelation. In a devotional this morning Dr. Vasholz reminded us from Proverbs 30 that we are exalted with Christ, seated in the heavenly places with Him. And yesterday Dr. Calhoun told us, wherever you were born physically, if you have been born again you were born in Zion, the heavenly city. This is quite an interesting episode, when the ark of the covenant is brought up to Jerusalem. The account is found in 2 Samuel 6 and also in 1 Chronicles 15 and 16. Let me read a portion of this account from 2 Samuel 6:1-11:

David again brought together out of Israel chosen men, thirty thousand in all. He and all his men set out from Baalah of Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name, the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim that are on the ark. They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals.

When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God.

Then David was angry because the LORD's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.

David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, "How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?" He was not willing to take the ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David.

Instead, he took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household.

As you read this passage, what is the major problem in the transportation of the ark to Jerusalem that caused this drastic event, Uzzah's death? The ark was put on an ox cart. How was the ark supposed to be carried? On poles. Let us go back to what we talked about in the very first lesson—worshiping in spirit and in truth. How would you judge the spirit of David in verse five? It was good! It says they were celebrating with all their might before the Lord with songs and instruments. So they were worshiping in spirit, in a sense. They wanted the ark in Jerusalem, and they were celebrating the presence of God. But, to put it in the category from John 4, they were not worshiping God in truth. God had revealed in very specific instructions that the ark was to be carried on poles. How was the act of Uzzah described? I remember the first time I read this I thought it was not very fair. Uzzah was just trying to do a good deed, keep the ark from falling—and he was struck dead for it. And this is a puzzling passage in some ways, but what can we learn from the way Uzzah's act is described? It is described as an irreverent act. Now, is this because the whole act of transporting the ark in an ox cart was irreverent? Was it because Uzzah was the one who said, "This is the way we should transport the ark," in defiance of God's law? We do not know. Many times we can ask more questions than we can find answers to, and we should not press the text to say more than it does. But we do know that God was displeased with the manner in which this was being carried out. We know what the Scripture's pronouncement on Uzzah's act is: it is irreverent. David then becomes upset. He was very excited about having the ark up in Jerusalem, and now he does not know if they can ever get it there. Something happens between the temporary residing of the ark at Obed-Edom's house and when the ark is brought up to Jerusalem the next time. The account continues in 2 Samuel 6:12-13: "Now King David was told, 'The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God.' So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf."

It says, "those who were carrying the ark of the LORD..." This indicates that they went back to the book; they went back to the instruction manual. They went back and consulted what God had told them and discovered the problem. We should pay attention to the details of God's Word. Even when we disagree with each other over the application of some of these Old Testament principles into New Testament worship, we need to have a reverence before God as He has expressed Himself in His Word.

We need to have a humble desire to do everything according to His Word as He desires it should be applied today. Be careful not to assume that we know everything there is to know about how to do worship. That is one of my deep concerns across the spectrum of the way people, even in the PCA, do worship, when we begin to say, “I have it right. Everyone should do it exactly like me.” I wrestle with that. It does not matter what it is that you think is right, whether it is “only a cappella songs” or “no instrument is worthy of the worship of God except the organ” or “if we do not have guitars we are not worshipping God.” I do not care which one you hold to, though I do have some of my own preferences, but when we elevate our ways of applying a biblical principle to the level of the biblical principle itself, then I think we are in danger of acting in pride. The account continues (coming into the even more controversial part) in 2 Samuel 6:14-23:

David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets. As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.

They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!”

David said to Michal, “It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Now, this is another one of those places in which people who seem to have a passion against any form of physical expression like dancing as a part of worship are quick to come to the conclusion (like we saw in Exodus 15), “Well, this was not a corporate, public worship service called by the elders of the church.” Okay, I will grant that it was not called by the elders. But that is not exactly what would be needed at this point for this to be corporate, public worship and for worship principles to apply. What do we have in the text? We have David and all the people gathered. We have fellowship and burnt offerings being offered. We have singing. We actually have God Himself as represented by the ark of the covenant, who is progressing up to find His new earthly dwelling place in Jerusalem. It seems that we have a few key components that would point to this having something to do with the true worship of God. Again, I do not think this passage is about the fact that David was down to his undergarments (or whatever he was wearing) and leaping and dancing uninhibited before the Lord. This passage is not so much about David’s act of dancing before the Lord as much as it is about his willingness as the dignified king of Israel to become undignified before the King of kings who alone is worthy of worship. And the judgment of the text is on the side of David, not of his wife Michal, which we sometimes forget in this particular passage.

