

Prophetic Fall Feasts of The LORD

Sept. 25, 2019 Lesson #37 Feast Of Tabernacles: Introduction

God's Instructions For His Feasts: Given after their deliverance from Egypt.

Lev. 23:34-44 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles [Booths] for seven days unto the LORD.

³⁵ On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind. ³⁶ For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work. ³⁷ 'These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD—burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day's matter on its own day— ³⁸ besides those of the sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.

³⁹ 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. ⁴⁰ Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. ⁴¹ You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴² You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, ⁴³ so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.'" ⁴⁴ So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD.

Every Biblical holiday given to the Jewish people has three aspects.

1. Israel was to observe the holiday in the present
2. in order to remember something God had done in the past,
3. while looking forward to some future prophetic purpose hidden within each festival.

This feast is the culmination of all the feasts on God's redemptive calendar.

- ❖ 1st four feasts have been fulfilled with Christ's 1st coming
 - He is the Lamb of God who came to seek, serve and save.
- ❖ Last 3 feasts will be fulfilled with Christ's 2nd coming.
 - Messiah is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, The King, The Great High Priest & The Lord of All.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, or *Sukkot*, the Jewish people were to gather together in Jerusalem not only to remember God's provision in the Wilderness but also to look forward to that promised Messianic age when all nations will flow to this city to worship the Lord.

Feast of Tabernacles which celebrates the final restoration occurred six months after the Passover feast that celebrated redemption. Passover and Tabernacles commemorate both the beginning and the end of the historical journey of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. It also pictures the inauguration and consummation of our spiritual journey from Calvary to the world to come.

Fall is the end of the harvest seasons. Its themes include:

- The Return Of The Messiah: Sounding of Trumpets Announce His Coming
- The Ingathering: Both agriculture and souls = Final gathering or harvest of God's Saints
- Regathering and Return of His people to Israel.
- The Repentance: God and man face to face
- Judgment of the Nations: separation of sheep and goats
- The Redemption: The Kingdom of God and His Culmination of His Plan of the Ages

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

II Pet. 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The Feast of Tabernacles [Feast of Booths, Feast of Ingathering and *Sukkot*], is the 7th and last feast the Lord commanded Israel to observe.

- It was instituted by Moses.
- It begins with a holy convocation = No work & the day is set aside for worshipping God
- It is observed on Tishri 15 for 7 days.
- On each day of the feast they were to offer an "offering made by fire to the Lord."
- After 7 days of feasting, the eighth day was to be "a holy convocation" when they were to cease from work and offer another sacrifice to God.
- It is observed 5 days after the Day of Atonement.
- Unique: Gentile nations were invited to come to Jerusalem with the Jewish people to worship the Lord at this "appointed time."

Deut. 31:12 The Lord told Moses to gather all men, women and children, along with the foreigners in their land, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.

Zechariah describes Feast of Tabernacles as being the required one for non-covenant nations to participate in during the coming Kingdom Age [the "Millennium"] to show their acknowledgment of the true God and the nation He delivered from Egypt.

Zech. 14:16-19 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

This feast was known as "Season of Our Rejoicing."

- ❖ Time of joy because Israel had passed through the season of repentance & redemption
- ❖ The produce of the field, orchard and vineyard is gathered.
- ❖ The granaries, threshing floors and olive presses are full.
- ❖ Weeks and months of toil and sweat put into the soil have been amply rewarded.

This Feast was a time of Joyous Celebration to remember the past, present and future.

God wanted Israel to remember: The Exodus of Israel from Egypt

Jer. 31:32 "...the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt..."

The Past: God had led them out of Egyptian bondage, cared for them in the wilderness, and brought them into their promised inheritance.

- According to all natural laws, they should have perished. They were divinely protected.
- God's presence led them day and night. They were totally dependent on Him.
- Once they had lived in booths or tents but now they would dwell in permanent houses.
- They would live in a land that produced bountifully.

Present: Celebrate God's continued provision for them in the current harvest which was just completed.

