



When we mention the term “Hebraic,” all kinds of pictures come to mind. We think of banners with the words, “Yeshua” or “Lion of Judah” on them; we think of different colored flags being waved all representing some aspects of the character of God; we think of people dancing the “Hora” to lively Messianic music; we hear lyrics being sung in the Hebrew language; we see the flag of Israel with the Star of David being waved and lifted high. These are all wonderful expressions of worship and praise and declaring who our God is. However, we must truly understand that all of these wonderful expressions whether done combined or separately, are not what defines the term “Hebraic” worship.

Many times what these forms and expressions represent is a “culture.” We need to differentiate between “Hebraic Worship” and the “Jewish Culture.” The term “culture” is defined as, *“The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. Culture is learned and shared within social groups and is transmitted by non-genetic means. These patterns, traits, and products are considered as the expression of a particular class, community, or population.”*

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Obviously, there are as many cultures as there are as many different peoples, countries and regions of the world. Initially, the idea of “culture” was established back in the Book of Genesis when we read about the Tower of Babel. Up until that point there was one language and basically they were all thinking the same way – anti-God. There was a remnant that believed in and lived in the covenant promises of God, however, a vast majority of the “mankind” were against the things of God. We see that once their language was confounded, they separated into various groups and dispersed into different regions and began their own “cultures.” (Genesis 11:1-9)

The whole concept of the term “culture” is that it separates and divides. The only “culture” that we, as born again children of God are to be a part of is the “Kingdom of God Culture” that causes us to now live a lifestyle that represents the Kingdom and expresses that we are disciples of Jesus. We are to be separated and set apart from the things of this world. (2Corinthians 6:14-18) There are some benefits of human culture, one of which is that of cuisine. I can think of some culture’s cuisine I would like to be enjoying right now. Oh boy – I’ll be right back.

Anyway, I’m back. As I was saying, “culture” can separate and divide. When we get involved in culture we are setting our attention on the things of man. This relates to any kind of culture – ethnic, age groups (old or young), denominational, etc. The true worship of God goes beyond any Human culture and should transcend us into the spiritual realm – that place where the Living God dwells. In that place, that place of true worship, we are able to experience the fullness of our relationship with the “Lover of our soul.” There should be no thought of culture when we are worshipping God.

Wherever we may be - country, denomination, ethnic situation, whatever – we must get past the “culture” of where we are. We are never to be enamored with a certain culture’s way of worship. Yes, it may reflect that culture’s way of life, however, no culture’s worship style is better than the other. It is simply a tool that is used to express an attitude of heart of the true worshipper. We are to be enamored with the One we are worshipping together. Yes, we are different but yet, are we? The scriptures are clear.

Colossians 3:11 - *“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond [nor] free: but Christ [is] all, and in all.”*

Colossians 2:8 – *“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”*

As we read Joshua 24:14-25, Joshua makes a clear “dividing line” statement. “Choose this day who you will serve.” The people answered Joshua by stating, “God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods...” Is it possible that “culture” has become a “god” to us and we are not even aware of it?

Culture can be described as a beautiful box that a gift is wrapped in. However, the most important part of the gift is the gift itself. What is inside the box? Who is the gift for? Is the gift to be what the recipient would want or is it what the giver thinks the recipient would want? Some of us, as a prank, have given or have been given a beautifully wrapped box only to open it up and have nothing in it. It was exciting to open but it was empty. Sometimes, this is how “culture” affects our gatherings. Hmmm – let’s take a “Selah moment” and pause and think on that.

So what does the term “Hebraic” mean after all? Is it really a cultural term or could it be telling us something else and we have been possibly missing it? The term “Hebrew” is a transliteration from the name of a person we first see in Genesis 10:20. “Eber,” came from the line of Shem. We can see through the many genealogies found in scripture, the line of the covenant went through the lineage of Shem all the way through and up to Jesus.

The name “Eber” literally means “the land or region **beyond**.” The name “Eber” is from the Hebrew word “eber” (pronounced ā•ver) whose root etymology is the word “`abar” (pronounced “ä•var”). This word “`abar” literally means: *to cause to pass over, cause to bring over, cause to cross over, make over to, dedicate, devote; to cause to pass through; to cause to pass by or beyond or under, let pass by; to cause to pass away, cause to take away.* In simplified terms we can say that it means “to cross over” or “crossing over.”

