

Deuteronomy 12:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

Analysis

The purpose: 'And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.' Covenant worship involves celebration, not just solemn ritual. The Hebrew *samach* (שָׁמַח, rejoice) emphasizes joy in God's presence and blessing. The phrase 'eat before the LORD' refers to fellowship offerings (Leviticus 3, 7:11-36) where worshipers consumed portions after dedicating them to God. This sanctified common meals, making eating an act of covenant fellowship. The inclusion of 'households' (family) emphasizes worship as communal, not merely individual. Joy flows from recognizing God's blessing on labor ('all that ye put your hand unto').

Historical Context

Ancient Israelite worship was festive, not austere. Pilgrimage feasts combined worship with family celebration. Psalm 122 captures joy of 'going unto the house of the LORD.' The fellowship offerings created sacred community meals, fostering relationships among worshipers. This contrasts with pagan worship's fearful appeasement and later Jewish legalism's burdensome rigor. True worship celebrates grace and blessing. New Testament worship similarly emphasizes joy (Philippians 4:4) and communal fellowship (Agape feasts, Lord's Supper).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How should joy and gratitude characterize Christian worship rather than duty or dread?
2. What role does recognizing God's blessing on our work play in authentic worship?
3. How can modern worship services recapture the celebratory, communal character described here?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|-----------------|--------|---------|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| וְשָׂמְחַת | מִ | אֱלֹהִים | וְאֶכְלָתֶם | לִפְנֵי | שׁ | מִ | יְהִי | הַ | לִפְנֵי | נָאָתֶם | וְאֶתְתָּמָן | |
| And there ye shall eat | | H8033 | before | | H6440 | | the LORD | | H3068 | thy God | | and ye shall rejoice |
| H398 | | | | | | | | | | H430 | | H8055 |
| אֲשֶׁר | רָ | וְבָתִים | מִ | אֶת | מִ | מִשְׁלֵחַ | וְ | בְּכָל | | | | |
| H3605 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| in all that ye put | | | your hand | | | | H859 | | | unto ye and your households | | H834 |
| H4916 | | | H3027 | | | | | | | H1004 | | |
| בָּרְכָה | הַ | יְהִי | הַ | בָּרְכָה | | | | | | | | |
| hath blessed | | the LORD | | thy God | | | | | | | | |
| H1288 | | H3068 | | H430 | | | | | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 12:18 (References God): But thou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

Deuteronomy 14:26 (References God): And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,

Leviticus 23:40 (References God): And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

Deuteronomy 12:12 (References God): And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

Philippians 4:4 (References Lord): Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

Deuteronomy 14:23 (References God): And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

Deuteronomy 27:7 (References God): And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 15:20 (References God): Thou shalt eat it before the LORD thy God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.