

A FRESH LOOK

NEW TESTAMENT

CONCEPTS OF

WORSHIP AND

ASSEMBLY

WORSHIP

- What is worship? How would you define it?

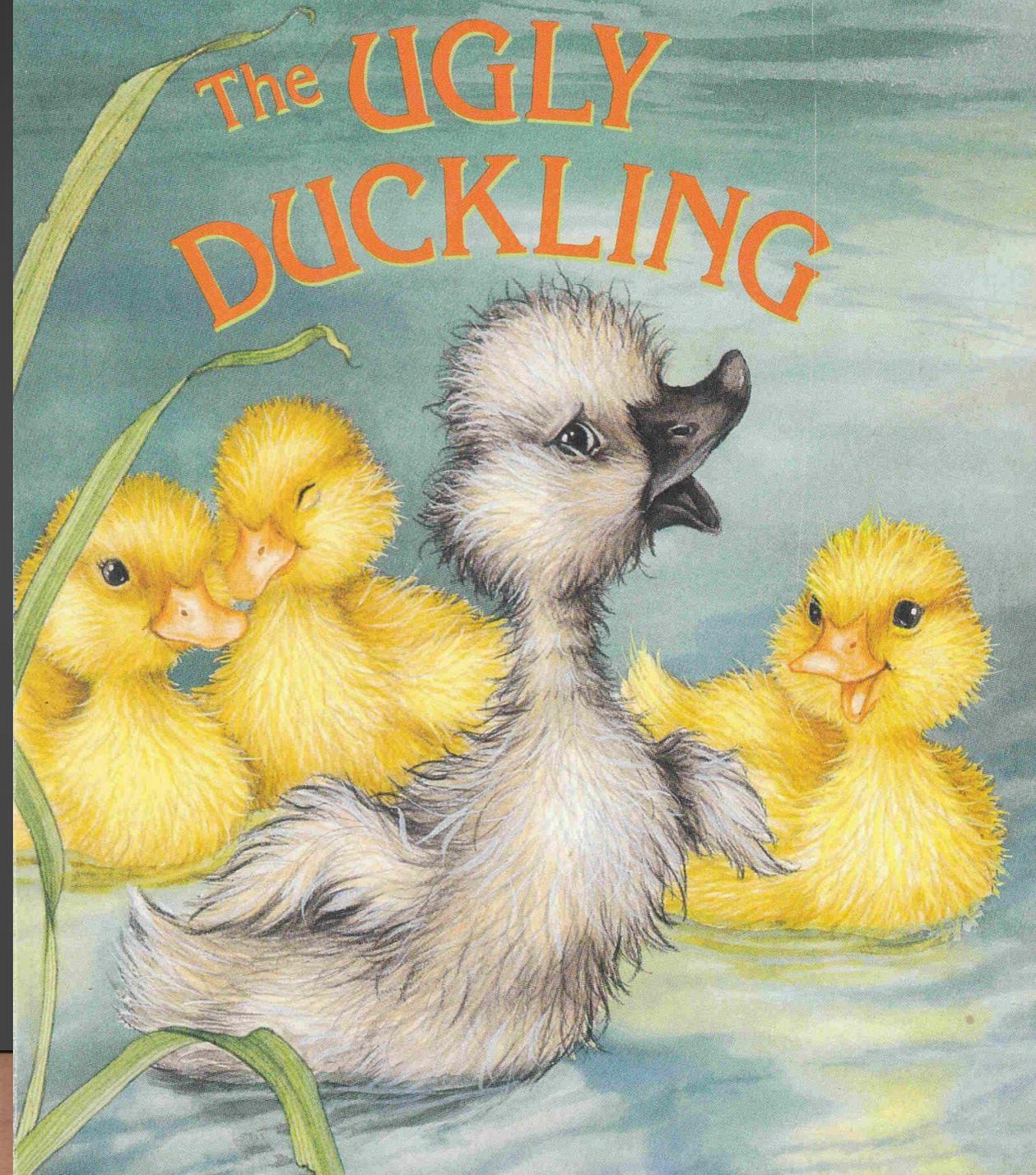
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THE UGLY DUCKLING

- What is the story of the Ugly Duckling?



THE RED BALLOON

- Back in the 1950s, the Austrian zoologist Konrad Lorenz discovered a fact of nature everyone should know: ducklings are gullible.
- Without any innate picture of what a mother duck should look like, they imprint on the first moving object they see after hatching.
- If it's a red balloon drifting across the barnyard, they will fall in line and that first impression orients them for life.