I think you know where I’m going with this. “Hebraic Worship” in essence has nothing to do with Jewish culture. It has everything to do with “crossing over” into the realm where God is – the spirit realm. Jesus expressed what “Hebraic Worship” really is in John 4:24. We “crossover” into God’s domain - that “region beyond,” the Spirit realm, that “secret place” that isn’t so secret any more, the very “Throne Room of our God” - when we worship as true worshippers from out of our Born Again spirit in “spirit and in truth.”

The pattern for “Hebraic Worship,” as we have been discussing is worship that was instituted by God. He gave the pattern of the worship that was pleasing to Him to His people first through Moses (the Tabernacle in the Wilderness) and then through David (the Tabernacle of David – Acts 15:13-18). Now, through Jesus and led by the Holy Spirit, we are to offer “spiritual sacrifices” of intimate worship from deep within. We are to express and experience a “true, first love” relationship with the Father. We are to follow after the pattern of the Priests of the “sons of Zadok” who come near, stand, and

minister **unto God** and not unto men. As we enter into that true worship, the Father cannot help Himself but to bring us to His “dining hall” to partake of all that is on the “table of God.” (Ezekiel 44:15-17)

You see, I sometimes feel that we as Christians have it backwards. In our gatherings when we enter into “times of worship,” we are so set in our desire to want God to come into **our** midst. Now, I am not saying that that is bad thing. However, could it be possible that when we do enter into that time of true, “attitude of the heart” worship that the Father is seeking after, that maybe, just maybe, He becomes so delighted that He comes and take us “to His place?” We must remember that the “secret place where the most High dwells” is in the atmosphere of worship. He dwells in the midst of worship. Worship, true worship, is the worship that transcends us from this realm (the natural, physical realm) into God’s realm (the Spirit realm) which can be referred to as true “Throne Room Worship.” It allows us to “crossover” into the spirit realm, where the Most High dwells. It takes us to “His house.” That is really what “Hebraic Worship” is all about.

I would like to suggest a few thoughts in respect to “Jewish culture” as it pertains to worship. The music of the Temple was, for the most part, lost at the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD by the Romans, when the Jews entered into the “diaspora.” The nearest music we have today to what may reflect the type of music that was heard during the Temple period would be something similar to that found within “Arabic music” or “Indian music” that we hear and know of today. The “Jewish” style of music we hear today is really a culmination and result from the assimilation of the Jews into the various cultures that they lived in as they were dispersed throughout the world.

The “Jewish musical sound” that we tend to lean towards is that which is written in a minor key or music that uses augmented second chords – both of which give an atmosphere of “mourning” or “lamenting” even during the most active times of praise. In the minor key the second note of the main triad of the key being used is lowered a half step. This may seem to represent, unknowingly and/or unintentionally, that the Jewish people are missing the full revelation of the second person of the Trinity – Yeshua. Most “Jewish Liturgical Music” is sung by a Cantor in the form of a “cantillation” or “recitative chanting” of the prose books of the Bible. Reformed synagogues do use an organ and other instruments in their liturgies.

True Hebraic worship today, the worship that is pleasing to God, I believe, should be called the “One New Man in Christ” worship because it can only come from a renewed spirit, no matter what it may be packaged in. It is a worship that goes far beyond music or any other media art form. It is an attitude of heart that is lived out as a lifestyle of worshipping the Lord in all that we do, in every aspect of our lives. It flows out of a regenerated spirit that is within the believer. It does not depend on who you are, where you are from, or what culture you come out of. Together we come united, led by the Holy Spirit, to worship God as the “One New Man in Christ” worshipping Him in “spirit and in truth.”

God is a God of unity in the midst of diversity. The gift we bring is to be a gift of love and adoration unto our God in response to His “Gift” of love to us - His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Remember, it does not matter what the box is wrapped with as long as the “gift” inside blesses the heart of our King.

***Many Items found in this essay are excerpts from Ray’s Book - [Being a Chenaniah in a Land of Davids](#) - visit www.simplysimpleworship.com/resources.html for more resources*