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What is worth celebrating? What do celebrations tell us about the kind of people we are? Here in Deuteronomy we see how marvelously Moses addresses celebration. Looking at the three festivals Moses mentions will help us celebrate all that we have in Jesus Christ.

The rest of Deuteronomy after Chapter 5 is an exposition of the Ten Commandments. Chapters 6-18 focus on the first four commandments, on how to love God. Chapters 19-26 apply to the last 6 commandments, which address how to love our neighbor. Then Chapters 27-34 list the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience. We must remember that the Law was given to Israel, so we cannot apply it directly to us. We do not need to follow the 613 regulations listed in the Law, and we are not promised physical blessing if we do so. However, the purpose and spirit of the Law is relevant to us because the Law reflects God's character and nature, which we should reflect as His creations. The Law is an example written for our instruction. It teaches us how we should live to reflect our identity as children of God. This idea applies to the festivals also. We do not need to celebrate these specific feast days, but the concepts of these celebrations are still applicable to us.

Recall that Deuteronomy is Moses' instruction to the new generation of Israelites during the last week of his life. He wants them to remember their history. Once they enter the Promised Land, they are to rejoice and celebrate three feasts: Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Five times in this passage, Moses mentions that these feasts are to be held in the place God chooses, (which will be revealed to be Jerusalem in the time of David). The fact that all of Israel gathers in one place signifies that these festivals are very important. There are other feast days mentioned in the Law, but here Moses chooses these three because they are tied to specific important events. They also inform us on how we should celebrate meaningfully.

The story of Passover is described in Exodus 12. After 400 years of slavery in Egypt, God delivered the Israelites through Moses. God struck dead the firstborn of Egypt, but passed over the Israelite homes, which had the blood of a sacrificial lamb painted on the doorframe. Passover celebrates the deliverance of Israel and the mercy of God on the Israelites. We know that in the New Testament, Jesus, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed for our sins on Passover. Exodus points to Jesus. The deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt is a shadow of our

deliverance from sin through Jesus Christ. Because of what Jesus did, we no longer have to wonder if God loves us, if we are forgiven, and if we are free from sin and death. This is worth celebrating.

During the Feast of Weeks, Israelites offered to God in proportion to what they received. The feast occurred seven weeks after the beginning of the harvest. It is the feast of new grain and of first fruits. During the feast, first fruits were offered to God. The first fruits of the harvest served as an sample of what was to come. Likewise, Jesus is the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep. His resurrection was an example of what was to come, the resurrection of the body upon His return. His resurrection assures us of ours. The Feast of Weeks points to our hope. We also know that the Holy Spirit is also the first fruit. 50 days (about seven weeks) after Passover, the Holy Spirit was poured out to the disciples. The Holy Spirit gives us a taste of what is to come; He is a guarantee of the new life that is ours forever.

Finally, the Feast of Tabernacles occurs after the harvest. During this festival, Israelites would live in tents in Jerusalem for seven days. This was to remind them of the time when they lived in tents while wandering the desert. During the days of the feast, a vessel of water and a vessel of wine were poured into a basin at the base of the altar, symbolizing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit when the Messiah comes and His kingdom is established. The last day of the Feast was known as the day of the great Hosanna. It was the day on which Jesus said in John 7:37-38, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." The outpouring of the Holy Spirit comes from Jesus. The Feast of Tabernacles reminds us that this world is only our temporary home, just as a tent is temporary. But it also reminds us of the second coming, and of our everlasting inheritance, which is guaranteed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. All the suffering we go through will pass, and we will go to our true home. This is worth celebrating. These three feasts point us to Jesus, and all that is ours through Him.