

~DANCING (390)

[Hebrew, *chul*, Greek, *or-khe'o-mai*]

.. Victory And Festive Dances

.. Other Bible Mention Of Dancing

- The **rhythmic performance of bodily movements, usually accompanied by music**, ranging anywhere from a slow tempo to a violent frenzy.
- Dancing is an **outward expression of one's emotions and attitudes, often those of joy and ecstasy, rarely of hatred and revenge**, as exhibited in war dances. The emotions and feelings displayed in the dance are heightened by appropriately colored costumes or symbolic accessories.
- The art of dancing is of very ancient origin, and from earliest times it has been used by almost all races as a medium of emotional expression, particularly in worship. In the Hebrew Scriptures several expressions occur that are translated dancing, circle dances, dancing around, and skipping about. The **Hebrew** verb *chul*, which basically means **whirl, turn**, is also rendered dance.
- 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**)
- Look! A windstorm of Yehowah, rage itself, has gone forth, an onward-sweeping tempest. Upon the head of the wicked ones it will whirl. (**Jeremiah 30:23**)
- The punishment for the error of the daughter of my people also becomes greater than the punishment for the sin of Sodom; Which was overthrown as in a moment, and to which no hands turned helpfully. (**Lamentations 4:6**)
- Two nouns meaning **dance, circle dance** are drawn from this **Hebrew** verb, namely, *ma-chohl'*.
- 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**)

- Praise him with the tambourine and the **circle dance**. Praise him with strings and the pipe. (**Psalms 150:4**)
- *Mecho-lah'*
- Come back, come back, O Shulammite! Come back, come back, that we may behold you! What do you people behold in the Shulammite? Something like the **dance of two camps**! (**Song of Solomon 6:13**)
- 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**)

•• Victory And Festive Dances

- Dancers expressed their heartfelt praise and thanksgiving to Yehowah after Israel witnessed the faith-inspiring demonstration of Yehowah's power in destroying the Egyptians. So, as the men joined Moses in singing a victory song, Miriam led the women in **dances** to the accompaniment of tambourines.
- At that time Moses and the sons of Israel proceeded to sing this song to Yehowah and to say the following; Let me sing to Yehowah, for he has become highly exalted the horse and its rider he has pitched into the sea. (**Exodus 15:1**)
- And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, proceeded to take a tambourine in her hand. 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**)
- Another victory **dance** motivated by deep religious feelings was that of Jephthah's daughter, who came out to join her father in praising Yehowah for having given the Ammonites into his hands.

- 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**)
- The women of Israel, **dancing** to the music of lutes and tambourines, welcomed Saul and David back after Yehowah's victory over the Philistines.
- 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 servants of Achish began to say to him; Is not this David the king of the land? Was it not to this one that they kept responding with **dances**, saying; (**1 Samuel 21:11**)
- Is this not David to whom they kept responding in the dances, saying; Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his tens of thousands? (**1 Samuel 29:5**)
- **Dancing** was a part of certain annual festivals in connection with the worship of Yehowah.
- Finally they said; Look! There is a festival of Yehowah from year to year in Shiloh, which is to the north of Bethel, toward the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem and toward the south of Lebonah. (**Judges 21:19**)
- So they commanded the sons of Benjamin, saying; Go, and you must lie in wait in the vineyards. (**Judges 21:20**)
- 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**)

- Accordingly the sons of Benjamin did just that way, and they proceeded to carry off wives for their number from the women **dancing** around, whom they snatched away, after which they went off and returned to their inheritance and built the cities and took up dwelling in them. (**Judges 21:23**)
- The Psalms also endorse **dancing** as a means of honoring and praising Yehowah.
- Praise Yah, you people! Sing to Yehowah a new song, this praise in the congregation of loyal ones. (**Psalms 149:1**)
- Let them praise his name with **dancing**. With the tambourine and the harp let them **make melody** to him. (**Psalms 149:3**)
- Praise him with the tambourine and the **circle dance**. Praise him with strings and the pipe. (**Psalms 150:4**)
- It was a great occasion when the ark of the covenant finally arrived in Jerusalem, especially for King David, who gave way to his emotions in a most **vigorous dance**.
- 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**)
- And David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of Yehowah with joyful shouting and sound of horn. (**2 Samuel 6:15**)
- And it occurred that when the ark of Yehowah came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, herself looked down through the window and got to see King David leaping and **dancing** around before Yehowah, and she began to despise him in her heart. (**2 Samuel 6:16**)
- So they brought the ark of Yehowah in and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, after which David offered up burnt sacrifices and communion sacrifices before Yehowah. (**2 Samuel 6:17**)
- In the parallel passage David is described as **skipping about**.
- 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**)