Most of my life my view of worship, my practice of worship, and even the way I have modeled and encouraged it for others, has tended to be lacking in emotion. I think I have had a fear of the abuse of

emotion that I have seen in some circles. This fear has caused me to overcompensate. This comes very naturally. I was raised in a rational, doctrinal Presbyterian family and context—for which I praise God! That biblical doctrine has been a foundation to build my life upon, grounded in Scripture. But where that doctrine should take me in terms of life and worship before God, I think that part has been squelched some, especially when it comes to worshiping God with all my might. My worship is often with restraint and caution. I remember one time we had a man in our church who had a tremendous solo tenor voice. In the summer the choir did not sing and we had what would be a choir introit as the service was beginning, with special music playing. Since the choir was not singing we would have a soloist, a duet, or an ensemble during this time. One of those times this man sang a simple song about God being exalted, a cappella. As he began to sing I was moved in my heart to kneel. Now, no one had ever knelt in our church to my knowledge, except perhaps in a wedding. There I was, in front of a congregation that never knelt. And there was this man, singing this very moving song that the Spirit seemed to be using to bring us humbly before God. I did not kneel because I was afraid (and probably rightly so, in this case) that it would be distracting to what God was doing in this people who were, let us say, kneeling in their hearts. So I got up after the song was over and said, “I want to praise God for how He used Evan’s solo to move my heart to come humbly before Him this morning. And I want you to know that the next time that happens and I am in front of you, do not be surprised if I get down on my knees and kneel, and I would encourage others to do the same.” The next day I was discussing this with someone in my office and she said, “The important thing is that we were kneeling in our hearts.” I responded, “Yes, that was the most important thing. But God also gave us knees. And so kneeling in our hearts while kneeling on our knees is actually consistent with the kind of beings that we are—God created us with the capacity to kneel.”

Thus there is a sense in which this expressiveness in worship—whether we lift our hands, kneel, or lie flat on our faces—is commanded in Scripture. Do you know what the most frequently referenced body posture in worship in the Bible is? Lying flat on your face before God. Now, we cannot lift our hands, kneel, and lie flat on our faces all at the same time. Thus this is not a command for a constant posture in worship. And I think body expressions in worship, including dancing, are actually ways of expressing other elements. If I am flat on my face, what am I expressing? I am probably confessing my sin. What is the element being expressed? The element is not lying flat on my face; the element is prayer, and I am doing it with a body posture that is consistent with what that manner of praying is. If I am raising my hands in praise to God, what am I usually doing? Praying prayers of praise or singing songs of praise and wanting to exalt God in that particular way. The element is not raised hands; the element is prayers or praise and raised hands is an appropriate posture to have when doing that. What is happening usually when I am dancing? Dancing is not a stand-alone element. (I am talking as if I danced every week in worship—I have only danced in worship when I was in Africa. What do you do when people in the congregation come to where you are sitting, take your hand and say, “Come out here to the middle where the rest of us are dancing. Let us enter into worship!”? Well, you go. It would be offensive if you did not. When I dance in worship I am expressing joy, I am celebrating. One time when I was in Ghana we were worshiping in a church where a man named Prince (a former Covenant Theological Seminary student) was the pastor. They sang this one particular song about thanking God that He had saved them and asking God to not only be their God but also be God to their children after them. Partway through the song this circle, storytelling dance began. Then the children of the congregation came up and started dancing inside of the circle dance that was going on. This was a beautiful expression of God’s covenantal relationship with His people that was expressed through song and dance in a way that was very natural and appropriate to who these people are and how they express themselves.

When we read this passage and focus on what the Scripture is not calling our attention to (because of its controversy in our circles) we miss the heart of this king before his King. One of the things that convicts

me about this passage is the question of whether I am willing to be undignified even in the eyes of people in my congregation that I am serving, pastoring, or am a part of. This is a fruit of truly worshiping God with all heart and with all my might. The danger of this is that I could develop an attitude of, "I do not care if I offend. In fact, I will try to offend because I want to prove a point." If I do that then I am not truly worshiping God with all my heart and with all my strength before Him. But the question remains, in the process of truly worshiping God am I willing to even be considered undignified? I think that is the point of this passage that I need to think through and apply to my life. The other interesting thing that happens in this passage we see in 2 Samuel 6:13: "When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he [David] sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf." One way of interpreting the language there is to say, "Every six steps they took, they stopped to sacrifice a bull and a fattened calf." If that is true we can compare it to the previous method of simply putting the ark in a wooden cart pulled by oxen. By this contrast we can see their conviction and repentance for not paying attention to God's instruction about how the ark should be carried. That is consistent if this is a correct way of interpreting the verse.