- Time of feasting, rejoicing and giving thanks to God for His bountiful gifts
- Living in flimsy booths reminds Israel that they once dwelled in temporary shelters during the forty years in the Wilderness, totally dependent on the Lord.

Future: This feast pictures the future kingdom God has prepared for Israel when their Messiah returns and they receive Him. [Zech. 12:10-13:1; Isa. 35]

The celebration is a "taste of the joy to come." Celebrate its future prophetic purpose:

The Return of Our King To The Earth

- Celebrates the covering of the Lord over Israel as a "tent or booth" during the Kingdom.
- Israel will no longer suffer oppression of any ungodly nation.
- Zechariah describes the topographical changes in Israel.
- Israel will be in their full boundaries of their Promised Land. [Ezek. 43:7]
- All nations will flow to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

Required: Each year the grown males had to appear before God to celebrate 3 specific feasts.

Deut. 16:16 observe each year by going to "appear before the Lord your God in the place which He shall choose."

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| 1. Passover & Unleavened Bread | Death of Christ |
| 2. Feast of Pentecost | Ascension of Christ |
| 3. Feast of Tabernacles [Ex. 23:14-19] | Christ's Return to Establish His Kingdom |

When there was the Temple in Jerusalem, they celebrated by going on a pilgrimage to the Temple. They also brought their tithes and offerings at this time.

The Significance Of Tabernacles

God commanded them to build temporary "tabernacles," or "booths," to live in during the festival. The Israelites left their houses and built temporary dwelling places.

- Hebrew sukkah denoted a "hut of woven boughs."
- They lived in these while rejoicing before God. These reminded them of their release from slavery and their dwelling in booths when God brought them out of Egypt. [Lev. 23:34; 41-43].
- In stark contrast to the hardship of slavery, this festival emphasizes rest, peace and prosperity as it meets the needs of all people, including strangers, widows and the poor.

The Symbolism of the Booths

Living in booths served as a reminder of God's protection during the forty years of wandering in the desert (Lev 23:42) after they were freed from bondage. The temporary booths symbolized the human need to depend upon God for His provision of food, water, and shelter.

- ❖ True in the spiritual realm
- ❖ The booth is the physical body which is a temporary dwelling place for our souls and spirit. [I Cor. 6:19-20]
- ❖ We need the food that the Word of God provides.

Matt. 4:4 It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

John 6:33-35 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. ³⁴ Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

³⁵ And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

- ❖ We need the cleansing, rinsing and washing God's Word brings to our lives.

Eph. 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

- ❖ We need the shelter of God's protection over our lives from the evil one. [Ps. 91]

Matt. 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

- ❖ Our physical needs will be provided for by God if we seek Him spiritually [Matt. 6:31-33]

Sojourning In a Booth:

I. Christ Tabernacling In The Flesh

Three facts are suggestive of Christ's incarnation being foreshadowed in this feast.

God Pitched His Tent [tabernacle] Among His People

Ex. 25:8 God told Moses: Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell [tabernacle] in their midst.

God provided the instructions and the people constructed the tabernacle.

Ex. 40:34 "then the cloud covered the tent of the meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

God manifested Himself as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night for 40 years in the wilderness.

The Tabernacle displayed an indescribable truth: The God of the universe, who created and sustains all things, now dwells [tabernacles] among His people.

1. John 1:14 And the Word (Christ) became flesh (human, incarnate) and tabernacled (fixed His tent of flesh, lived awhile) among us; and we [actually] saw His glory (His honor, His majesty), such glory as an only begotten son receives from his father, full of grace (favor, loving-kindness) and truth. [Amplified]

- ❖ God's presence came in the incarnate Messiah who was present with His people. Immanuel, God with us.
- ❖ When He became flesh, Jesus inhabited the temporary shelter of an earthly body.
- ❖ He dwelt with us in a corruptible body, knowing He would be required to leave it.
- ❖ He did it so we might find a home in Him - an eternal home in a Kingdom that abides forever.

2. The people's gathering of palm [victory] branches when persuaded of His Messiahship Lev. 23:40 Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.

