

SINGING THE SCRIPTURES

How All Believers Can Experience
Breakthrough, Hope and Healing

JULIE MEYER



Chosen

a division of Baker Publishing Group
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Julie Meyer, *Singing the Scriptures*
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Published by Chosen Books
11400 Hampshire Avenue South
Bloomington, Minnesota 55438
www.chosenbooks.com

Chosen Books is a division of
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Printed in the United States of America

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Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Control Number: 2017038733

ISBN 978-0-8007-9860-4

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The personal testimonies included in this book are real; however, some names have been changed.

18 19 20 21 22 23 24 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Praise the **LORD**!
Sing to the **LORD** a new song.
Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful.
O Israel, rejoice in your Maker.
O people of Jerusalem, exult in your King.
Praise his name with dancing,
accompanied by tambourine and harp.
For the **LORD** delights in his people;
he crowns the humble with victory.
Let the faithful rejoice that he honors them.
Let them sing for joy as they lie on their beds.
Let the praises of God be in their mouths,
and a sharp sword in their hands—
to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishment on the peoples,
to bind their kings with shackles
and their leaders with iron chains,
to execute the judgment written against them.
This is the glorious privilege of his faithful ones.

PSALM 149:1–9 NLT

Psalm 149 is the glory of every one of us as we lift our voice and sing the Scriptures. May each one of us take up our sword, which is the Word of the Lord in our mouths, and may our weapons be our very own melodies—then let us join Him releasing His light into every dark place in the earth.

I dedicate this book to Shiah Isaac and Sophia Grace, my two absolutely perfect grandchildren, and to all the grands that I shall have in the future but have not yet met.

May you grow up loving the Scriptures. May you sing the Word and let it be on your heart and in your mind at every moment of the day. May these words be life to your souls. May you be like some of our modern-day Levites, but mostly may you love the Word. And if you do not see the Word alive in those around you, then you *be* the Word to everyone around you. I love you, my sweet, perfect ones.

FOREWORD

God wants to be so close to us—He loves to hear our voices and speak directly to our hearts. He loves to hear each one of us pour our hearts out to Him in every moment with every type of emotion. I absolutely love *Singing the Scriptures*. It calls each one of us deeper into intimacy with God. I believe He wants to use this book to draw you closer to His heart of love for you, to help you understand what He feels for you and to bring restoration to your heart. God is singing over you, and He wants you to sing with Him and with all of creation in worship. God is fighting on your behalf; He is with you in every struggle, every painful moment and also in every victory. No matter where you go or what you do, you cannot escape the passionate love of God; He is pursuing you.

Julie shares how singing the Word of God allows us to remember, believe and live out these words of truth and life. It literally breaks fear off of our lives. It changes situations and brings breakthrough. God speaks and creation is birthed. He breathes and we come alive. He sings and our anxious hearts become calm in His peace. There is nothing in your life that God does not care about.

He is passionate for you, He is with you, He loves you, He has good things for you. Sometimes we can start to believe incorrect things about what God is like based on our own experiences or expectations. Singing God's Word realigns us with His truth; we sing until our hearts feel His love again. We sing until our emotions get the breakthrough. Julie shares personal experiences and testimonies from others who battled fear. Each time they began to sing the Word of God, their hearts softened and shifted, and perfect love cast out fear. Julie sang until her emotions changed. She knew God did not call her to be afraid, so she fought fear with the Word of truth. You can do the very same.

Julie is a dear friend of mine. We are both worshipers who love the presence more than anything else. We both love to worship and then respond with God as we minister His love to those around us, right out of that place of worship. We sing and receive His love, and then we pour out His love on everyone we meet, so that they will know Him, too. Julie is a powerful worship leader—she brings everyone willing right up into the presence with her as she sings straight to Jesus, her first love. It is in those deep places of worship where God encounters us and calls us to partner with Him in spreading His love and fragrance on the earth. Julie has a heart after God and a heart after people. She desires that we all know God more. That is why she wrote this book. Julie pours her life out for those around her, teaching people how to connect with God through song. She breaks into song about anything in any place. I love to hear her voice as she so readily loses herself looking at her King. It is easy to get caught up in the glory with her.

