

OUR SONG OF GRATITUDE  
Selected Scripture



November 18, 2018 | DAVID ANDERSON

A pastor once said: Imagine for a moment that your home is surrounded by enemy forces who aim to destroy you. Imagine for a moment that your work and school are surrounded by enemy forces that want your destruction. Imagine that ultimately your family isn't wrestling against flesh and blood, "but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens" (Eph. 6:12). But suppose there is a song that when you sing it with all your heart, enemy forces can't advance on you and your family. In fact, whenever they hear it, they pull back and run the other direction.

Of course you would want to learn the song. And after you learned it, you would sing it when you went to bed at night and when you got up in the morning. You would sing it on the way to work, and whenever you were among strangers. You would take the time to teach your kids and grandkids to sing it. And as your confidence grew you would even venture outside the city and sing it as you walked boldly through the enemy lines on your way to another town. The more deeply embedded in your heart the song became, the more steady and deep and serene and fearless your life would become. Others would see and hear and learn the song from you. And in the end the enemy wouldn't have power over you.

*What is that song?* That song is the song that God, God's Word, God's family and God's Spirit have been trying to teach you your whole life. *God appointed gratitude as the song we sing that guards our souls and brings us back to Him.*

That's the song that Yahweh wanted the Israelites to sing every day, every week, every month, every season, every year, every seven years, and every 50 years. What did God want His children to always know? *They created nothing, they owned nothing and every gift is a gift from God.*

Daily sacrifice	For the Israelite, the day started with a sacrifice at sunrise and a sacrifice at twilight (Ex. 29:38-42). The point is that God has given us another day to live and will sustain us through this day.
Weekly Sabbath	Every week the Jews celebrated the Sabbath where they stop all activity and be reminded that everything comes from God and apart from Him nothing moves forward (Ex. 31:13-17).
Seasonal feasts	The Jews had strategic feasts to celebrate God's supernatural intervention and provision-- Feast of Passover (Ex. 12:1-4), Feast of Pentecost (Lev 23:15-21), Day of Atonement (Lev 16:1-34), Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:33-38).
Thank offerings	The Jews had a thank offering for everything. How to thank God for your crops and blessing? A meal offering (Lev 2). How to thank God for unexpected blessing? A thank offering (Lev 3). How to thank God for deliverance? A vow offering (Lev 3). How to thank God for all his blessings? A freewill offering (Lev 22:18-30).
Sabbatical year	Every 7 years was a sabbatical year where you voluntarily released every one of their debts (Lev 25).
Year of Jubilee	Every 50 years, a Year of Jubilee, all land went back to the original owners (Lev 25).

Gratefulness has been said to be the parent of all virtue. Out of gratitude flows all good things, while ungratefulness is the spark that leads to acres and acres of destruction.

In Romans 1, Paul claims as Solomon does that humanity claimed to be wise but instead they were fools. They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for a false image. God gave them over to the desires of their hearts and they dishonored their bodies among themselves, exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the creation rather than the Creator. It goes on to describe the painful tailspin of humanity.

Do you know where it all starts for Paul? In vs. 21, "For although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or give Him thanks, but they became futile in their thoughts and their senseless hearts were darkened." Paul says that something happens when we stop singing this song of gratitude. Your mind will be darkened and you will surrender yourself to the blinding work of Satan. In 2 Timothy, Paul talks about those who fall away in the last, difficult days, "For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving" (2 Tim 3:2-3).

This is Solomon's observation as well:

Proverbs 27:20 says "As Death and Destruction are never satisfied, so the eyes of a person are never satisfied."	Proverbs 27:4 says, "Wrath is cruel and anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?"	Proverbs 30:15-16, "The leech has two daughters: "Give! Give!" There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, "Enough"-- the grave, the barren womb, land that is not satisfied with water, and fire that never says, "Enough!" (Pro 30:15-16).
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### SING YOUR SONG OF GRATITUDE!

Grumbling, whining, and thanklessness are not ultimately the heart's responses to circumstances, but to God. Whenever God doesn't perform the way we think he should, we let Him know it. As long as he gives us blessing we will keep following Him, but the moment He doesn't give us what we think we deserve we have no way forward because we believe He owes us.

Paul says in Colossians 4:2, "Be devoted to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving." You recall in the Garden of Gethsemane how Jesus admonished the sleepy disciples (Matthew 26:41), "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

How we watch is through this song of gratitude.

I know all we want to do is compare ourselves to others, but that is a game that will never work--it is a dead-end! There is a song that God, God's Word, God's family and God's Spirit have been trying to teach us our whole lives. God appointed gratitude as the song we sing that guards our souls and brings us back to Him.

Take a moment and look back on God's fingerprints all over your life; remember what He has done!

- Remember how God has kept you from destroying yourself.
- Remember how God graciously sent people into your life to prop you up.
- Remember how you walked away from that terrible car crash.
- Remember how your loved one survived breast cancer.
- Remember how God took care of your family when you were looking for work.
- Remember how God miraculously healed you.
- Remember that impossible prayer request that God answered.
- Remember how you had no money and out of nowhere God showed up.
- Remember how He pursued you - you should not be sitting here right now! He just kept coming and coming with His love and grace.

