

~AMUSEMENTS (410)

[English, laughter, enjoyment, delight, fun, pleasure, glee, hilarity,
Opposite of, **boredom**, Hebrew, *sa-chaq'* laugh]

.. Expressions of Joy and Pleasure

.. Proper Balance In Amusement

- As expressed by the writer of Ecclesiastes;
- For everything there is an appointed time, even a time for every affair under the heavens. (**Ecclesiastes 3:1**)
- A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to wail and a time to skip about. (**Ecclesiastes 3:4**)
- The word laugh here translates the Hebrew verb *sa-chaq'*. Though the basic meaning is laugh, this word and the related words *sechoq'* and *tsa-chaq'* are also translated by expressions such as **celebrate**, **play**, **make sport**, **offer amusement**, and **have a good time**.
- At this David said to Michal; It was before Yehowah, who chose me rather than your father and all his household to put me in command as leader over Yehowah's people Israel, and I will **celebrate** before Yehowah. (**2 Samuel 6:21**)
- Will you **play** with it as with a bird, or will you tie it for your young girls? (**Job 41:5**)
- And it came about that because their heart was merry, they began to say; Call Samson that he may offer us some **amusement**. So they called Samson out of the prison house that he might make sport before them, and they proceeded to stand him between the pillars. (**Judges 16:25**)
- So on the next day they were early in rising, and they began offering up burnt offerings and presenting communion sacrifices. After that the people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up to have a **good time**. (**Exodus 32:6**)
- So it came about that as his days there extended themselves Abimelech, king of the Philistines, was looking out of the window and taking in the sight, and there was Isaac having a **good time** with Rebekah his wife. (**Genesis 26:8**)

- Forms of the verb *sa-chaq'* are used at;
- Then I came to be beside him as a master worker, and I came to be the one he was specially fond of day by day, I **being glad** before him all the time. (**Proverbs 8:30**)
- **Being glad** at the productive land of his earth, and the things I was fond of were with the sons of men. (**Proverbs 8:31**)
- With regard to the master worker as **being glad** before Yehowah following the earth's creation, as well as to describe the **play** of the animal creation in the sea and in the fields.
- There the ships go, as for Leviathan, him you have formed to play about in it. (**Psalms 104:26**)
- For the mountains themselves bear their produce for it, and all the wild beasts of the field themselves **play** there. (**Job 40:20**)

•• Expressions of Joy and Pleasure

- The **amusements** and diversion of the Israelites are not prominently portrayed in the Bible record. Nevertheless, it shows them to be viewed as both proper and desirable when in harmony with the religious principles of the nation. The principal forms of recreation were the **playing of musical instruments, singing, dancing, conversation, as well as some games.** The **propounding of riddles and difficult questions** was much esteemed.
- Then Samson said to them; Let me, please, **propound a riddle** to you. If you will without fail tell it to me during the seven days of the banquet and you do solve it, I shall in that case have to give you thirty undergarments and thirty outfits of clothing. (**Judges 14:12**)
- Singing, dancing, and the use of tambourines broke forth in praise of Yehowah right after Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea.
- And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, proceeded to take a tambourine in her hand, and all the women began going out with her with tambourines and in dances. (**Exodus 15:20**)
- And Miriam kept responding to the men; Sing to Yehowah, for he

has become highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea. (**Exodus 15:21**)

- Later, when Aaron proclaimed a festival to Yehowah after having made the golden calf, the people ate and drank and then got up **to have a good time**, Hebrew *letsa-cheq'*. Their dancing and singing in this case, however, were coupled with false worship, causing disgrace.

- When Aaron got to see this, he went to building an altar before it. Finally Aaron called out and said; There is a festival to Yehowah tomorrow. (**Exodus 32:5**)

- So on the next day they were early in rising, and they began offering up burnt offerings and presenting communion sacrifices. After that the people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up to have a good time. (**Exodus 32:6**)

- But he said; It is not the sound of the singing over mighty performance, and it is not the sound of the singing of defeat; It is the sound of other singing that I am hearing. (**Exodus 32:18**)

- So it came about that as soon as he got near the camp and could see the calf and the dances, Moses anger began to blaze, and he at once threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. (**Exodus 32:19**)

- And Moses got to see that the people went unrestrained, because Aaron had let them go unrestrained for a disgrace among their opposers. (**Exodus 32:25**)

- The three annual festivals provided occasion for enjoyment along with the observance of the requirements of worship set forth in the Law. **Circle dances** are mentioned with regard to the yearly festival held in Shiloh.