I encourage you not only to read this book, but to practice with Julie in singing the Scriptures. She provides many tools, including questions and even songs from Scripture to start practicing with. She teaches you how to start singing over any situation. It

Foreword

is so simple, yet so life-changing. Music is a key to our hearts that touches deep places we are not easily able to access. Song pulls us into a romantic dance with Jesus and allows us to be swept away by love. Don't wait. Start singing His Word today, and let yourself be captured again by His passionate love for you!

Heidi G. Baker, Ph.D., co-founder and CEO, Iris Global

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my husband, Walt—who helped me so much by being the best spouse I could ever ask for and also doing the cleaning so I could write.

Thank you to Sophia Grace and Shiah Isaac—just because you are so amazing. I get to sing the Scriptures with you and you think that is cool.

Thank you to my amazing children, Isaac, Brit, Joe, Sarah, Jesse—just because you are all so amazing. This mom could not be more proud of any of her children. I love you.

Dad—I love you. You are the best dad ever. I am who I am because of you (and Jesus).

To my family, Penny and Jay, Jamie, Jeff and all my awesome nieces and nephews—it has been my joy to sing the Scriptures over all of you.

Heidi Baker—from the bush bush in Mozambique to the largest stadium filled to capacity, you, my friend, are always singing. Singing the Word, singing in the Spirit, everywhere you go, before every sermon, there you are on your knees singing to Jesus. Many in the nations are singing to the Lord because of your life.

God has surely picked you up like a paintbrush and painted His beautiful picture with your life. Love you much.

Thank you to my Into the River staff, Joseph, Isaac and Jesse. You have worked hours upon hours on videos, recordings, new ideas, social media, websites and new products. I am blessed to be able to work with such creative and inspirational young men who also happen to be “my three sons.”

Thank you to the amazing, kind, encouraging intercessor Kim Bangs. I believe your prayers over me brought this book about. You will never, ever know how much I felt your prayers and your email messages of encouragement. You are a star, Kim Bangs, a shining star in the heavens.

Thank you to Jane Campbell—for giving me this opportunity to shout out through the written word the amazing life-changing tool of singing the Scriptures.

Thank you, Patricia King—I love you so, so much. Thank you for being a champion to my heart and actually singing the Scriptures. You are one of my heroes.

Thank you to James Goll—for giving me feedback and helping me write this book. You will always be my big brother.

Thank you, Mike and Diane Bickle—for being who you are. Diane—you were the first prophetic singer I ever heard. In 1983, at our nightly prayer meetings, you would take up your Bible to pray, but you would sing it. You would sing your prayers, and you were my first teacher in how to sing the Bible. Thank you. And thank you, Mike Bickle. I love the House of Prayer. Thank you for loving the Word and encouraging all the singers to sing the Scriptures. It has kept me on the narrow road. I will always love you and the International House of Prayer in Kansas City.

Thank you, Stacey Campbell—I simply adore you. I love your walk in God. I love your passion for the Word. I am so glad we are now living blocks from each other, and we get to pray

together and love Jesus together and pray for our kids together and pray for revival in California. You are an inspiration in my life.

Graeme and Sabrina—I am so thrilled that you are here. We are family. We are friends. We are piles and piles of mercy and grace, and I cannot even thank God enough for bringing some of my family here to Santa Maria, California.

And to some of my new friends.

Thank you, Rick and Lori Taylor—oh! I cannot believe I get to journey here in the Central Coast of Cali with you. Thank you for your prayers, your kindness and your encouragement. Thank you for your leadership, your “over the top” giving and blessing us. I am pinching myself that I get to do revival on the Central Coast with you.

And to David and Carol Kingsly—I love you both so, so much. I cannot imagine Monday nights without you. Look what God did because of our simple prayers—no more drought in California.

