



Rice Memorial MBC

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Joyful Worship Restored

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **June 30, 2013**

Worship with us at **3201 Mary St** until we rebuild our sanctuary at 802 W. 15th,
... We're just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas

Ezra 3:1-7

Introduction: In the close of the foregoing chapter we left Israel in their cities, but we may well imagine what a bad posture their affairs were in, the ground untilled, the cities in ruins, all out of order; but here we have an account of the early care they took about the **re-establishment** of religion among them. Thus did they lay the foundation well, and begin their work at the right end. I. They set up an altar, and offered sacrifices upon it, kept the feasts, and contributed towards the rebuilding of the temple, Ezra 3:1-7. II. They laid the foundation of the temple with a mixture of joy and sorrow, Ezra 3:8-13. This was the day of small things, which was not to be despised, Zechariah 4:10.

(Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible* classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

Ezra 3:1, And when the **seventh month** was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.

NOTE: This was the month Tishri, corresponding to our September-October. This was the first day of the month (Ezra 3:6), The Feast of Trumpets (Numbers 29:1-6), a foreshadowing of Israel's final regathering. Assuming a two-year delay in the beginning of the journey from Babylon after **Cyrus'** decree, this would have been September 25, 536 B.C. The laying of the temple foundation the following **spring** would thus have brought to an official close the **seventy-year** captivity prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:1-12), i.e., from 605 to 535 B.C.

(Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

NOTE: The month Tisri, which answers to the latter part of our September, and beginning of October. It seems that the Israelites had **left Babylon** about the spring of the year; that on their arrival at Jerusalem they constructed themselves **huts** and **sheds** to lodge in among the ruins, in which they must have spent some months. After this they rebuilt the altar of burnt-offerings, and kept the **feast of tabernacles**, which happened about this time, and continued to offer sacrifices regularly, as if the temple were standing.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

Leviticus 23:34, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the **feast of tabernacles (a hut—booth, tent)** for **seven days** unto the LORD.

NOTE: The Jews were commanded during the whole period of the festival to dwell in booths, which were erected on the flat roofs of houses, in the streets or fields; and the trees made use of are by some stated to be the citron, the palm, the myrtle,

and the willow, while others maintain the people were allowed to take any trees they could obtain that were distinguished for verdure and fragrance. While the solid branches were reserved for the construction of the booths, the lighter branches were carried by men, who marched in triumphal procession, singing psalms and crying "Hosanna!" which signifies, "Save, we beseech thee!" (Ps 118:15, 25, 26). It was a **season** of **great rejoicing**. But the ceremony of drawing water from the pool, which was done on the last day, seems to have been the introduction of a later period (John 7:37). That last day was the eighth, and, on account of the scene at Siloam, was called "the great day of the feast." The **feast of ingathering**, when the vintage was over, was celebrated also on that day [Ex 23:16; 34:22], and, as the conclusion of one of the great festivals, it was kept as a sabbath. (Source: Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary classic.studydrive.org/com/jfb)

Leviticus 23:39, Also in the **fifteenth day** of the **seventh month**, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the **eighth day** shall be a sabbath.

Exodus 23:16, And the **feast of harvest**, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the **feast of ingathering**, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

NOTE: The **booths** were constructed much after the manner of the **brush arbors** that were widely used for the church in the early part of this century as outdoor gathering places where the gospel was preached. (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studydrive.org/com/bcc/)

Ezra 3:2-3, Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the **altar** of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is **written** in the **law of Moses** the man of God. And they set the altar upon his bases; for **FEAR** was upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the LORD, even burnt offerings morning and evening.

Fear defined 367 'eymah pronounced ay-maw' or (shortened) remah {ay-maw}'; dread (apprehension [recognition] of evil or danger).

NOTE: They were in the **midst** of **enemies** that bore ill will to them and their religion, for whom they were an unequal match. And, (1.) Though they were so, yet they built the altar (so some read it); they would not be frightened from their religion by the opposition they were likely to meet with in it. Never let the fear of man bring us into his snare. (2.) Because they were so, therefore they set up the altar. Apprehension of danger should stir us up to our duty. Have we many enemies? Then it is good to have **God** our **friend** and to keep up our correspondence with him. (Source: The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studydrive.org/com/mhc)

Thought 1. They knew their safety lay in obeying God's covenant, because he said he would protect them, if they obeyed. (Deuteronomy 28:1-14)

After Jesus died and rose again, the people that have trusted in his work have a new and better Covenant in which to trust. It has even better promises. But, we need to know what our God, and Father expects of us, and who he has made us to be in Jesus.

Psalms 29:2, Give unto the Lord (Yahweh) the **glory due** his name; **worship** the Lord (Yahweh) in the **beauty of holiness**.

1 Peter 2:9, But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a **peculiar (purchased)** people; that ye should show forth the **PRAISES** of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light...

Praises defined 703, manliness (the qualities of a MAN.) (**valor** [strength of mind in regard to danger; that quality which enables a man to encounter danger with firmness]), **i.e. excellence** (state of possessing good qualities in an eminent [high] degree; [1913 Webster]).