- And you must look, and, there now, when the daughters of Shiloh come on out **to dance in circle dances**, you must also come out from the vineyards and carry off for yourselves by force each one his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and you must go to the land of Benjamin. (**Judges 21:21**)

- Other occasions were the victory celebrations,

- Finally Jephthah came to Mizpah to his home, and, look! His

daughter coming out to meet him with tambourine playing and dancing! Now she was absolutely the only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter. (**Judges 11:34**)

- And it came about that at their coming in, when David returned from striking the Philistines down, the women began coming out from all the cities of Israel with song and dances to meet Saul the king, with tambourines, with rejoicing and with lutes. (**1 Samuel 18:6**)
- And the women that were celebrating kept responding and saying; Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his tens of thousands. (**1 Samuel 18:7**)
- And the coronation of a king,
- After that all the people came on up following him, and the people were **playing on flutes and rejoicing with great joy**, so that the earth was split by the noise of them. (**1 Kings 1:40**)
- While dancing was engaged in more particularly by women, men also danced on occasion, as did David when bringing the Ark up to Jerusalem.
- And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before Yehowah with all sorts of instruments of juniper wood and with harps and with stringed instruments and with tambourines and with sistrums and with cymbals. (**2 Samuel 6:5**)
- And David was dancing around before Yehowah with all his power, all the while David being girded with an ephod of linen. (**2 Samuel 6:14**)
- At this David said to Michal; It was before Yehowah, who chose me rather than your father and all his household to put me in command as leader over Yehowah's people Israel, and I will celebrate before Yehowah. (**2 Samuel 6:21**)
- And David and all Israel were celebrating before the true God with full power and with songs and with harps and with stringed instruments and with tambourines and with cymbals and with trumpets. (**1 Chronicles 13:8**)
- And it came about that, when the ark of the covenant of

Yehowah came as far as the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, herself looked down through the window and got to see King David skipping about and celebrating, and she began to despise him in her heart. ([1 Chronicles 15:29](#))

- The vintage time and also sheepshearing time were occasions of joy and feasting.
- And as for you, you will prophesy to them all these words, and you must say to them; From on high Yehowah himself will roar, and from his holy dwelling he will give forth his voice. Without fail he will roar upon his abiding place. A shout like that of those treading the winepress he will sing out against all the inhabitants of the earth. ([Jeremiah 25:30](#))
- And it turned out after two full years that Absalom came to have sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is close by Ephraim, and Absalom proceeded to invite all the sons of the king. ([2 Samuel 13:23](#))
- So Absalom came in to the king and said; Here, now, your servant has sheepshearers! Let the king go, please, and also his servants, with your servant. ([2 Samuel 13:24](#))
- But the king said to Absalom; No, my son! Do not let all of us go, please, that we may not be a burden upon you. Although he kept urging him, he did not consent to go but blessed him. ([2 Samuel 13:25](#))
- Finally Absalom said; If not you, let Amnon my brother go with us, please. At this the king said to him; Why should he go with you? ([2 Samuel 13:26](#))
- And Absalom began to urge him, so that he sent Amnon and all the sons of the king with him. ([2 Samuel 13:27](#))
- Then Absalom commanded his attendants, saying; See, please, that just as soon as Amnon's heart is in a merry mood with wine, and I shall certainly say to you; Strike down Amnon! You must then put him to death. Do not be afraid. Have not I myself commanded you? Be strong and prove yourselves to be valiant men. ([2 Samuel 13:28](#))

- **Marriages, too, were times for enjoyment, and Jesus contributed toward such at a marriage held in Cana.**

- **And I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of exultation and the voice of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, for the land will become nothing, but a devastated place. (Jeremiah 7:34)**

- **For this is what Yehowah of armies, the God of Israel, has said; Here I am causing to cease out of this place before the eyes of you people and in your days the voice of exultation and the voice of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. (Jeremiah 16:9)**

- **Now on the third day a marriage feast took place in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. (John 2:1)**

- **Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the marriage feast. (John 2:2)**

- **When the wine ran short the mother of Jesus said to him; They have no wine. (John 2:3)**

- **But Jesus said to her; What have I to do with you, woman? My hour has not yet come. (John 2:4)**

- **His mother said to those ministering; Whatever he tells you, do. (John 2:5)**

- **As it was, there were six stone water jars sitting there as required by the purification rules of the Jews, each able to hold two or three liquid measures. (John 2:6)**

- **Jesus said to them; Fill the water jars with water. And they filled them to the brim. (John 2:7)**

- **And he said to them; Draw some out now and take it to the director of the feast. So they took it. (John 2:8)**

- **When, now, the director of the feast tasted the water that had been turned into wine but did not know what its source was, although those ministering who had drawn out the water knew, the director of the feast called the bridegroom (John 2:9)**