Jeff and Cindy Gough—I don’t believe there will ever be a time that I can put into words how much you both mean to me. I simply adore you both. I love your honesty. I love your questions. I love that I get to do life with you.

To my amazing church—Crosswords Church in Buelton, California. Pastor Samuel and Sarah Keiser—I love our church, and I love the word in our church. I love doing life with you. I love your heart for the Word. This is my home. It is my family.

INTRODUCTION

I make it a practice to sing the Scriptures wherever I am and wherever I go. And I am blessed again and again by the response that I feel in my heart. In fact, it is so great that I began to think: *I cannot keep singing the Scriptures a secret. I need to tell everyone.*

This is not about being on a worship team. This is an equipping tool, and it starts with personal use. But as you read through this book, you will see that singing the Scriptures works on a corporate level as well. To sing the Word is life changing; it is heart changing. It is my personal testimony. I have continued through many seasons to experience great breakthrough, hope and healing through singing the Scriptures. And you can, too.

Maybe you are one who will sing the Scriptures only in the privacy of your own home. That is wonderful—do it. Maybe you are one who will sing in public and shift the atmosphere. That is great—do it. Maybe you are one of the modern-day Levites who will take this tool and sing the Scriptures in the darkest places, at the very frontlines. That is amazing—do it. My prayer is that you will be so encouraged by this book that you will carry the Scriptures in song all throughout your day.

I want to shatter the mindset that singing is only for the trained ear, although that is really good for Sunday morning church services. We need to understand that singing the Scriptures is a powerful tool that each of us can use. It is important in our personal devotions, as it helps us remember the Word and keep it alive in our hearts, but it is also vital in the battle against darkness.

Sing the Word with all your heart, and watch as breakthrough, hope and healing are released in your own life and in the lives of all who hear it.

1

Sing

My heart is steadfast, O God,
my heart is steadfast;
I will sing and give praise.
Awake, my glory!
Awake, lute and harp!
I will awaken the dawn.
I will praise You, O LORD, among the peoples;
I will sing to You among the nations.

PSALM 57:7–9



Hemel Hempstead is a beautiful town in Hertfordshire in the east of England. It is located about 24 miles northeast of London. It is a town with shops, pubs and restaurants serving cream tea and sticky toffee pudding, which are some of my very favorite sweet treats in Britain. The cobbled streets and park are also some of my favorite memories.

But what I love most about Hemel Hempstead, besides the amazing people I met during my stay, is a very old church right in the center of town. The construction of St. Mary's Church started in AD 1140, and the people of Hemel will tell you it has its original spire built in the fourteenth century. The beautiful stained-glass windows and acoustics make it hard to stop singing as you walk through the church. I could imagine my voice right alongside the voices of all those who sang out in generations past, all those lifting their melodies and choruses of "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain." It has been more than a decade since my visit to Hemel Hempstead, and still I remember the sounds that arose from St. Mary's Church, and even sensing the *songs of the saints* from generations past that also arose in that beautiful church.

I was in Hemel Hempstead because I had been invited to be part of a worship school and teach about singing the Scriptures. It is simply singing the Bible to the Lord. He has our focused attention. He is our complete celebration. And suddenly we begin to experience 1 Corinthians 2:9–10:

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

In the middle of our adoration and celebration of Jesus, the Spirit of the Lord does what the Word says He will do: The Holy Spirit begins to reveal the deep things of God's heart to the human heart. He reveals simple truths that set the heart free to love Him more and to feel His love in a personal, tangible experience. This actually helps us in loving God more, and in loving ourselves so

that we can love one another more. It is a beautiful response that comes from praise, worship and singing the Word of God. It helps us obey what the Word of God says. It helps us to walk out forgiveness and walk out life here on earth.

Prophetic worship is a powerful part of our worship service. As a worship leader and singer, I made it a focused part of my life even when I was not at church or leading worship. If I was cleaning the house or driving to the store, I would sing the Psalms or the gospels or the epistles. I soon found that even without music playing in the background, I sang the words to simple melodies that I knew or that flowed from my heart as I went along. I discovered that when the Word of God is sung to our own melodies, it becomes a powerful tool that helps us walk out life and walk through life.

