

## FEAST: WORSHIP IN THREE DIMENSIONS

God taught his people physical acts of worship. A tambourine and a palm branch are not merely physical objects. Used in the right context, they are a form of prayer. So why not a meal? Eating is, after all, the most social of human activities.

Tradition is a negative word to many people . . . synonymous with empty ritual, manmade process, or stuffiness. The fact is, however, that tradition is everywhere regardless of whether or not we recognize it.

### Physical Worship

- Clapping, Psalm 47:1.
- Shouting, Psalm 32:11.
- Lifted hands, Psalm 28:2.
- Bowing/Kneeling, Psalm 95:6.
- Singing, Psalm 21:13.
- Jesus blesses bread, Mark 6:41.
- Jesus celebrates Passover, Mark 14:12-26.

### Feasts

- Passover (Unleavened Bread).
- Shavuot (Pentecost).
- Rosh HaShanah (Trumpets).
- Yom Kippur (Atonement).
- Sukkot (Tabernacles, Booths).
- Hanukkah (Dedication).
- Purim (Feast of Esther).
- Most found in Leviticus 23.

### Does God Feast?

Jesus was known as a frequent attender of feasts and banquets (Luke 7:34). God promises a great feast in the World to Come (Isaiah 25:6).

### Did People in the Bible Feast?

Israelites brought one of their tithes to the temple to share in a great feast (Deuteronomy 14:22-27). The early followers of Jesus ate together often (Acts 2:46).

### What's So Special?

The Feasts and holy days of the Bible are times of fulfillment and meaning. Jesus died on Passover, rose on first-fruits, and sent the Spirit on Shavuot. Rosh HaShanah calls for repentance. Yom Kippur focuses on atonement by blood. Sukkot is about living with God forever.

**Think of worship at the temple in Biblical times and also in the future. We will all, Jew and Gentile, worship at the temple for the first thousand years at the Feasts (Zechariah 14:16-17). Picture the scene . . .**

Every home for miles around Jerusalem was full around the times of these pilgrim feasts. People even slept in animal stables, if they weren't lucky enough to have relatives in the city . . . But the experience began long before the actual feast. The journey itself was a worship experience. The roads were packed around the time of the feasts as families, clans, and entire towns traveled together to the temple, singing psalms of ascent.

--Derek Leman, FEAST, 2008.

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