WORSHIP AND ASSEMBLY

- Is it possible that we do the same thing with our expectations for worship and assembly based on our experiences?
- “Very often the traditions we first encounter calcify into a stubborn expectation of what Christian practices are and must be whether their origin is biblical, cultural, or merely personal experience.”
- Where did our traditions and understandings come from?



DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?



- Matthew 15:1-9

¹ Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, ² “Why do your disciples break the **tradition** of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat.” ³ He answered them, “And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your **tradition**? ⁴ For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ ⁵ But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, “What you would have gained from me is given to God,” ⁶ he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your **tradition** you have made void the word of God.

DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

- Matthew 15:1-9

⁷ You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:

⁸ ““This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me;

⁹ in **vain** do they **worship** me,
teaching as doctrines
the commandments of men.””



WHAT IS THE WAY TO AVOID VAIN WORSHIP?

- Acts 17:11

¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.



WORSHIP

- In the **Old Testament** the most common words translated “worship”:
 - *Shachah* – deferential respect; obeisance, literally and with other words meaning “to bow oneself down” (e.g. Exod. 34:8)
 - *Abad* – “to serve” (used of worshipers of Baal; 2 Kings 10)

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WORSHIP IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Exodus 34:6:8

⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.” ⁸ And Moses quickly **bowed his head** toward the earth and **worshiped (shachah)**.

- Why did Moses bow his head and worship?



WORSHIP IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Exodus 33:18-22

¹⁸ Moses said, “Please show me your **glory** (*kavod*).” ¹⁹ And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The Lord.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰ But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.” ²¹ And the Lord said, “Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, ²² and while my **glory** (*kavod*) passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.”

- *Kavod* (*Kabod*) – honor, glory, respect or spender

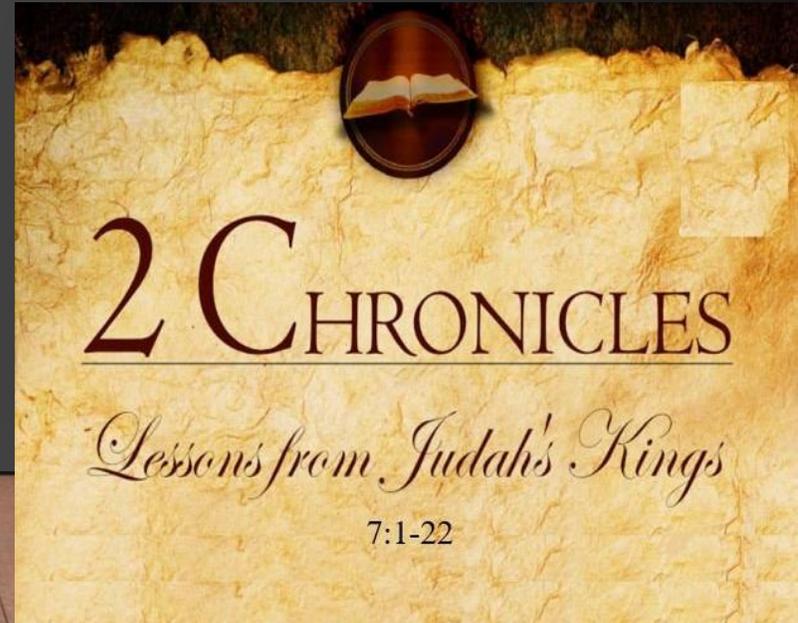
root meaning – “heavy of weighty”



WORSHIP IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- 2 Chronicles 7:19-20

¹⁹ “But if you turn aside and forsake my statutes and my commandments that I have set before you, and go and **serve** (abad) other gods and **worship** (shachah) them, ²⁰ then I will pluck you up from my land that I have given you, and this house that I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.



WORSHIP

- In the **New Testament** the most common words translated “worship”:
 - *proskuneo* – to make obeisance, do reverence; from “to kiss toward” (most often related to Christ in the gospels and Revelation. Never used relative to the assembly).
 - *threskeia* – “religious ceremonial practice” (used in James 1:26)
 - *latreuo* – “to serve” (God - used of the priestly activities in the temple – Hebrews 9-10)



wor/ship

WORSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- Matt. 4:8-10

⁹ And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and *worship (proskuneo)* me.”¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

““You shall *worship (proskuneo)* the Lord your God and him only shall you *serve (latreuo)*.””



WORSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- Hebrews 9:1, 6

¹ Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship (*latreuo*) and an earthly place of holiness.

⁶ These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties (*latreuo*),



WORSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- James 1:26-27

²⁶ If anyone thinks he is **religious** (*threskeia*) and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's **religion** (*threskeia*) is worthless. ²⁷ **Religion** (*threskeia*) that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.