It became a passion of mine to encourage everyone to sing the Scriptures in worship services and in each one's personal life. I began doing simple workshops teaching how to sing the Bible. I would have everyone open his or her Bible to any one of the Psalms and begin to sing the Scriptures to a simple chord progression. The words are already written, so it is simply learning to make up a spontaneous melody and sing.

For years I mostly found myself teaching worship teams and musicians about singing the Scriptures. Which leads me back to the town of Hemel Hempstead, where I saw firsthand that singing the Scriptures is a tool for everyone—even those who are certain they cannot sing! We all need this tool in our tool belts as a weapon of warfare and breakthrough. Singing the Bible is for everyone, which I was blessed to witness firsthand as the Spirit of the Lord began revealing God's heart for an English grandfather who was at one of my singing the Scriptures clinics.

People of all ages had gathered to learn about singing the Scriptures, from teens to grandparents. They were not professional

singers. They were also not necessarily on a worship team. They simply wanted to come and learn to sing the Scriptures. One gentleman caught my attention through most of the workshop. He was 82 years young and very quiet, sitting in the back of the room. But I noticed he was listening closely.

I began encouraging them to open their Bibles to Psalm 116:1–2, to make up their own melodies alongside the music that would be playing in the background, and to sing: “I love the LORD because He hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because He bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath!”

In this part of the workshop, I asked them to take these verses and sing them as if God were singing directly to them. With a piano playing in the background, playing simple chord progressions to which everyone could sing, everyone in the room began to practice this musical exercise. I glanced at the gentleman in the back. He looked down at his Bible and I could see his lips moving. Then he looked up with his eyes closed and began to sing. As I watched, I could see a tear slowly drip down his cheek—and then another tear and another tear. At that point I looked away because I could see the Lord was touching him.

After a few minutes had passed I brought the music down. Then I asked for any testimonies.

“What did you experience when you began to sing the Word?” I asked. “Did singing the Word have more of an impact than reading the Word?”

The older man stood up and began to walk slowly to the front of the room. He still had tears rolling down his cheeks.

He said, “I was saved at a young age. I’ve walked with God my whole life, but I never felt like a true son. I looked at God as my Father, but I felt like a servant in my Father’s house. I didn’t feel worthy enough to belong in *His* house. I thought that at any time He would come to me and tell me to go back to the servant’s house

where I belonged. I didn't think He really heard my prayers. But today when I began to sing this Scripture, 'He bends down and listens,' I heard the Lord say to me, *Well, I have heard every word you have ever prayed.*"

This man looked at me and said, "I finally got it. I am eighty-two years old, and after all these years I finally understand. God has heard every single prayer I have ever prayed."

At this point, he had everyone's attention. With tears still rolling down his cheeks, he said, "God has heard every prayer. I now know that I belong in His house."

That memory is sealed in my heart as if it happened yesterday. I watched right before my eyes as someone found his place as a son of God. And it happened through singing Scripture. When he sang the Word, the Spirit of the Lord did what He loves to do: He revealed truth to this man's heart about who he was before the Lord. He was a true son. That simple song broke off decades of feelings of unworthiness.

Worship leaders and teams have experienced this for years. As they put the words of Scripture to song in worship, they receive personal breakthrough and freedom. But I have also watched those who would never consider themselves singers or musicians get incredible breakthroughs while singing the Bible. This is not just for those skilled in music. It is for everyone desiring a closer walk with Jesus, everyone needing to hear His voice, everyone needing freedom.

Plus, I believe it is the best way to retain the Word. We can meditate on the Word, pray the Word, speak the Word, declare the Word. But the best way to keep the life-giving Word in our hearts is to sing it.

Have you ever thought about the fact that you are able to remember songs from your childhood? I remember songs my Grandma Cook taught me when I was little. I remember songs

from grade school and high school. I can pretty much remember songs from the different seasons of my life. And, on the other hand, I have no idea what homework I was doing when I was learning these songs, or what Sunday services I liked because the sermon was good.