There are a couple things that happen under David's rule that I think are significant. In the instructions God gave regarding worship to Moses, the only mention God made regarding instruments at that time was trumpets or the ram's horn that should be blown. David expands significantly the musical expressions in worship of God. It is very dramatic and very significant if you realize how little there was before David's time. There were Miriam and the women of Israel with tambourines as part of the expression of worship in Exodus 15. But David dramatically expands musical expression in worship. In 1 Chronicles (an Old Testament book that is all about worship in many ways) 23:3-5 we read: "The Levites thirty years old or more were counted, and the total number of men was thirty-eight thousand. David said, 'Of these, twenty-four thousand are to supervise the work of the temple of the LORD and six thousand are to be officials and judges. Four thousand are to be gatekeepers and four thousand are to praise the LORD with the musical instruments I have provided for that purpose.'"

David appointed 4000 full-time musicians for the worship of God at the temple. That is very significant. And he provided them with instruments. Then 1 Chronicles 9:33 says, "Those who were musicians, heads of Levite families, stayed in the rooms of the temple and were exempt from other duties because they were responsible for the work day and night." Apparently David gave these musicians instruments and gave them rooms in the temple so that there would be an ongoing, never-ending musical expression of praise to God in the temple. That is quite amazing to me.

One time in a church I served, an assistant pastor was leading the service. (I want to make sure you know that in the churches I have served the people loved to worship and were very responsive. I do not want you to get the picture that I am only focusing on negative things. But it is sometimes out of the responses you get to certain things that you find other things in the Scripture.) The way the assistant pastor had arranged the service was that we would read a passage of Scripture about exalting God and then sing the song, "He is Exalted," and then there would be a time of open prayers of praise and exaltation to God. The people of the congregation were invited to pray during this open prayer time. This assistant pastor had worked out with the pianist that when he started praying to close out the open time of prayer, she should start to softly play the song, "He is Exalted," and then the congregation would sing that song again. So he had structured the service as Scripture, song, and prayers of exaltation to God. The next day one person said, "To have the piano playing during the pastor's prayer was very emotionally manipulative. Music should not be used that way. I was very offended." Now, this same person loves to have instrumental prelude music to help her get into the right frame of mind and heart for worship. I think this is a little inconsistent. I will admit that it may be that if you have never had that

before it can be hard to focus on what the pastor is praying because the piano has started playing. I will grant that can be a hurdle. But I do not think this is a theological issue of offense.

Later on, after this episode, I was reading through some of these passages, and I noticed that there is a very interesting dynamic going on in 1 Chronicles 25. In 1 Chronicles 25:1 we read, “David, together with the commanders of the army, set apart some of the sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals.” What would be the closest thing to prophecy that goes on in our churches now? Preaching. And prophecy was to be accompanied by harps, lyres, and cymbals! We were not even doing enough. I should have had instrumental accompaniment while I preached. And there are some churches that do that, specifically some African-American churches I have been in where they sometimes give at least instrumental punctuation to the sermon. I am not arguing or advocating that we should have musical accompaniment to sermons. But I do think there is biblical precedent for the assistant pastor to have the pianist play “He is Exalted” while he closed out the prayer time of exaltation to God.

Another interesting dynamic in 1 Chronicles 25 comes after the listing of the three worship leaders (Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun) and their sons in verses 6-8: “All these men were under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the LORD, with cymbals, lyres and harps, for the ministry at the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman were under the supervision of the king. Along with their relatives—all of them trained and skilled in music for the LORD—they numbered 288. Young and old alike, teacher as well as student, cast lots for their duties.”

What is going on here? Well, it seems that who took their turn when was not determined by the most skilled and excellent musician. It says the “Young and old alike, teacher as well as student, cast lots for their duties.” Now, were the teachers better than the students? Probably. Are the old better than the young? Often. But they all were trained and skilled. Thus there seems to have been a basic level of training and skill necessary to be a part of this 288-person group. But they did not always have the best four or five playing—they rotated around to let others learn and develop and have opportunity to express their gifts in the worship of God. I think this is an important principle that we can apply to training and raising up those who would come behind us.

