

TABERNACLES

Day 3 - Rejoicing Before the Lord

Introduction (to be read aloud by the patriarch)

The Feast of Tabernacles is not only about dwelling in booths; it is also about *joy*. God commands His people to rejoice before Him for seven days. This is remarkable, joy is not a suggestion, it is a command. The wilderness may have been marked by testing, but the Feast is marked by celebration. God wants His people to know the rhythm of worship is not only repentance and obedience, but also gladness and thanksgiving.

Rejoicing before the Lord is not shallow happiness or mere entertainment. It is joy rooted in His salvation, His provision, and His covenant faithfulness. Israel was to take palm branches, willow, and boughs of thick trees and wave them before the Lord as a visible sign of joy. Families ate, sang, and worshiped together. Strangers, widows, fatherless, and Levites were invited to join. The feast was communal, abundant, and overflowing with gladness.

For us, this means that true joy is not optional. It is commanded worship. To fail to rejoice is to dishonor the God who provides every good gift. Our joy testifies that God's presence is better than comfort, His salvation is better than wealth, and His covenant is better than any earthly inheritance.

Today, as you dwell in your booth, remember that rejoicing is an act of obedience. Set aside complaints. Lay down anxieties. Lift up songs and thanksgiving to the Lord who dwells among His people.

Scripture Reading (KJV)

Leviticus 23:40

40. 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 16:14–15

14. *And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.*

15. *Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose: because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.*

Psalm 100:1–5

1. *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*

2. *Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*

3. *Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*

4. *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*

5. *For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*

Psalm 118:24–29

24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

25. *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.*

26. *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.*

27. *God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.*

28. *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.*

29. *O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

Isaiah 12:3–6

- 3. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*
 - 4. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.*
 - 5. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth.*
 - 6. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.*
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Zechariah 14:16

- 16. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*
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Luke 10:20–21

- 20. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*
 - 21. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.*
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Philippians 4:4–7

- 4. Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*
- 5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*
- 6. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*
- 7. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

16. Rejoice evermore.

17. Pray without ceasing.

18. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Reflection

Rejoicing before the Lord is not optional; it is commanded. The God who fed His people with manna and brought them into the Promised Land calls them to celebrate in His presence. Joy is worship. Joy is testimony. Joy declares that God is faithful, His covenant is good, and His salvation is sure.

The Feast of Tabernacles is a shadow of the eternal feast to come. When we rejoice now, we anticipate the joy of dwelling with God forever. Complaining dishonors Him, but rejoicing magnifies Him. When we choose joy, we proclaim with our lives: “The Lord is our strength and our song, and He has become our salvation.”

Family Application / Activities

- As a family, sing a hymn or psalm of joy in your sukkah tonight.
 - Share with one another something God has done this year that gives you reason to rejoice.
 - Decorate your sukkah with symbols of joy (fruit, flowers, or lights) to reflect God’s abundance.
 - Take time to pray prayers of thanksgiving only, without asking for anything.
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Discussion / Family Questions

For Young Children (Ages 5–8):

1. Who tells us to rejoice during the Feast of Tabernacles?
2. What kinds of things can we thank God for every day?
3. How does singing to God show our joy?

For Older Children / Teens (Ages 9–15):

1. Why do you think God commands joy, instead of leaving it as a choice?
2. How does rejoicing in hard times show trust in God?
3. How can joy be a testimony to unbelievers?

For Adults:

1. How does joy protect us from grumbling or discontentment?
 2. In what ways is rejoicing an act of faith?
 3. How does our rejoicing during this feast point to the joy of eternity with God?
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 **Hymn: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee**

Henry Van Dyke (1907)

1 Joyful, joyful, we adore You,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You,
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

2 All Your works with joy surround You,
Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,
Stars and angels sing around You,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Praising You eternally!

3 Always giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Loving Father, Christ our Brother,
Let Your light upon us shine;
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine.

4 Mortals, join the mighty chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us,
Joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.

 **Closing Prayer**

Lord of Joy,
We thank You for commanding us to rejoice in Your presence. Forgive us for grumbling hearts and anxious spirits. Today we lift up songs of praise, thanksgiving, and gladness, for You are good and Your mercy endures forever. May our homes and booths be filled with joy that honors You. Teach us to rejoice not in possessions or comfort, but in Your salvation and in the hope of dwelling with You forever. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.