



THE LION

In Matthew 6, Jesus teaches us to pray, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:10). In order to understand God's will, we look to the Kingdom of Heaven. What is God's will when it comes to worship? How does heavenly worship work? The prophet Isaiah and the Apostle John provide us a glimpse into the throne room of heaven, where worship is vividly described (Isaiah 6; Revelation 4). They draw our attention to four living creatures around the throne in Revelation 4:6-8. These creatures never stop proclaiming, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." All four of them are covered with eyes, and each has a distinct form or appearance: a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle.

Let's start by focusing on the lion. The first connection we can make here is with the **Lion of Judah**. What does the Lion of Judah reveal about Christ and our response to Him as worshippers?

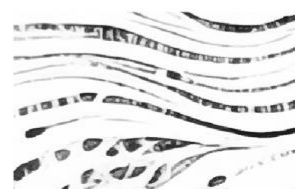
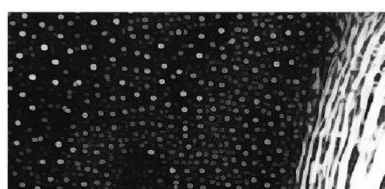
The concept of the Lion of Judah first appears in Genesis 49, and it is clearly connected to Jesus in Revelation 5. In Genesis, Jacob blesses Judah, his fourth son, with prophetic words that echo through history all the way down to Jesus Christ: "Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies... The sceptre will not depart from Judah ... until Shiloh comes" (Genesis 49:8-10 AMP). Judah's legacy points directly to Jesus, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, who overcomes every enemy and embodies ultimate victory.

The New Testament repeatedly tells us that, as believers, we are included in the Lion's story. Living life in the Spirit means to engage everyday life from a place of victory; the challenges of this world do not limit us. Romans 16:20 assures us, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." We are not victims of circumstance. Romans 8:37 declares, "In the midst of – and in spite of – all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

The Lion's message to worshippers is clear: as children of God, we walk in the authority of the Lion of Judah. By identifying with Christ, we align our internal reality with His eternal reality. Seated with Him, we can "reason together" with God (Isaiah 1:18). Seeing and understanding His ways, we can align our thoughts with His (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Agreeing with God – confessing His truth over every circumstance - is crucial. When we worship, we use God's vocabulary; we align our words with His truth, transforming our praise into a powerful declaration of victory. Whenever we feel overwhelmed, remember that God has given us the key to unlock a greater awareness of His presence in our circumstances: our song of praise.

God is powerfully present in our times of worship (Heb 12:2, Psalm 22:4). As we lift our voices in praise and allow the power of His presence to fill our hearts. Inviting us to identify with Him,





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aligning our hearts with His reality, and agreeing with His truth is God's way of getting us to access the favour He wants to pour out into our lives.

The Lion of Judah assures us that worship is not a bargaining chip to gain God's favour. We worship from a place of acceptance and victory that has already been established. Jesus has already made up God's mind about us. Nothing we can do can make Him love us more – or less – than He already does. In Ephesians 1:3-9, Paul reminds us that we are blessed with every possible spiritual blessing, chosen and adopted by God's will. In Him, we have redemption and forgiveness; In Him, we have been lavished with wisdom and understanding.

Psalm 149 offers us such rich imagery for worship: "Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song ... Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King." The new song is the song of the redeemed, a unique anthem for those saved by grace. As we praise Him in the assembly, Jesus Himself joins our worship (Heb 2:12), singing over us with joy (Zeph 3:17).

When we dance, sing, and play instruments, we express the joy of our freedom in Christ. Psalm 149:1-5 reminds us that the Lord delights in His people, adorning the humble with salvation and the afflicted with victory. We worship from a place of rest, reflecting the victory achieved by Christ. Hebrews 4:10 speaks of entering His rest, ceasing from our labour as God did from His. 'Reclining' in His victory, we worship from a position of triumph.

Psalm 149:6-9 further emphasises our authority as we engage in spiritual warfare in worship. When we 'wield' the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, we have authority to bind and execute judgment on spiritual opposition (Luke 10:19-20). This aligns with Jesus' promise in Matthew 16:19 and Matthew 18:10-20, granting authority to 'bind' or 'loose' on earth whatever it is that God has decreed in heaven. His word encourages us to embrace the truth of our redemption and victory in Christ, praising Him for the finished work of salvation.

The Lion in Heaven's throne room turns our attention towards Christ, the Lion of Judah, calling us to worship here on earth from a place of heavenly authority and victory. Embracing our identity in Christ, we identify with His victory, aligning our thoughts with His and confessing His truth. The lion is inviting us, as worshippers, to let our worship reflect the triumph of our King. Let us lift up our voices as we walk boldly in the authority and victory of the Lion of Judah.