- **Dancing** also had a religious significance among the people of the pagan nations. The processions of ancient Babylon and other nations were usually of a religious nature, and often **processional dances** were staged as part of the event.
- The **dances** in Greece usually acted out some legend connected with their gods, who were themselves depicted as **dancing**. Fertility **dances** were designed to stimulate the sexual passions of both participants and observers.
- The Canaanites performed **circle dances** around their idols and sacred poles honoring the fertility forces of nature. The worship of Baal was associated with **wild, unrestrained dances**.
- In Elijah's time there was such a display by the priests of Baal who, in the course of the **demonic dance**, **lacerated themselves with knives as they kept limping around the altar**.
- Accordingly they took the young bull that he gave them. Then they dressed it, and they kept calling upon the name of Baal from morning till noon, saying; O Baal, answer us! But there was no voice, and there was no one answering. And they kept limping around the altar that they had made. (**1 Kings 18:26**)
- And it came about at noon that Elijah began to mock them and say; Call at the top of your voice, for he is a god, for he must be concerned with a matter, and he has excrement and has to go to the privy. Or maybe he is asleep and ought to wake up! (**1 Kings 18:27**)
- And they began calling at the top of their voice and cutting themselves according to their custom with daggers and with lances, until they caused blood to flow out upon them. (**1 Kings 18:28**)
- And it came about that, as soon as noon was past and they continued behaving as prophets until the going up of the grain offering, there was no voice, and there was no one answering, and there was no paying of attention. (**1 Kings 18:29**)

- Other translations say they **performed a limping dance**, **AT**, **danced in halting wise**, **JP**, **performed their hobbling dance**, **JB**. On making the golden calf, the Israelites also indulged in a form of pagan **dancing** before their idol, thus meriting Yehowah's condemnation.
- 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**)
- And Joshua began to hear the noise of the people because of their shouting, and he proceeded to say to Moses, There is a noise of battle in the camp. (**Exodus 32:17**)
- 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**)

•• Other Bible Mention Of Dancing

- In Israel, **dancing** was performed mostly in groups, particularly by women. When men joined in the **dance**, they were in separate companies, apparently there was no mingling of the sexes in their **dances**. The **dances** were both processional and circular.
- 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**)
- 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**)
- And David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of Yehowah with joyful shouting and sound of horn. (**2 Samuel 6:15**)

- And it occurred that when the ark of Yehowah came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, herself looked down through the window and got to see King David **leaping** and **dancing around** before Yehowah, and she began to despise him in her heart. (**2 Samuel 6:16**)
- But these styles did not make the **dances** akin to the pagan processional or **circle dances**. The motives and objectives behind the **dances** themselves, the announced purpose of the **dances**, the movements of the **dancing** bodies, and the ideas such movements convey to observers are the important things to consider and compare in determining resemblance in **dance** patterns.
- In the **Christian Greek Scriptures** the **Greek** word *or-khe'o-mai* is translated dance. According to **W. E. Vine** it **probably originally signified to lift up, as of the feet, hence, to leap with regularity of motion**. [**An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, 1962, Vol. 1, p. 266**] Herod was so pleased with Salome's **dancing** at his birthday party that he granted her request and had John the Baptizer beheaded.
- 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**)
- Grieved though he was, the king out of regard for his oaths and for those reclining with him commanded it to be given. (**Matthew 14:9**)
- And he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. (**Matthew 14:10**)
- And his head was brought on a platter and given to the maiden, and she brought it to her mother. (**Matthew 14:11**)
- But a convenient day came along when Herod spread an evening meal on his birthday for his top-ranking men and the military commanders and the foremost ones of Galilee. (**Mark 6:21**)

- **And the daughter of this very Herodias came in and danced and pleased Herod and those reclining with him. The king said to the maiden; Ask me for whatever you want, and I will give it to you. (Mark 6:22)**
- **Yes, he swore to her; Whatever you ask me for, I will give it to you, up to half my kingdom. (Mark 6:23)**
- **And she went out and said to her mother; What should I ask for? She said; The head of John the baptizer. (Mark 6:24)**
- **Immediately she went in with haste to the king and made her request, saying; I want you to give me right away on a platter the head of John the Baptist. (Mark 6:25)**
- **Although he became deeply grieved, yet the king did not want to disregard her, in view of the oaths and those reclining at the table. (Mark 6:26)**
- **So the king immediately dispatched a body guardsman and commanded him to bring his head. And he went off and beheaded him in the prison (Mark 6:27)**
- **And brought his head on a platter, and he gave it to the maiden, and the maiden gave it to her mother. (Mark 6:28)**
- **Jesus Christ likened his generation to the young children he observed playing games and dancing in the marketplace.**
- **With whom shall I compare this generation? It is like young children sitting in the marketplaces who cry out to their playmates. (Matthew 11:16)**
- **Saying; We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we wailed, but you did not beat yourselves in grief. (Matthew 11:17)**
- **Correspondingly, John came neither eating nor drinking, yet people say; He has a demon! (Matthew 11:18)**
- **The Son of man did come eating and drinking, still people say; Look! A man gluttonous and given to drinking wine, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. All the same, wisdom is proved righteous by its works. (Matthew 11:19)**

- With whom, therefore, shall I compare the men of this generation, and whom are they like? (Luke 7:31)
- They are like young children sitting in a marketplace and crying out to one another, and who say; We played the flute for you, but you did not **dance**, we wailed, but you did not weep. (Luke 7:32)
- Correspondingly, John the Baptist has come neither eating bread nor drinking wine, but you say; He has a demon. (Luke 7:33)
- The Son of man has come eating and drinking, but you say; Look! A man gluttonous and given to drinking wine, a friend of tax collectors and sinners! (Luke 7:34)
- All the same, wisdom is proved righteous by all its children. (Luke 7:35)
- In Jesus illustration of the prodigal son, however, a different **Greek** word is used, *kho-ros'*, from which the **English** word chorus is drawn. This **Greek** word has reference to a **company of dancers**, evidently a **dancing** troupe hired as entertainment for such a festive occasion.
- 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)

See Also SALOME 2