The three major instrumental groups, almost across cultures, are wind, strings, and percussion. Things you blow into, things you strum, and things you beat on. Almost any instrument you find fits into one or more of those categories. (As a side note, the piano is both a string and percussion instrument because it has a hammer that hits a string). Many of the “serious” debates over instruments—over the validity of percussion or electronic instruments, for example—should not be taken nearly as seriously as they are. I say that people should find their worship personality in their local church and then worship with all their might to the glory of God, realizing that what is most important is worshiping with all your might to the glory of God regardless of which wind, string, or percussion instruments you may use to do that. And we should train people to use instruments well in worship. Excellence is important. It is not the most important thing, but it is important.

Let us move on to look at worship under Solomon. There is the building of the actual temple, which is very significant. There is the dedication of the temple in 2 Chronicles 6 and 7. These passages feature a prayer of Solomon that I love. Here this most magnificent place for God to dwell on earth is built in Jerusalem, and Solomon recognizes that the whole heavens and earth cannot contain God. In this prayer there is the perspective that even in this most magnificent and grandly earthly place for God to dwell according to His instruction, even this is nothing compared to His eternal and heavenly dwelling place. God is stooping to be pleased to dwell among His people in this way, even in this beautiful place with

the cedars of Lebanon, gold, precious stones, and all the rest. It is hard to imagine how beautiful it was. And yet Solomon has perspective. We should hear Jesus' words from John 4 ringing in our ears: "...[A] time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem [...] a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Does that mean we should diminish the significance of the beauty and wonder and grandeur of Solomon's temple? No. It means we should elevate way beyond that the beauty, wonder, and glory of Christ Himself as the true temple. We do not need to diminish Solomon's temple in order to elevate beyond it Christ as the true temple. And the true temple is made up of living stones, which are us. It is more beautiful to have a human heart fully devoted to God, joined to Christ, and worshiping God—there is more beauty in that than there was in Solomon's temple, as beautiful as it was. We do not have to tear down the beauty and wonder of Solomon's temple. We can actually start there and let it go to a greater place of living stones built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, with Christ Himself as the cornerstone.

In 2 Chronicles 5:11-14 we see another expression of worship when the ark is brought not just now to Jerusalem but to its appropriate place in the temple:

The priests then withdrew from the Holy Place. All the priests who were there had consecrated themselves, regardless of their divisions. All the Levites who were musicians—Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun and their sons and relatives—stood on the east side of the altar, dressed in fine linen and playing cymbals, harps and lyres. They were accompanied by 120 priests sounding trumpets. The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang:

“He is good;
his love endures forever.”

Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God.

The cymbals harps and lyres were the string and percussion instruments, and then the trumpets were the wind instruments. These were played by some of the 288 we read about earlier. Then the singers are part of the 4000 full-time musicians—there may have been 1000 singers! The chorus they sing is a simple chorus that recurs many times in Scripture. The magnificence of that kind of worship and God being willing to come among them and for His glory to fill the temple is a magnificent picture of worship. Then we can jump forward to Hebrews 12, which gives a description of what happens when we gather to worship. Hebrews 12:22-24 says, “But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.”

This is not speaking of the ancient Israelites back at the dedication of Solomon's temple. This is believers in Christ speaking who are coming to Christ from various ethnic backgrounds—this is us speaking. Every Lord's Day when we gather with a portion of His people in the local church where we are, we do not just enter into that building and that worship space with those people. By the work of Christ who joins heaven and earth by His presence with us and being seated at the right hand of the

Father, we enter into this ceaseless worship of thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly with reverence and awe. There is both joy and reverence. The kind of glory that is present when the ark is brought into the Holy of Holies—the magnificence of it is even greater when we enter into a place of worship on the Lord’s Day. This is true whether our church is indoors or outdoors, in an elementary school with a big personified hotdog on the wall, or a beautiful cathedral. We are entering into the heavenly Jerusalem when we come to worship.

As we have seen, David takes something God has commanded in the Mosaic legislation to be a part of His worship—trumpets—and he builds on it and expands it with all these musical and vocal expressions. He sees this as enhancing what God has required. Thus we see in the canon of Scripture itself how further along in the story one of God’s servants who is building on the revelation of God to another of his servants feels free (presumably without a direct prophecy or command from the Lord) to expand on what God has required. He sees it as being consistent with what God has already revealed to expand it to the degree that he does. I think this is a liberty that is consistent with the principle that I think we can continue to apply today. This is not a denial of the regulative principle of worship, but rather it is an expansion that builds upon it and that is consistent with it.