Hebrews 13:15-16, By him (*Jesus*) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of **praise** to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips **giving thanks** to his name. But to do good and to **communicate** (give to another, as a partaker) forget not: for with such **sacrifices** God is well pleased.

NOTE: ...they restored regular offerings to him (*God*), morning and evening, as he directed in the Law of Moses (cf. Num. 28:1-8). In burnt offerings, the whole animal was consumed as a symbol of the worshipper's total commitment to God.

"The people of those countries" (Ezra 3:3) were the inhabitants of the area Israel had once occupied. These included the Ammonites, Moabites, and the Edomites to the east and southeast; the Philistines in the coastal cities; and foreign and **hybrid** peoples living in Judah and Israel. As early as the Assyrian deportation of Israel, peoples of the east had been relocated there. Some of them **intermarried** with Jews, creating the group, later called, the **Samaritans**. All these resented the restoration of Jerusalem.

The returned Jewish exiles, significantly, did not resort to raising an army or building fortifications to protect themselves. Those things would eventually have a place, but their first priority was to **restore true worship** of their God. They understood, as least in part, the truth spoken by Zerubbabel: "**Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts**" (Zech. 4:6).

(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication-Christian Life Series*)

Ezra 3:4-6, They kept also the **feast of tabernacles, as it is written**, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; And afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the **set feasts** of the LORD that were consecrated, and of every one that **willingly** offered a freewill offering unto the LORD. From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the **foundation** of the **temple** of the LORD was not yet laid.

Thought 1. The most important aspect of worship is a reverent heart that knows what God requires of it, and will worship at the temple and elsewhere, in spirit and in truth. Christians are the temple of the Lord. But, he still says we need assemble ourselves.

Ephesians 2:18-22, For through him (*Jesus*) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father... And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: In whom all the building... groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Hebrews 10:24-25, And let us consider one another to **provoke** unto **love** and to good works: Not forsaking the **assembling** of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another...

John 4:20-24, Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, **worship** the **Father**. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the **true worshippers** shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must **WORSHIP** him in **SPIRIT** and in **TRUTH**.

Worship defined 4352, do reverence to, ADORE (1. to worship with profound (deep) REVERENCE 2. To love in the highest degree; to regard with the utmost esteem (high value, regards), affection and respect).

Reverence, FEAR mingled with respect and esteem (high value, regards).

The fear acceptable to God, is a filial (becoming a child in relation to his parents) fear, an awful reverence of the divine nature, proceeding from a just esteem (high value, regards) of his PERFECTIONS (infinite power, holiness, justice, benevolence and wisdom of God are denominated his perfections), which produces in us an inclination (leaning of the mind or will) to his service and an unwillingness to offend him.

Spirit defined 4151, mind (heart or seat of affection: passion, feeling, love).

Thought 2. Reverence is the MOOD of true worship! It causes us to want to please God and express the love, high regard, deep respect, admiration, and gratitude we have for him, and our Lord Jesus. This is what we are doing when we worship! It's a JOY to know them! And as we learn more about the benefits of our relationship within God's family, we find ourselves expressing our gratitude and the joy in our minds. That's still reverence controlling our minds: attitudes!

Another truth is reverence for God means we HATE whatever is evil, Proverbs 8:13. But, what we must do is meditate God's word and receive the teaching he sends us, which increases our understanding and exercises our senses; making us more able to discern what's good, and what's evil. This also makes us more skilful in using his word to prove (examine) everything, so that we can hold fast to the good and avoid ALL appearance of evil! (1 Thess. 5:21-22)

Truth defined 225, verity (the quality of being **TRUE** or **REAL** [not artificial, counterfeit or FACTITIOUS]).

Factitious, unnatural, anything is *unnatural* when it departs in any way from its **SIMPLE** or normal state; it is *factitious* when it is wrought [worked] out or wrought [worked] up by LABOR [1. exertion of muscular strength 2. Intellectual exertion] and effort [straining], as, a **factitious excitement**.

Thought 3. So, "in truth", includes WHAT we do and the MANNER in which we DO it! Because of our desire to express reverence, "in truth" tells us the songs we sing must have words that AGREE with the context, wisdom, understanding, and sound teaching of the truth found in the scriptures as revealed by the Holy Spirit.

In order to make a song "truth", sometimes it requires only changing a few words. Other times, most of the song will have to be rewritten or the entire song just avoided.

The last part of "in truth" is dealing with the manner in which the song is sang. When we sing, we should not be exerting effort to work up excitement, etc. This includes trying to "get into" a place where we FEEL the spirit or trying to make the people believe that the anointing is being manifested upon us. Nor should we be doing "voice gymnastics": showing off our great voice range and even showing off how long we can hold a note. All of these things fall in the category of not worshipping in truth: not being "REAL". It's pride! And this also goes for the preaching of God's word. Jesus said babes and sucklings are the best example of a true worshippers attitude: in "**keeping it real.**" We can actually learn from them! (Matt. 21:15-16)

Ezra 3:7, They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant (gift) that they had of (from) Cyrus king of Persia.