

## Facts About Birthday Celebrations

'His (Job's seven) sons used to go and feast in the house of each on his birthday in turn, and they invited their three sisters to eat and drink with them' (Job 1:4).

There are a few people who do not like to celebrate birthdays because they think it is not 'scriptural'. In the above verse, we can see Job's righteous adult children celebrated their birthdays in each other's homes, with a feast attended by the whole family. There is no scripture that says this is wrong or sinful.

Before the days of glass bottles and milk formula, the only nourishment babies had was the God-created mother's milk. Babies were usually breast fed until their third birthday, and only then the family would celebrate the birth of the baby. Infant mortality was so high, the birth of the baby was not celebrated until the child was three years old and there was a better chance it would survive.

The ancient tradition of having a feast and celebration on the child's third birthday – the day they were weaned – is mentioned in the Bible. 'The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast the same day Isaac was weaned' (Genesis 21:8). We notice there was no celebration when Isaac was born – that happened when he was weaned. It was the same with Samuel. 'When Hannah had weaned Samuel she took him with her ... and brought Samuel to the house of the Lord in Shiloh when the boy was young ... His mother made him a little robe and brought it to him from year to year' (1 Samuel 1:24; 2:19). These verses show us celebrating the birth of a child and subsequent birthdays with gifts and feasting, is scriptural.

Throughout the Bible, the names and ages of individuals are written for our information. If the Biblical characters ignored all of their birthdays as some people think, it would have been almost impossible for the writers to know how old certain characters were. Examples of this are: Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem when He was exactly twelve years old (Luke 2:41 & 42) and He was thirty years old when He started His ministry (Luke 3:23). Jacob's son Joseph was seventeen years old when he was sold into slavery (Genesis 37:2) and he was thirty years old when he became the ancient equivalent of Prime Minister (Genesis 41:46). Enoch lived for 365 years (Genesis 5:23). Methuselah was 969 years old when he died (Genesis 5:27). Pharaoh and Herod celebrated their birthdays (Genesis 40:20; Matthew 14:6; Mark 6:21). Job and Jeremiah cursed their birthdays (Job 3:1; Jeremiah 20:14). All through the Bible there are lists of lineages where people are named and their exact age given. Imagine trying to memorise all that information if their individual birthdays were not somehow recorded. It is not logical. Common sense tells us every person had the day of their birth recorded in some way.

God knows every day of our lives before we are born (Psalm 139:16) so we can have birthday gatherings without being concerned about offending the Lord. If you are one of those who are unsure about having or attending birthday celebrations, relax and enjoy your family gathering.

Amen and God bless you.

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