When you enjoy a song, you will sing it over and over; it is a repetitive form of learning. The more we repeat something, the more it tends to stay in our minds. The songs that we have sung over and over stay with us over decades. Can you see that singing the Bible is not just for singers and musicians? Could singing the Bible be a powerful tool that everyone needs to use?

I saw a promotional piece online showing the power of music to help dementia patients. It records an elderly man named Henry sitting in a wheelchair in a nursing home. He is not responding to anyone. One of his family members puts his favorite songs that he sang throughout his life on an iPod. These were songs he had loved and listened to for years. We see as the nurse puts the headphones on his head and starts the music.

Immediately he comes to life. His face lights up. His feet start moving to the beat of the music. His eyes get big. There is excitement on his face. It is as if there is healing power in the music that his brain remembers. The doctor begins to interview Henry about the music, and he begins to sing and talk about some of the songs that he remembers from his past. This is powerful. When no one can reach him, this music is able to break in and actually enable Henry to have a conversation.

This reminds me of Colossians 3:16 where Paul writes, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Paul is encouraging the Colossian believers to let the Word of Christ live in them, to come alive in them.

John Wesley, in *Wesley's Notes on the Bible* (Zondervan, 1987), explains that we should let the word of Christ *dwell* in our hearts, “not make a short stay, or an occasional visit, but take up its stated residence,” and let it dwell *richly*, “in the largest measure, and with the greatest efficacy; so as to fill and govern the whole soul.”

Regarding Paul's encouragement for us to teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, Matthew Henry writes this in his *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Revell, 1983): “Singing of psalms is a teaching ordinance as well as a praising ordinance; and we are not only to quicken and encourage ourselves, but to *teach and admonish one another*, mutually excite our affections, and convey instructions.” Singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs serves not only to teach but also to encourage and to warn.

Now maybe you are a singer or a musician; maybe you are neither. Regardless, the results are the same. Singing the Bible is a powerful means of breakthrough. As we put the living Word to simple melodies, we can all experience breakthrough just like the amazing grandpa who lived in Hemel Hempstead.

But here is an even greater reason to sing. Do you realize that God is singing over you? Look at Zephaniah 3:17: “The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.”

I think God loves it when we sing His Word. I have even heard recordings in which creation itself sounds as though it is singing. A friend of mine played a recording of crickets with their chirruping slowed way, way, way down—and it sounded beautiful. It seems as if everything praises in song—even crickets. You can find this on YouTube. There have been studies done with music on icicles and plants, showing how everything seems to grow better when the sound around them is beautiful singing.

Come with me on a journey of melodies and living Word. I believe you will find your song and your voice whether you are a banker, a homemaker, an artist, in the workplace or retired. The Holy Spirit will set your heart free to love God more and to feel His love in return. There is a song in you and Scriptures are waiting to be sung.

Lord,

I pray that You will help each reader begin the journey of singing the Scriptures. Let the Holy Spirit begin to shine His light into every heart revealing the truth about each word sung. I pray this journey of singing the Word takes us straight into Your heart with new passion to love You and new passion to love ourselves as You created us to be. Let every song awaken every heart as Your Word rides the beautiful waves of sound, coming from every believer.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Questions

1. Can you think of a really old worship song that you may have sung years ago? Do you still remember the song?
2. When you read Colossians 3:16—what does this verse mean to you?
3. Have you ever read this verse and started singing the Psalms more because of reading this Scripture?
4. Are you willing to try? In fact, let's take the next five to six days and put a simple melody to Colossians 3:16. See if you begin to get excited about singing the Word from this Scripture that encourages us to sing the Scriptures.

— *Singing the Scriptures* —

How-To for Chapter 1

To help you begin practicing what I wrote about in this chapter, please go to www.juliemeyerministries.com/singingthescriptures and search for chapter 1. This short video offers practical instructions for singing the Scriptures.