- And said to him, Every other man puts out the fine wine first, and when people are intoxicated, the inferior. You have reserved the fine wine until now. (**John 2:10**)
- Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and got near the house he heard a music concert and dancing. (**Luke 15:25**)
- A **music concert and dancing** are mentioned as part of the festivities celebrating the return of the prodigal son.
- In Egypt slaves were taught music and dancing to entertain the family and their guests. The Greeks also **employed professional female dancers and musicians to entertain guests**. There was dancing for entertainment on Herod's birthday when he was asked for the head of John the Baptizer.
- But when Herod's birthday was being celebrated the daughter of Herodias danced at it and pleased Herod so much (**Matthew 14:6**)
- That he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. (**Matthew 14:7**)
- Then she, under her mother's coaching, said; Give me here upon a platter the head of John the Baptist. (**Matthew 14:8**)
- **Dancing was popular among the Greeks as an amusement**, though Greek dancing was originally associated with religious worship.

·· Proper Balance In Amusement

- Warnings against improper forms of amusement and the need for keeping entertainment in its place are set forth in certain texts. Proverbs describes the stupid one to whom the carrying on of loose conduct is like sport **Hebrew *sechohq'*** and the man who tricks his fellow and says; Was I not having failure, **Hebrew *mesa-cheq***?
- To the stupid one the carrying on of loose conduct is like sport, but wisdom is for the man of discernment. (**Proverbs 10:23**)
- So is the man that has tricked his fellowman and has said; Was I not having fun? (**Proverbs 26:19**)

- Showing amusements relative worth to be small,
- Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, and grief is what rejoicing ends up in. (**Proverbs 14:13**)
- Says; Even in laughter, **Hebrew** *bi-sechohq'*, the heart may be in pain, and grief is what rejoicing ends up in.
- I said to laughter; Insanity! And to rejoicing; What is this doing? (**Ecclesiastes 2:2**)
- Better is it to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet house, because that is the end of all mankind, and the one alive should take it to his heart. (**Ecclesiastes 7:2**)
- Better is vexation than laughter, for by the crossness of the face the heart becomes better. (**Ecclesiastes 7:3**)
- For as the sound of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of the stupid one, and this too is vanity. (**Ecclesiastes 7:6**)
- The merry Philistines called out blind Samson to offer them amusement, **Hebrew** *sa-chaq'*, only to have him bring the house down on them.
- And it came about that because their heart was merry, they began to say; Call Samson that he may offer us some amusement. So they called Samson out of the prison house that he might make sport before them, and they proceeded to stand him between the pillars. (**Judges 16:25**)
- Then Samson said to the boy that was holding him by his hand, Do permit me to feel the pillars upon which the house is firmly established and let me lean against them. (**Judges 16:26**)
- Incidentally, the house was full of men and women and all the Philistine axis lords were there, and upon the roof there were about three thousand men and women who were looking on while Samson offered some amusement. (**Judges 16:27**)
- Samson now called to Yehowah and said; Sovereign Lord Yehowah, remember me, please, and strengthen me, please, just this once, O you the true God, and let me avenge myself upon the Philistines with vengeance for one of my two eyes. (**Judges**

16:28)

- With that Samson braced himself against the two middle pillars upon which the house was firmly established, and got a grasp on them, one with his right and the other with his left hand. (**Judges 16:29**)
- And Samson proceeded to say; Let my soul die with the Philistines. Then he bent himself with power, and the house went falling upon the axis lords and upon all the people that were in it, so that the dead that he put to death in his own death came to be more than those he had put to death during his lifetime. (**Judges 16:30**)
- Jeremiah, aware of the seriousness of the times and undergoing persecution for his preaching, states that he did not sit down with those playing jokes, Hebrew *mesa-chaqim*', and exulting.
- I have not sat down in the intimate group of those playing jokes and begun exulting. Because of your hand I have sat down all by myself, for it is with denunciation that you have filled me. (**Jeremiah 15:17**)
- Though he foretold doom for Jerusalem, he also prophesied of the time when her inhabitants would again go forth with rejoicing in the dance of those laughing, decked with tambourines.
- And from them there will certainly go forth thanksgiving, and the sound of those who are laughing. And I will multiply them, and they will not become few, and I will make them heavy in number, and they will not become insignificant. (**Jeremiah 30:19**)
- Yet shall I rebuild you and you will actually be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel. You will yet deck yourself with your tambourines and actually go forth in the dance of those who are laughing. (**Jeremiah 31:4**)
- Zechariah similarly foretold the day when the public squares of restored Jerusalem would be filled with children playing.
- And the public squares of the city themselves will be filled with boys and girls playing in her public squares. (**Zechariah 8:5**)

See Also DANCING

See Also GAMES
See Also THEATER