



SABBATH 46—NOVEMBER 16, 2024

## Worship is Doing God's Will

**Ephesians 5:7—“Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”**

One of the most important principles of true worship could be expressed in these words: “Worship is doing God’s will, not mine.” When Jesus lived on earth as a man, He said, “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me” (John 6:38).

There is a story in the book of Exodus that helps us understand the depth of this principle. The biblical text tells us: “Three times in the year all your men shall appear before the Lord, the Lord God of Israel. For I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year” (Exodus 34:23, 24).

Through Moses, God instructed the Israelites that three times a year, on the same date each year, all the men and those who were able to travel should leave their homes and go to Jerusalem to celebrate a feast dedicated to the Lord.

The Israelites were surrounded by fiery tribes, eager to take their land. What would prevent their enemies from rushing upon these unprotected houses and ravaging them with fire and sword? What would prevent the country from being invaded? God had promised to protect His people. Apparently, it would be safer to stay in the city to protect it, but only obedience to God’s expressed will could make their cities safe.

Imagine thousands of Israelites heading to the holy convocation in Jerusalem, singing the psalm of pilgrimage that said, “Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

**Appeal:** This story teaches us that worship is doing God’s will, even when it doesn’t seem safe. Someone may say, “If I want to keep my job, I’d better keep Sunday rather than the Sabbath. It’s safer that way.” When it doesn’t feel safe to keep the Sabbath, remember that worshiping is doing God’s will, not yours. When it doesn’t feel safe to be faithful with tithes and offerings, remember that God told the people of Israel that they would only be safe if they did what God had commanded.