Consider: The palm branches were used in the Feast of Booths to remind Israel of God's guidance out of Egypt.

Christ is celebrated as the One who brings His people out of captivity and slavery to sin.

John 12:12-13 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Interesting: Only John specifies they were palm branches in the Gospels.

It appears John portrays the Triumphal entry in Jerusalem as a picture of what will happen in the heavenly Jerusalem.

Rev. 7:9-10 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"

Rev. 7:14 These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Multitudes of the redeemed standing before the throne with palm branches and celebrating how the Lord led them out of "great tribulation."

- ❖ Provides Christians with the needed reassurance that God would see them through their tribulation to a glorious destiny.

Rev. 7:15 Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sits on the throne shall dwell among them.

The waving of the Palm Branches [Rev 7:9] and the Heavenly Booth [Rev 7:15] literally translated reads: "The One seated upon the throne will erect a booth over them with His presence."

- ❖ John's use of the Old Testament symbols of the Feast of Tabernacles now transferred to God's Heavenly Feast.

3. Christ chose "the great day of the feast," Feast of Tabernacles, to identify Himself with one of its incidents. While the waters of Siloam [on the last day of the feast] were being poured on the altar steps, "Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink." [John 7:37-38]

4. His tabernacle life was not permanent. Booths are for pilgrims, not residents. Jesus was here but for a season. "Yet a little while I am with you."

II. Man's Insecure Tenure On Earth

1. A booth of boughs and palms would quickly wither; so does our frail tabernacle. What are these bodies but tents of drooping flesh?
 2. It was occupied but a few days. We are resident in this body only a brief season.
 3. The materials of the booths were of the earth and returned to the earth: mere growths from the soil, soon to decay and go back to the soil.
- Even so, "dust thou art," & "of the earth earthy."

III. Celebration of The Stranger & Pilgrim Spirit Which God Fosters In Us

In order to follow God easier, the Israelites lived in simple booths.

- ❖ Voluntary leaving of their homes to live in a "tented state"
- ❖ Picture of the stranger and pilgrim spirit to which we are called
- ❖ God in the wilderness dwelt as the Great Pilgrim in a tent with his pilgrim people.
- ❖ Year by year He enjoined his people in their generations to become literally "strangers with Him" as their forefathers had been.

Ps. 39:12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

Consider: The same danger threatens us: to feel at home in this world and give up the pilgrimage. Peter warns us:

I Pet. 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Truth: If the world doesn't seem strange to me, I am not living as near to God as I should. The more I draw near to God, the greater will be my moral distance from the world.

Consider: The Bible emphasizes that, as with booths or temporary dwellings, our physical life is transitory. Paul's writings reflect this theme:

II Cor. 5:1-2 "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

II Pet. 1:13-14 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; ¹⁴ Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown me.

Hebrews 11 recounts many of God's faithful servants. It concludes in Heb. 11:13-16 "these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. ¹⁵ And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

A long pilgrimage can be welcomed if it leads toward everlasting joy in the Father's house. Is there not an element of triumph associated with such a celebration as this Feast of Tabernacles? It indicates victory over worldly feeling through faith in God. No wonder that palm branches and goodly boughs were waved by joyous ones before the Lord. It is into victorious joy He summons all His people as the earnest of the everlasting joy with which He is yet to crown them.

Zech. 8:3 Thus says the LORD, 'I will return to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts *will be called the Holy Mountain.*'

The Holy City on Earth will be called Jehovah Shammah = The Lord Is There. [Ezek. 48:35]

Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them:

For Israel, the best is yet to come.

- The scattered people will be gathered.
- The sinful people will be cleansed.
- The sorrowful people will rejoice.

For Gentile believers, the best is yet to come.

- We shall be together with the Lord and His people.
- We will forever rejoice in His presence.

Imagine what it will be like when the Lord returns to this earth and sets up His throne and all peoples stream to Him! "The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name." [Zechariah 14:9]

Now we need to be commanded to be joyful, then there will be no holding back the exaltation!